PROSPECTION, RETROSPECTION, AND EMOTIVE EFFECT:
SUSPENSE, SURPRISE, AND CURIOSITY IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

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ABSTRACT

This examination explores ways in which the narrative of the Gospel of Matthew elicits and develops the emotions of suspense, surprise, and curiosity within its readers. The dream narrative (common in Greek literature) found at the beginning of the Gospel sets up expectation for Jewish salvation (Matt 1:21; 2:6) though this fails to be realized in the narrative given the salvation requirements set forth in Jesus' discourses and parables. This narrative of failure brings about increasing suspense related to the characters in the plot (leaders of the people, crowds, disciples, and Peter). The narrative ends with the commission to the Gentiles (Matt 28:19-20), as a surprise for the reader given the initial expectation of Jewish salvation. This surprise, however, invokes curiosity, calling readers back to the narrative's beginning. Upon rereading with a retrospective view, the reader discovers that the Gentile mission was foreshadowed throughout the narrative via ironic quotations and echoes of Isaiah (Matt 1:23-24; 4:14-16; 8:17; 12:18-21; 20:28; 21:33-45; 26:28) that now take on universal interpretation.

Cette thèse explore des façons dans lesquelles le récit de l'Évangile de Matthieu provoque et développe pour ses lecteurs les émotions de suspense, surprise, et curiosité. Le récit de rêve (une notion littéraire commune dans la littérature grecque) au début de l'Évangile construit pour le lecteur une attente au salut juif (Matt 1:21 ; 2:6). Par contre, si on tient compte des conditions de salut décrits dans les discours et les paraboles de Jésus, cette attente ne se concrétise jamais dans le récit. Ce récit d'échec augmente le suspense lié aux caractères du complot (les dirigeants spirituels des citoyens, les foules, les disciples, et Pierre). Le récit se termine avec la mission aux gentils (Matt 28:19-20) et considérant l'attente initiale au salut juif, ce passage surprend les lecteurs. Par la suite cette surprise invoque une curiosité qui invite les lecteurs à retourner au commencement du récit. En le lisant de nouveau avec une rétrospective, le lecteur découvre qu'à travers le récit, les citations et les échos ironiques d'Esaïe (Matt 1:23-24; 4:14-16; 8:17 ; 12:18-21; 20:28 ; 21:33-45; 26:28) laissent présager la mission aux gentils. Une interprétation universelle de ces passages devient maintenant nécessaire.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

What impact does the Gospel of Matthew have on a reader? How do the structure, content, and context of this text guide that impact? The first question focuses on the reception of the text and the second on the way in which that reception is guided by the text itself; both allow examination of a text's emotional impact. The emotions specific to this particular examination are suspense, surprise, and curiosity. Literary criticism and its application to Matthew's Gospel has been developed in Kingsbury's *Matthew and Story*,[1] itself inspired by David Rhoads' work on Mark[2] and the literary critical methods of Seymour Chatman.[3] Kingsbury, however, does not concern himself with suspense and surprise which Chatman develops.[4] Many others, building on Kingsbury's work, either comment only briefly on emotive affect[5] or focus on other literary critical methods[6] in their

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[1] Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (2d ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988).

[2] David M. Rhoads, "Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark," *JAAR* 50, no. 3 (1982).

[3] Seymour Benjamin Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978).

[4] Ibid., 59-63.

[5] Janice Capel Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* (JSNTSup 91; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 142-44.

[6] David B. Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story: A Study in the Narrative Rhetoric of the First Gospel* (JSNTSup 42; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990); Mark Allan Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?* (GBS; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990).

application of methods developed by Chatman, Wayne Booth,[7] Wolfgang Iser,[8]

and, to a lesser extent, Meir Sternberg.[9] This is somewhat surprising given that

all four of these literary critics comment on suspense,[10]surprise,[11]and curiosity,[12]

and the ways in which they are significant in literary reception. Sternberg has

continued to develop his theory of these emotive responses,[13] and his explanation

of suspense, surprise, and curiosity relative to their inclusion in narrative has been

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[7] Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

[8] Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

[9] Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (ISBL; Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1985).

[10] Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 64, 285; Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 59-63, 171; Iser, *Act of Reading*, 191.

[11] Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 127; Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 59-63, Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 287.

[12] Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 125; Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 171; Iser, *Act of Reading*, 194.

[13] Meir Sternberg, "Biblical Poetics and Sexual Politics: From Reading to Counterreading," *JBL* 111, no. 3 (1992): 463-88; Meir Sternberg, "Telling in Time (I): Chronology and Narrative Theory," *Poetics Today* 11, no. 4 (1990): 901-48; Meir Sternberg, "Telling in Time (II): Chronology, Teleology, Narrativity," *Poetics Today* 13, no. 3 (1992): 463-541; Meir Sternberg, "Telling in Time (III): Chronology, Estrangement, and Stories of Literary History," *Poetics Today* 27, no. 1 (2006): 125-235. Meir Sternberg, "Universals of Narrative and Their Cognitivist Fortunes (I)," *Poetics Today* 24, no. 2 (2003): 297-395; Meir Sternberg, "Universals of Narrative and Their Cognitivist Fortunes (II)," *Poetics Today* 24, no. 3 (2003): 517-638.

influential in understanding narrative plot and structure.[14] Application of these

concepts to the Gospel of Matthew fills a gap in gospel studies.[15] The exploration

of reader emotion provoked by gospel texts has only just begun,[16] although there

is a long history of this type of study in relation to literature dating from the time

of Aristotle.[17] The emotional responses of suspense, surprise, and curiosity are

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[14] Teresa Bridgeman, "Time and Space," in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative* (ed. David Herman; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 54.

[15] For very brief discussion, see Sönke Finnern, *Narratologie und biblische Exegese: Eine intergrative Methode der Erzählanalyse und ihr Ertrag am Beispiel von Matthäus 28* (WUNT 285; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 199-200.

[16] Karl Allen Kuhn, *The Heart of Biblical Narrative: Rediscovering Biblical Appeal to the Emotions* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009).

[17] Aristotle comments that the subject of poems should be given at the outset so that the mind is not held in suspense (καὶ μὴ κρέμηται ἡ διάνοια) (*Rhetorica* 1415a). Here, suspense is related to uncertainty with regard to that which will come. Demetrius comments on a different kind of suspense. "In the case of disaster we should not immediately say that a disaster has happened but reveal it only gradually, keeping the reader in suspense and forcing him to share the anguish" (Demetrius, *De elocutione* 216 [Warrington, LCL]). The audience is left to feel with the characters as the unknown future comes to pass; it is suspense of empathy. In the specific example given, the audience knows of the death of Cyrus, but it must be revealed to Parysatis. She oscillates between the hope that Cyrus is alive and the fear that he has died as the audience follows the narrative. Although the audience knows that Cyrus' death must be revealed, there is anticipation as to how the revelation will take place and empathy with the character of Parysatis. For the most complete discussion of ancient suspense, see Andreas Fuchs, *Dramatische Spannung: moderner Begriff – Antikes Konzept* (Drama 11; Stuttgart: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 2000). There is also extended discussion of suspense in the scholia to the Iliad and other early commentary. See N. J. Richardson, "Literary Criticism in the Exegetical Scholia to the Iliad: A Sketch," *CQ* 30, no. 2 (1980): 269-70; Roos Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories in Greek Scholia* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1987), 200-209. Demetrius also comments on surprise stating that there is a charm connected to the unexpected. The strange and unanticipated hospitality of the Cyclops, when he states that he will eat Odysseus last, is seen as surprising by Demetrius. He also emphasizes that the reader experiences surprise when something occurs that

brought forth by playing the expectations formed at the beginning of the Gospel against the outcomes revealed at the end of the Gospel.

Through inclusion of a dream oracle (Matt 1:20-21 - τέξεται δὲ υἱόν, καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν· αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν. τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος·) and a prophecy taken from Isaiah (Matt 1:23 - ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἕξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.), the Gospel of Matthew's introduction sets the stage for salvation of Jesus' people, assumedly the people of Israel. Throughout the narrative's unfolding, Matthew repeatedly employs references and also allusions to the text of Isaiah related to this salvific intention (Matt 1:23-24; 4:14-16; 8:17; 12:18-21; 20:28; 21:33-45; 26:28). As will be argued below, when one focuses on the beginning of the Gospel (primacy effect), the use of Isaiah points toward Jewish salvation; when the end of the narrative (recency effect) is the interpretive paradigm, however, the above passages are subject to a more universal understanding. It is the premise of this thesis that a *sequential reader* (see Methodology) focusing on the introduction of

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is unconnected with that which has proceeded in a narrative (*Elec.* 152-53); see Pierre Chiron, *Un rhéteur méconnu: Démétrios (Ps. Démétrois De Phalère): essai sur les mutations de la théorie de style à l'époque hellénistique* (Textes et Traditions 2; Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 2001), 292-93. Aristotle also concerned himself with events that occur contrary to expectation (*Poetica* 1452a); see Paul Turner, "The Reverse of Vahlen," *CQ* 9, no. 2 (1959): 207-15. Finally, regarding curiosity, Aristotle makes it clear that human beings desire to know (*Metaphysica* i 1, 980a 21; *De anima* ii 3, 414b 18; iii 3, 429a68). The passage from *Metaphysica* is quoted by Cicero where he emphasizes a human zeal for learning and knowledge (*De officiis* 1. 18-19). For discussion, see P. G. Walsh, "The Rights and Wrongs of Curiosity (Plutarch to Augustine)," *GR* 35, no.1 (1988): 73-85.

the Gospel of Matthew persists in expecting salvation for the nation of Israel and in viewing Gentiles in a negative light until the narrative's conclusion, which serves as a surprise ending. Suspense is sustained throughout the Gospel as the sequential reader anticipates an expected (even predicted) salvation for Israel even while the rejection of Jesus motif intensifies. The surprise ending is that the sequential reader's expectation is never fulfilled, but rather, "the people" of the initial prophecy is redefined to consist primarily of Gentiles. Curiosity then plays a role as the text calls the sequential reader to return to the beginning (by means of inclusio – Matt 1:23; 28:20), and through an end-focused reading, the sequential reader discovers foreshadowing of the narrative's surprise outcome.

METHODS AND APPROACHES CONTRIBUTING TO THE "GOSPEL AND EMOTION" RESEARCH GAP

The dearth of research in this particular area can be attributed to at least three main influences that will be discussed below:

1. The recent development of suspense theory in literary studies

2. Theoretical approaches that diminish recognition of suspense and surprise

    a. Tendencies to approach the Gospel through structural readings

    b. Use of a rereading perspective as opposed to a primacy reading

    c. Assumption of a reliable narrator

    d. Construction of the implied reader

    e. Assumption of prophetic fulfillment related to neglect of discourse material

   f. Readings that view Matthew as a commentary on Mark's

    Gospel

  3. Matthean dream research has focused on rhetorical categories and the

   immediate context of Matt1:18-23 rather than in trying to incorporate

   the angelic message into an understanding of the book as a whole.

Theoretical Development

  Meir Sternberg, in a series of *Poetics Today* publications, has clarified,

expanded, and provided commentary on the literary theories of suspense, surprise,

and curiosity.[18] Scholars were previously unable to apply these concepts since

they existed only in rudimentary form, earlier works have been forgotten,[19] and

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[18] Meir Sternberg, "The Bible's Art of Persuasion: Ideology, Rhetoric, and Poetics in Saul's Fall," *HUCA* 54 (1983): 45-82; Sternberg, "Biblical Poetics," 463-88; Meir Sternberg, "How Narrativity Makes a Difference," *Narrative* 9, no. 2 (2001): 115-22; Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*; Meir Sternberg, "Proteus in Quotation-Land: Mimesis and the Forms of Reported Discourse," *Poetics Today* 3, no. 2 (1982): 107-56; Sternberg, "Telling in Time (I)," 901-48; Sternberg, "Telling in Time (II)," 463-541; Sternberg, "Telling in Time (III)," 125-235; Sternberg, "Cognitivist Fortunes (I)," 297-395; Sternberg, "Cognitivist Fortunes (II)," 517-638;

[19] This is not to say that literary suspense has been left undeveloped. See William F. Brewer. "The Nature of Narrative Suspense and the Problem of Rereading," in *Suspense, Conceptualizations, Theoretical Analyses, and Empirical Explorations* (ed. H. Wulff, M. Friedrichsen, and P. Vorderer; Mahwah, N. J.: Erlbaum, 1996), 107-27; W. Brewer and E. H. Lichtenstein, "Stories are to Entertain: A Structural-Affect Theory of Stories," *J Pragmatics* 6 (1982): 473-86; William F. Brewer, "The Story Schema: Universal and Cultural-Specific Properties," in *Literacy, Language, and Learning: The Nature and Consequences of Reading and Writing* (ed. David R. Olson, Nancy Torrance, and Angela Hildyard; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 167-94; William F. Brewer and E. H. Lichtenstein, "Event Schemas, Story Schemas, and Story Grammars, "in *Attention and Performance* (ed. J. Long and A. Baddeley; Hillsdale, N. J.: Erlbaum, 1981), 363-79; William F. Brewer and Keisuke Ohtsuka, "Story Structure, Characterization, Just World Organization, and Reader Affect in American and

interest has been renewed in the subject only recently. This thesis is founded on

the definitions and indicated applications within Sternberg's most recent

publications regarding suspense, surprise, and curiosity. Other theorists have also

been developing the ways in which literature brings about these responses, as will

be discussed below.

Presuppositional Diminishing of Suspense and Surprise

Structural Readings

In many instances, Matthew is "read from above," from a specific outline

of the Gospel, viewing it as a complete whole or even teleologically from end to

beginning. If this is the case, the primacy effect is lost. Such approaches

diminish, if not remove completely, the suspense and surprise aspects of

Matthew's narrative. Proponents of suspense theory have often noted that

viewing a text for a second time removes the initial qualities of a suspense

narrative. "Since first readings involve the continuous making and revision of

guesses, first readings are like the process of living moment to moment in the

present. Second or subsequent readings – when the question of 'what happens

next' no longer pertains with urgency – differ fundamentally from first readings

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Hungarian Short Stories," *Poetics* 17 (1988): 395-415; Hans Hoeken and Mario van Vliet, "Suspense, Curiosity, and Surprise: How Discourse Structure Influences the Affective and Cognitive Processing of a Story," *Poetics* 27, no. 4 (2000): 277-86; P. E. Jose and W. F. Brewer, "Development of Story Liking: Character Identification, Suspense, and Outcome Resolution," *Dev Psychol* 20 (1984): 911-24. Early works on the subject include Donald Clive Stuart, "Foreshadowing and Suspense in the Euripidean Prolog," *SP* 15, no. 4 (1918): 295-306; Donald Clive Stuart, "The Function and Dramatic Value of the Recognition Scene in Greek Tragedy," *AJP* 39, no. 3 (1918): 268-90; and George E. Duckworth, *Foreshadowing and Suspense in the Epics of Homer, Apollonius and Virgil* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1933).

and resemble the ways in which we experience the past."[20] This is even more the

case when, in the course of secondary reading, one examines the text anew to see

the ways in which a surprise ending was foreshadowed.

> [F]or a surprise ending to be ethically and aesthetically appropriate . . .
> the author includes materials in the progression that can retrospectively
> be understood as preparing the audience for the surprise; or to put this
> point another way, the audience can recognize that the necessary
> reconfiguration caused by the surprise actually fits well with the
> beginning and the middle of the progression. . .[21]

In discussing the Gospel of Matthew, Kingsbury set out by clarifying and

defining many key issues, setting a standard for much of what would follow in

Matthean studies related to structure and plot, as indicated in the works of Mark

Allen Powell[22] and David Bauer.[23] Kingsbury's method, however, was

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[20] Marianna Torgovnick, *Closure in the Novel* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton
University Press, 1981), 8. This is not to say that suspense is completely
eliminated. See note 229 for discussion on the paradox of suspense and willfull
forgetting.

[21] James Phelan, *Experiencing Fiction: Judgments, Progressions, and the
Rhetorical Theory of Narrative* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press,
2007), 95.

[22] D. A. Hagner, "The *Sitz im Leben* of the Gospel of Matthew," in *Treasures New
and Old: Recent Contributions to Matthean Studies* (ed. David R. Bauer and Mark
Allan Powell; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 27-68; Mark Allan Powell,
Expected and Unexpected Readings of Matthew: What the Reader Knows," *AsTJ*
48 (1993): 31-51; Mark Allan Powell, "The Magi as Kings: An Adventure in
Reader-Response Criticism," *CBQ* 62, no. 3 (2000): 459-80; Mark Allan Powell,
"The Magi as Wise Men: Re-examining a Basic Supposition," *NTS* 46, no. 1
(2000): 1-20; Mark Allan Powell, "The Mission of Jesus and the Mission of the
Church in the Gospel of Matthew," *TSR* 16, no. 2 (1994): 77-89; Mark Allan
Powell, "The Plot and Subplots of Matthew's Gospel," *NTS* 38, no. 2 (1992): 187-
204; Mark Allan Powell, "Toward a Narrative-Critical Understanding of
Matthew," *Int* 46, no. 4 (1992): 341-46; Mark Allan Powell, *What is Narrative
Criticism?* (GBS NT Series, ed. Dan O. Via; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990).

significantly influenced by rereading the text in light of its end or by viewing the text as a whole in knowledge of the end.

In his chapter, "Matthew: A Literary-Critical Approach," Kingsbury outlines the Gospel's plot in relation to chapter divisions proposed in his earlier works.[24] Referring to his structural division of the Gospel, he states, "Accordingly, we see that Matthew, by combining the phrase *apo tote* with the verbs *archomai*, has succeeded in creating an expression that strongly denotes the beginning of a new phase in the 'life of Jesus.'"[25] He goes on to say, "If, therefore, we utilize this formula to arrange Matthew's Gospel according to topic, the following outline readily emerges: (I) The person of Jesus Messiah (1:1-4:16); (II) The proclamation of Jesus Messiah (4:17-16:20); and (III) The Suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Messiah (16:21-28:20)."[26] This entire construction promotes a view of the text from outside the text – a view at one moment from beginning to end and from end to beginning. Such an approach

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[23] David R. Bauer, "The Kingship of Jesus in the Matthean Infancy Narrative: A Literary Analysis," *CBQ* 57, no. 2 (1995): 306-23; David R. Bauer, "The Major Characters of Matthew's Story: Their Function and Significance," *Int* 46, no. 4 (1992): 357-67; David R. Bauer and Mark Allan Powell, eds. *Treasures New and Old: Recent Contributions to Matthean Studies* (SBLSymS 1; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996).

[24] Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975); Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Structure of Matthew's Gospel and His Concept of Salvation History," *CBQ* 35 (1973): 451-74.

[25] Kingsbury, *Structure, Christology, Kingdom*, 8.

[26] Ibid., 9.

voids the experience of suspense and surprise that a sequential reader would encounter.

Rereading Perspective

Discussing this structure in relation to salvation history, Kingsbury indicates that Matt 1:23 needs to be read in light of Matt 28:20, and he concludes: "In combination, they reveal the message of Matthew's story: *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.*"[27] Thus, the primacy effect is completely avoided. The beginning is the end.

Kingsbury not only stands above the text in his outline, but his idea of plot has been influenced by Frank J. Matera who supports rereading (or understanding the beginning from the end) by emphasizing causality in plot. In an influential article emphasizing the way in which the conclusion of the Gospel is instrumental for understanding the plot of Matthew's Gospel, he answers the question, "In terms of time, how does the ending of Matthew's gospel bestow upon the whole work duration and meaning?"[28]

The Reliable Narrator

Reading from above, viewing the entire structure, and reading from the end, can lead to the presupposition of a reliable narrator, variously defined. Kingsbury defines its inverse, the unreliable narrator, in accord with Chatman, as

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[27] Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 42.

[28] Frank J. Matera, "The Plot of Matthew's Gospel," *CBQ* 49, no. 2 (1987): 241.

". . . when a narrator does not espouse the same system of ideas, values, or beliefs that sustains and informs the story."[29] In the case of Matthew, the reader has to deal only with a "reliable narrator," one who is in full accord with the implied author.[30]

> Narrative critics have pointed out the importance of establishing
> in the reader a sense of either the reliability or non-reliability of
> the narrator who reports incidents and comments on events. Thus,
> the sequence's second accomplishment is that the implied reader is
> subtly encouraged to accept the narrator in Matthew's gospel as a
> spokesperson with authority or reliability because he/she is
> conveying information that is consistent with the implications
> of the genealogy. (This effect is enhanced later in the narrative
> when Jesus himself also uses the fulfillment formula.)[31]

Most assume a reliable narrator for Matthew's Gospel.[32] The conflation of the implied author (constructed from the whole text) [33] with the implied narrator is an easy step since Kingsbury constructs the narrator from an end narrative reading. This mixing of the two literary constructs removes aspects of suspense and eliminates surprise. If it is granted that the implied narrator and the implied author are the same and there is no disagreement between them, there is no room

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[29] Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 31.

[30] Ibid; Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 26.

[31] Richard A. Edwards, "Reading Matthew: The Gospel as Narrative," *List* 24 (1989): 254.

[32] Anderson, *Narrative Web*, 47, 193; Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 46; Powell, "Plot and Subplots," 26.

[33] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 148-49. On the ubiquity of this understanding, see Ansgar F. Nünning, "Deconstructing and Reconceptualizing the 'Implied Author': The Resurrection of an Anthropomorphicized Passepartout or the Obituary of a Critical Phantom?" *Anglistik* 8, no. 2 (1997): 95-116.

for irony, which would enable the creation of suspense, surprise and curiosity in this Gospel.

The Implied Reader

The implied reader is a theoretical literary construct used to bridge the gap between an ideal understanding of everything the implied author wishes to communicate and readings generated by real readers; it is a text-centered concept.[34] With reference to Matthew, this exploration has been outlined most clearly by Powell who states that the implied reader must have knowledge concerning the spatial, temporal, and social setting of the narrative. The real reader must suppress knowledge "concerning the narrative's setting that the reader is not expected to have. . . Typically, the knowledge that the reader is expected to have will be that which pertains to the narrative's story or content."[35] The implied reader knows everything the implied author expects him to know.

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[34] This type of reader response criticism emphasizes textual intention that guides the reader; the reader is subservient to the text. There are, however, various interpretations of the implied reader and the role that real readers play (or do not play) in its reconstruction. See discussions in Robert M. Fowler, "Who is the Reader in Reader-Response Criticism?" *Semeia* 31 (1985): 5-23; Zoltán Schwáb, "Mind the Gap: The Impact of Wolfgang Iser's Reader-Response Criticism on Biblical Studies – A Critical Assessment," *Lit Theol* 17, no. 2 (2003): 170-181. Stanley Porter has emphasized that some of the benefits of utilizing the implied reader in literary critical studies include attention to plot, motivation for action, value of the story as story, textual integrity, and the reception process. See Stanley Porter, "Literary Approaches to the New Testament: From Formalism to Deconstruction and Back," in *Approaches to New Testament Study* (eds. Stanley E. Porter and David Tombs; JSNTSup 120; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 112-15.

[35] Powell, "Expected and Unexpected," 35. Powell indicates that the purpose of the implied reader is to eliminate unexpected readings by real readers that fail to take into account the knowledge of the implied reader or depend upon knowledge the implied reader does not have; Powell, "Expected and Unexpected, 32.

This includes linguistic competence (Greek), universal knowledge (e.g., miracles can be identified as miraculous), geographical, historical, social and cultural understandings (e.g., monetary value of currency). (S)he is to be familiar with symbolic language (e.g., "brood of vipers") as well as literature cited or alluded to within the narrative (e.g., Isaiah).[36] Powell limits the implied reader's knowledge based on three criteria:

> (1) Availability. Was the knowledge we are to regard as assumed for the setting of the narrative available to the author? . . .
> (2) Recurrence. Is the knowledge we are to regard as assumed for the setting of the narrative relevant for understanding the text in repeated instances? . . .
> (3) Thematic Coherence. Is the reading gained by assuming that the reader possesses certain knowledge related to the setting of the narrative consistent with the narrative as a whole?[37]

This definition of the implied reader is valuable as a tool for examining Matthew's Gospel. Criterion three unfortunately suffers from being unable to see the narrative through a primacy perspective.[38] Thus, the quest for the implied reader leads necessarily to a recency reading emphasizing consistency, which removes suspense, surprise, and curiosity from the examination.[39] This is a

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[36] Ibid.: 35.

[37] Ibid.: 38-9. Powell's criterion of thematic coherence creates a tension with the idea of a first time reading.

[38] Powell seems to change his mind regarding what the implied reader is to know. At one point, he emphasizes an implied reader who understands the text from the end (Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 20). At a later point, he emphasizes the significance of reading the text as a first time reader but acknowledges the change in his position. See Mark Allan Powell, *Chasing the Eastern Star: Adventures in Biblical Reader-Response Criticism* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001), 79, 211.

[39] See below for discussion of these terms.

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natural response to narrative since literary criticism emphasizes the unity of the

work.

> We view the whole of the text from the perspective of the end
> of the reading experience. The path we have had to follow to
> get to the end of reading is regarded merely as prelude to the
> end product. Only at the conclusion of reading do we dare ask
> ourselves: "What is *the* meaning of the story? What is *the* point
> of the story? What content did I get out of it? . . . Reading a text
> is a rich and dynamic experience; but focusing on the end product
> of reading lends itself to perceiving a text as a static, spatial
> form . . . [40]

Fowler later argues that there is a linear, temporal side to literature that is filled

with "psychological phenomena of anticipation and retrospection . . . While we

read, we are actively involved in reviewing what has preceded and speculation

about what lies ahead."[41] By emphasizing suspense, surprise, and curiosity, we

return to an implied reader who feels: "[T]he term 'implied reader' denotes no

flesh-and-blood person of any century. Instead, it refers to an imaginary person

who is to be envisaged, in perusing Matthew's story, as responding to the text at

every point with whatever *emotion*, understanding, or knowledge the text ideally

calls for."[42] The implied reader must allow the literary text to exercise its effect if

this reader's understanding is to correspond with that of the implied author.[43] By

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[40] Fowler, "Who is the Reader," 19.

[41] Ibid., 20.

[42] Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 38. Italics mine.

[43] Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 210.

analyzing emotion within the text, one can move towards a better understanding of the way in which the text was meant to be read.[44]

Assumption of Prophetic Fulfillment

A subsequent outcome of reading from above, rereading, and assuming a reliable narrator is Kingsbury's continual emphasis on the efficacious nature of Christ's sacrifice.[45] "In the story Matthew tells apart from the great speeches, Jesus is depicted as the Son of God who, in willing obedience to his Father, goes the way of the cross so as to save humanity by shedding his blood for the atonement of sins (1:21; 20:28; 26:28)."[46] He reiterates and elaborates further:

> Not only that, but God also establishes Jesus' death as the means
> whereby Jesus atones for the sins of all people (1:21; 26:28). As
> Matthew's gospel draws to a close, therefore, Jesus' cross becomes
> the symbol, not of his destruction at the hands of his enemies, but
> of the salvation God accomplishes in him on behalf of all humankind,
> whether Jew or Gentile (1:21; 20:28; 26:28).[47]

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[44] Edwards indicates that the text-connoted reader "is informed *only* by the specifics of the narrative world under analysis from the beginning of the narrative, and *not* from sources beyond it, nor from events/descriptions which take place later in the story." Richard A. Edwards, *Matthew's Narrative Portrait of Disciples: How the Text-Connoted Reader is Informed* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press, 1997), 10. It is Edwards' construct of the text-connoted (implied) reader, with its emphasis on chronology, that is utilized throughout this work. Powell emphasizes the emotional impact of this type of reading. See Powell, *Eastern Star*, 23 and Mark Allan Powell, "Literary Approaches and the Gospel of Matthew," in *Methods for Matthew* (ed. Mark Allan Powell; MBI; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 54-55, 60.

[45] It is very probable that Kingsbury and Powell have been influenced by a thesis that follows this same line of thinking in addressing the salvific efficacy of the cross. Ronald David Witherup, "The Cross of Jesus: A Literary-Critical Study of Matthew 27" (PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1985), 321-22, 25-27.

[46] Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 111.

[47] Ibid., 124.

Kingsbury does state that Christ offers forgiveness to all humanity, but it is not clear if this offer can be rejected.[48] Powell seems to follow this idea: "He has come to save people from their sin and he will accomplish this not through the speeches but through the blood of the covenant which is 'poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins' (26:28)."[49] Further, David Howell picks up a similar train of thought: "For example, the conditions necessary for Jesus to save the people from their sin (1.21) are fulfilled by the end of the narrative with Jesus' death and resurrection, but the offer of salvation continues in the life and mission of the church."[50] While Jean Miler also followed this idea, he realized some of the ambiguities involved:

> Ces paroles concluent l'annonce à Joseph. Elles sont les premières à dire la vocation de Jésus et quelles en seront les effets. L'ange affirme que Jésus sauvera le peuple de ses péchés. La nature des péchés n'est pas précisée et rien n'est dit de la manière dont Jésus accomplira sa mission. L'annonce de l'ange présente donc de manière globale la vocation de Jésus. Elle constitue une prolepse mixte. L'ange annonce le salut qui sera réalisé dans la passion et la résurrection (Mt 26-28) . . .[51]

> (These words conclude the announcement to Joseph. They are the first to speak of Jesus' vocation and its effects. The angel affirms that Jesus will save the people from their sins. The nature of the sins is not specified, and nothing is said of the manner in which Jesus will accomplish his mission. The announcement of the angel therefore presents the vocation of Jesus in a global manner. It constitutes a

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[48] Ibid., 162.

[49] Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 46.

[50] Howell, *Matthew`s Inclusive Story*, 102.

[51] Jean Miler, *Les citation d'accomplissement dans l'évangile de Matthieu : quand Dieu se rend présent en toute humanité* (AnBib 140 ; Rome: Editrice Pontifico Istituto Biblico, 1999), 26-27.

mixed prolepsis. The angel announces the salvation that will be realized in the passion and the resurrection (Mt 26-28)...)

Thus, there is a trend in scholarship to view the oracles and prophecies as fulfilled within the text, and the result is as Powell notes, with regard to other textual predictions and fulfillments: "[S]uspense is not a major motif in Matthew's gospel."[52] This understanding of fulfilment with specific reference to Matthew 1:21 has, however, been challenged.

According to Luomanen, one must distinguish between the means necessary for salvation and those that are sufficient for salvation.[53]

> [S]cholars have not been able to agree on what to regard as
> "salvation" in Matthew's gospel. Is salvation to be equated only
> with the admission to the final kingdom of the Father? Or is it
> to be seen in the forgiveness of sins and a new covenant based
> on Jesus' blood? Could it perhaps be found through the
> proclamation of Jesus, in his merciful turning to the sinners or
> in the understanding granted to his followers? In some sense all
> these events could be labelled as salvation. The problem is not
> only whether or not the convictions connected to these events
> belonged to Matthew's world of thought, as some of them did and
> others did not, but also how Matthew himself pictured the relationship
> between the different beliefs he had as regards salvation.[54]

He goes on to say that readers cannot form an overall view of Matthew's soteriology by analyzing the word σῴζω for it cannot be assumed that "everything pertinent to salvation is expressed in this particular term."[55] This, then, questions

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[52] Powell, Expected and Unexpected," 35.

[53] Petri Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven: A Study on the Structure of Matthew's View of Salvation* (WUNT 101; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 44-51.

[54] Ibid., 37.

[55] Ibid., 38.

the underlying presupposition that the cross itself is the fulfillment of Matthew 1:21. Readers are presented with numerous texts encompassing salvific content in Matthew's Gospel, particularly in the discourses, and the cross may not be the focal point of salvation for the characters in the text, despite its significance to the overall plotline of Jesus' life.

> Matthew's use of extended discourses and his frequent topical arrangement of material are both found in many ancient biographies. Lucian's *Life of Demonax* and Plutarch's *Life of Cato the Elder* 7-9 are good examples. However, as a result of paying more attention to the story-telling techniques of modern novelists than to the methods of ancient biographers, narrative critics have emphasized the "story-line" and plot of Matthew at the expense of doing justice to his five extended discourses. Like many biographers, Matthew was concerned to give particular prominence to the sayings of Jesus (28.21a).[56]

To move from Matt 1:21 to the cross, avoiding the tension created by the demands of the kingdom as indicated in the discourses, removes suspense regarding the leaders of the people, the crowds, and the disciples with relation to their attainment of salvation based on their words and actions. It oversimplifies the plot. The literary assumption of internal fulfillment moves against a suspense reading by assuming a lack of irony and seeking fulfillment of the prophecies internal to the story of the Gospel. Hill's summary outlines clearly the shortfalls of such a salvation-history type approach to Matthew:

> Notwithstanding this close connection between the narrative form of the gospel and the concept of salvation history, salvation history seems inadequate as a heuristic paradigm for interpreting the inclusive nature of Matthew, because it paradoxically neglects the narrative character of the Gospel genre. The salvation history interpretations which we have examined have read the Gospel with a history of ideas

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[56] Graham N. Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 71.

frame of reference that uses a concept to encapsulate the message of the narrative. The paradox of this approach is that the temporal movement and plot of the Gospel, which are absolutely essential to narrative, are given up for a static idea.[57]

The point of the above criticism is not to diminish the substantial value of these literary hermeneutical methods but to emphasize the way in which they remove the aesthetic impact of the text. The universal knowledge assumed in many of the above constructs may instruct readers concerning the ways in which the text ultimately is to be understood, and it removes ambiguity, but it does not speak to the emotive effects invoked during a primacy reading (in this study, suspense, surprise, and curiosity) and their impact on the reader.

Matthew as Commentary on Mark

Stanton holds that there is little room for surprise in Matthew's Gospel since its audience would already have familiarity with the story of Jesus according to Mark.

> Reader response critics often set out a close reading of a work
> of modern fiction from the standpoint of a first-time reader.
> Several attempts have now been made to read the gospels from
> this perspective, in the case of Matthew most notably by R.E.
> Edwards. But once we consider the ways Matthew's gospel was
> encountered for the first time by the first recipients, this becomes
> an exercise of doubtful value. Christians (or non-Christians for
> that matter) are unlikely to have become acquainted with Matthew
> by means of an oral performance of the whole gospel. They are
> much more likely to have heard shorter sections. They may well
> have been acquainted with Mark's gospel before Matthew's. In
> other words, for most of the first recipients, Matthew's gospel was
> an extended commentary on what the original readers and listeners

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[57] Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 90.

already knew. Hence the story-line and the plot contained few surprises.[58]

Stanton's argument of familiarity could equally be used as an argument against suspense since familiarity reduces suspense.[59]

Even if the Gospel is presented in sections, however, as long as it is done in order, suspense or surprise will not be reduced; rather, the delay between segment readings may even heighten these effects as listeners anticipate the end. Second, even if one grants some familiarity with Mark, Matthew clearly provided distinctive contributions to the material. Since the beginning and end of the Gospel of Matthew are unique, framing the story and giving it distinctive emphasis, the reader could actually experience the inverse of Stanton's assumption; there may, in fact, be an intensification, relocation, or refocusing of suspense and a greater surprise. The "who" of Jesus' salvation in Matthew is explicit in Matt 1:19-23, and the final proclamation to preach to the Gentiles runs

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[58] Stanton, *Gospel for a New People*, 76. This assumes a later date for Matthew than Mark. While there is no consensus on the dating of Matthew and proposals range from 40 C. E. to 125 C. E., the majority emphasize a date between 80-100 C. E. The suggested place of composition is likewise debated (Alexandrea, Caesarea Maritima, Caesarea Philippi, Transjordan, Damascus, Phoenicia, Sepphoris and others) with the majority focusing on Antioch. Most recent commentaries, however, stress the inability to be precise. For a recent discussion, see David C. Sim, "Reconstructing the Social and Religious Milieu of Matthew: Methods, Sources, and Possible Results," in *Matthew, James, and Didache: Three Related Documents in their Jewish and Christian Settings* (ed. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen Zangenberg; Leiden: Brill, 2008). See also W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 1:127-47; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007), 15-19; and John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 16-18.

[59] On the reduction of suspense and familiarity, studies indicate that, although there is a reduction in suspense, the emotion is still strong. See note 229.

exactly opposite to the silent ending of Mark.[60] Thus, in Matthew, the final

proclamation is set up as a surprise within its own narrative, one that is

accentuated when compared to Mark. A "reframing" or "commentary," as

rhetorically effective as that term is for readers of Stanton, is still a new story with

its own twists and turns; redaction criticism in principle accentuates these

points.[61] Stanton does not want to abandon the use of redaction criticism in

emphasizing the distinctive nature of Matthew, yet he seems to minimize the

associated outcomes of this uniqueness.[62] Finally, if Stanton can admit the

possibility of text self-actualization, that the Gospel's readers carry out that which

is commanded (Matt 28:20) and implied (Matt 24:14; 26:13) and do bring the

gospel to a "new people," then there is room for a first-time hearer.[63]

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[60] There is ongoing debate regarding Mark's positive disposition toward Gentiles. If Mark is considered less positive, this would comparatively increase the surprise at the end of Matthew. For a perspective against positive Gentile readings in Mark, see Richard A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 2001), x, 46, 105, 162, 171, 179-80, 214. For recent trends on positive Gentile readings and universalism, see Kelly R. Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark: Even the Dogs Under the Table Eat the Children's Crumbs* (LNTS 339; New York: T&T Clark, 2007).

[61] Stanton, *Gospel for a New People*, 52.

[62] Although Willard W. Flint did not use the term *redaction*, in his study, he indicated that changes in event order, altering or introducing details, altering emphasis and adding new or unfamiliar material, each allow for an increase of suspense. See his *The Use of Myths to Create Suspense in Extant Greek Tragedy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1921), 86-87.

[63] Daniel W. Ulrich, "The Missional Audience of the Gospel of Matthew," *CBQ* 69, no. 1 (2007): 64-83.

Current Dream Narrative Research

The two most recent works on dream narrative in Matthew are by W. J. Subash[64] and Derek Dodson.[65] Subash provides a history of interpretation regarding Matt 1:18-25. The thesis outlines the major interpretive trends related to hero legend, midrash, typology, and encomium. After examining these hypotheses, the thesis moves on to suggest that the dream answers questions around Joseph's decision to marry Mary and Jesus' early travels.[66] Subash follows the majority of interpreters of the dream of Matt 1:18-23 in concern for the immediate context with little interest shown regarding implications for the larger Gospel. Dodson is primarily concerned with dream classification, rhetorical categories, and the immediate plot line concerning Joseph and Jesus. While, as with Subash, he does not include the dream's significance in terms of overall plotline (but rather studies its relevence for Matthew 1 and 2), the present study will build upon Dodson's understanding of Greek and Roman dreams by exploring the implications of Matt 1:21 for the entire Gospel and moving beyond encomium.

METHODOLOGY

The overarching methodological approach to be taken is narrative critical with openness to historical inquiry. As non-fiction, the Gospels must be

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[64] W. J. Subash, "The Dream Passages of Matthew 1-2: A Tradition, Form, and Theological Investigation" (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2009).

[65] Derek S. Dodson, *Reading Dreams: An Audience-Critical Approach to the Dreams in the Gospel of Matthew* (LNTS 397; London: T&T Clark, 2009).

[66] Ibid., 212.

interpreted within their historical setting. The validity of combining historical

investigations with modern literary theory has been emphasized in recent

literature on the Gospels:

> While we emphasize that the Gospels are non-fictional
> narratives by nature, we do not take this to mean that narrative
> criticism should stop making any questions that concern the
> 'literary' aspects of the Gospels and replace all such questions
> for 'historical' and 'sociological' ones. What we do suggest,
> however, is that narrative analysis of the Gospels should be
> methodologically as inclusive and comprehensive as possible.
> This will help us to see narrative as a truly dialogic form of
> communication that takes shape in a process of interaction
> with the historical situation and ideology of the author and
> the readers. Once we have given proper attention to the
> dialogic relationship of the text with its ideological and
> historical environment of origin and reception, this will make
> it easier for us to recognize the rich polyphony of the diverse
> elements within the text as well.[67]

David Rhoads believes that "narrative critics should enhance their analysis

of biblical narrative by *comparison with other ancient literature. . .* Also, the

presentation of characters in ancient biographies and novellas can be an important

means for understanding New Testament narratives."[68] He goes on to include

genre criticism and rhetorical criticism as aspects of narrative criticism.[69] David

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[67] Petri Merenlahti and Raimo Hakola, "Reconceiving Narrative Criticism," in *Characterization in the Gospels: Reconceiving Narrative Criticism* (ed. David M. Rhoads and Kari Syreeni; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 47-48.

[68] David M. Rhoads, "Narrative Criticism: Practices and Prospects," in *Characterization in the Gospels: Reconceiving Narrative Criticism* (ed. David M. Rhoads and Kari Syreeni; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 274-75.

[69] Ibid., 275.

Aune views the overall theoretical horizon of narrative criticism as "eclectic."[70]

Broadening the scope of narrative criticism, this work addresses the rhetorical use and definitions of irony in association with the negative and positive responses to Jesus' teaching and ministry in order to show the emotive potential of the Matthean text. Such analysis of irony reminds readers that a verbal statement can have an initial meaning in its context that retrospectively requires reinterpretation. This use of verbal irony is often found in literary prophecy and has been utilized within various early Greek texts ranging from historiography to biography and ancient novel. Examination of such texts does not imply Matthean knowledge of these works but intends, rather, to demonstrate that a broad array of ancient literature attempted to deceive readers, expecting them to be manipulated in particular ways by setting up false anticipations. This temporary deception of the reader, caused by initial understandings (primacy interpretation) relative to final revelation (recency interpretation), influences the reader's emotions, prompting an experience of suspense, surprise and curiosity.

The cognitive theory of emotion (having its roots in Aristotle) is used to indicate the way in which the oscillation between fear (that Jesus' message and mission will be rejected) and hope (that they will be accepted) moves readers to suspense. Cognitive theory also presents narrative misdirection as a cause of surprise and curiosity. The employment of irony by Matthew's narrator, in conjunction with prophetic misdirection, oscillating fear and hope, and the ultimate rejection of Jesus' teaching and mission by the narrative's major figures

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[70] David E. Aune, "Literary Criticism," in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament* (ed. David E. Aune; Chichester, UK: Blackwell, 2010), 133.

help to produce suspense, surprise, and curiosity. The rhetoric of irony, its

application to prophecy, and its use to create emotion, when understood together,

harmonize many hermeneutically disputed texts in Matthew, notably the

genealogy and the quotations of and allusions to Isaiah.

While a study such as the one undertaken here makes use of material from

a variety of sources in a number of domains, the theoretical concepts with which

this thesis works and upon which it builds are outlined as follows:

1. Suspense

2. Surprise

3. Curiosity

4. Unreliable narrator

5. Primacy and recency effects

6. Distinctions between irony and ambiguity

7. Recognition of allusions in the text

<u>Suspense</u>

Various authors have investigated suspense since the 1980's, and a

methodic emphasis on suspense in literary criticism is generally traced back to the

works of Meir Sternberg[71] who has described it in several ways:

> *Suspense* arises from rival scenarios about the future: from the
> discrepancy between what the telling lets us readers know about
> the happening (e.g., a conflict) at any moment and what still lies
> ahead, ambiguous because yet unresolved in the world. Its fellow
> universals [curiosity and surprise] rather involve manipulations
> of the past, which the tale communicates in a sequence

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[71] Meir Sternberg, *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction*
(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

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discontinuous with the happening.[72]

He paraphrases it again at a later point.

> *[S]uspense*, as the cross-sequential dynamics of prospection,
> arises whenever we look ahead to a resolution: the uncertainty
> and expectancy and drive toward closure may then bear on a
> paradoxical theme, on a seesawing argument . . . in the open
> discoursive "future" yet to be actualized, traversed, experienced,
> if possible finalized - recurs across the suspended forms.[73]

Equally significant for Sternberg, regarding suspense, is the relationship between

hope and fear:

> The criterial driving force remains the uncertain prospection,
> born of a gapped future, an ambiguous contingency, a multiple
> scenario, with or without normative polarization. Only in the
> former, polarized case do we have a stake (ethical, emotional,
> practical, doctrinal) in the event that hangs in the balance. The
> play of expectations then escalates into a clash of hope and
> fear, which engenders the sharpest form of suspense, because
> these rival hypotheses about the outcome are both loaded (hope
> with a positive charge, fear with a negative) and mutually
> exclusive.[74]

All of this is an elaboration of ideas that he first expounded in 1978:

> Our distinction between the two clashing components of
> suspense, hope and fear, relates to two possible expectations
> about the future resolution of a conflict . . .[75]

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[72] Sternberg, "Narrativity," 117.

[73] Sternberg, "Cognitivist Fortunes (I)," 381-82.

[74] Sternberg, "Cognitivist Fortunes (II)," 614.

[75] Sternberg, *Expositional Modes*, 244. It should be noted here that Sternberg's
analysis is far from unique in emphasizing suspense as the oscillation of hope and
fear; he admits his debt to Lucian's works in *Charon* (15) in which fear shocks
humanity into panic, and hope dangles overhead leaving at the point that it is
about to be grasped; also, in *Alexander* (21), humanity is at the mercy of fear and
hope and desires the foreknowledge of oracles and prophets. The first conception,
in English, of suspense as this oscillation can be traced to Stuart, "Foreshadowing
and Suspense," 296. He also connects this conception to Aristotle's discussion of

Defining Hope and Fear

Since Sternberg does not, in fact, define fear and hope clearly,[76] here

cognitive psychology is informative, defining suspense in similar terms to

Sternberg but going further and validating his definition through empirical literary

testing. Cognitive studies will be included throughout to clarify current literary

definitions regarding emotion and to support "real world" responses that move

beyond literary theory. Ortony defines suspense as "involving a hope emotion

and a fear emotion coupled with the cognitive state of uncertainty . . . [and] the

event about which the person is uncertain must have sufficiently desirable or

undesirable consequences, and, because it pertains to outcomes not already

known, it will inevitably implicate one or both of the prospect emotions."[77]

Elaborating on hope, cognitive psychologists see two sides: "Concretely, hope

that stems from an unsatisfactory situation is associated with a goal of avoiding

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fear (*Poet*. 1452b 32) in "Function and Dramatic Value," 271-72. He was
followed by Duckworth, *Foreshadowing and Suspense*, 37; Dolf Zillmann,
"Anatomy of Suspense," in *The Entertainment Functions of Television* (ed. Percy
H. Tannenbaum; Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1980), 133-63; Chatman, *Story and
Discourse*, 171; Manfred Pfister, *The Theory and Analysis of Drama* (trans. John
Halliday; ESEL; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 99. On fear and
hope as related to suspense in ancient writings, see Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and
Clitophon* (2.23.3-4 and 3.8.7 [Gaselee, LCL]); Virgil, *Aenid* (1.218 [Fairclough,
LCL]); Seneca, *Epistulae morales* (1.5.7-8 [Gummere, LCL]); Seneca, *De
tranquillitate animi* (2.7 [Basore, LCL]). For further discussion, see Matthew A.
Elliot, *Faithful Feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament* (Grand
Rapids, Mich.: Kregel, 2006), 76.

[76] Peter Vorderer, Hans Jürgen Wulff, and Mike Friedrichsen, *Suspense:
Conceptualizations, Theoretical Analyses, and Empirical Explorations* (LEA
Commun Ser; Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1996).

[77] Andrew Ortony, Gerald L. Clore, and Allan Collins, *The Cognitive Structure of
Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 131.

undesirable things,[78] whereas hope that stems from a satisfactory situation is

associated with a goal of achieving desirable things,"[79] or to put it differently,

"being pleased about the prospect of a desirable event."[80] Fear is seen as the

reverse. "Fear . . . arises when the possibility of a desirable outcome is threatened

or the possibility of an undesirable outcome becomes likely."[81]

Increasing Suspense: Intensifying Hope and Fear

While a complete discussion of suspense theory is beyond the scope of this

current examination,[82] four literary critical methodologies that address fear and

hope will be utilized: the theories of William Brewer,[83] Richard Gerrig and Allain

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[78] Lazarus only emphasizes hope as yearning for relief; Richard S. Lazarus, *Emotion and Adaptation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 282-83.

[79] Karolien Poels and Siegfried Dewitte, "Hope and Self-Regulatory Goals Applied to an Advertising Context: Promoting Prevention Stimulates Goal-Directed Behavior," *J Bus Res* 61, no. 10 (2008): 1031.

[80] Ortony, Clore, and Collins, *Structure of Emotions*, 115.

[81] R. Madrigal and C. Bee, "Suspense as an Experience of Mixed Emotions: Feelings of Hope and Fear while Watching Suspenseful Commercials." *Adv Consum Res* 32 (2005): 561.

[82] Silvia Knobloch, "Suspense and Mystery," in *Communication and Emotion: Essays in Honor of Dolf Zillmann* (ed. Bryant Jennings, David R. Roskos-Ewoldsen, and Joanne Cantor; Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum, 2003), 379-85. For a representative collection of various theories, see Vorderer, Wulff, and Friedrichsen, *Suspense*.

[83] Brewer, "Nature of Narrative Suspense," 107-27; Brewer and Lichtenstein, "Stories are to Entertain," 473-86; Brewer, "The Story Schema," 167-94; Brewer and Lichtenstein, "Event Schemas," 363-69; Brewer and Ohtsuka, "Story Structure," 395-415; Hoeken and Vliet, "Suspense, Curiosity, and Surprise," 277-86; Jose and Brewer, "Development of Story Liking," 911-24.

Bernardo,[84] Yumiko Iwata,[85] and Noël Carroll.[86]

Suspense and Plot Structure

Brewer researched the significance of plot structure on emotion. His work

indicates that suspense is created by having the discourse structure (the order in

which the events are presented) follow the event structure (the chronological

sequence of events); in other words "the underlying events and the linguistic

presentation of those events in the narrative" are in the same order.[87] It is also

necessary for the event structure to contain an initiating event: "an event that has

the potential to lead to a significant outcome (either good or bad) for one of the

main characters in the narrative."[88] His conclusion with regard to suspense is that

> [i]n general a suspense text is organized with the initiating
> event early in the text and with considerable intervening
> material before the outcome is presented. The initiating event

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[84] R. Gerrig and A. Bernardo, "Readers as Problem-Solvers in the Experience of Suspense," *Poetics* 22 (1994): 459-72.

[85] Yumiko Iwata, "Creating Suspense and Surprise in Short Literary Fiction: A Stylistic and Narratological Approach" (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2008).

[86] N. Carroll, "The Paradox of Suspense," in *Suspense, Conceptualizations, Theoretical Analyses, and Empirical Explorations* (ed. Peter Vorderer, Hans Jürgen Wulff, and Mike Friedrichsen; Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1996), 77-8. Juan A. Prieto-Pablos, "The Paradox of Suspense," *Poetics* 26, no. 2 (1998): 105-6. Dolf Zillmann, "The Psychology of Suspense in Dramatic Exposition," in *Suspense: Conceptualizations, Theoretical Analyses, and Empirical Explorations* (ed. Peter Vorderer, Hans Jürgen Wulff, and Mike Friedrichsen; LEA Commun Ser; Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1996), 206-7.

[87] Brewer and Lichtenstein, "Event Schemas," 365.

[88] William F. Brewer, "Short Story Structure and Affect: Evidence from Cognitive Psychology," in *The Tales We Tell: Perspectives on the Short Story* (ed. Barbara Lounsberry; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998), 159.

causes the reader to become concerned about the potential consequences for the characters; the intervening material prolongs the suspense; and the eventual occurrence of the outcome resolves the suspense.[89]

Brewer's findings have been verified by various others.[90] To be clear, other emotions may also be involved in response to a narrative that follows this type of structure, but this structure is one effective means of creating suspense.[91] The emotion of suspense in this plot-driven examination is called *artefact emotion*, and it originates "in the structural, stylistic, or compositional aspects of the work . . . such as suspense, surprise, and curiosity, generated by story structures . . ."[92] By examining Matthean passages throughout the Gospel in relation to the initiating event, the general criticism of Brewer (who seems not to distinguish between the local level [single sequences] and the global level [whole plot]), will be somewhat avoided given that many of the single sequences are necessarily part of the overall structure.[93] That said, not every event in the Gospel will come under examination. As will be argued below, Matthew's initiating event is

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[89] Ibid.

[90] Silvia Knobloch et al., "Affective News: Effects of Discourse Structure in Narratives on Suspense, Curiosity, and Enjoyment while Reading News and Novels," *Commun Res* 31, no. 3 (2004): 259-87.

[91] For criticism of this method regarding the range of human emotional response and various poetic stylistic features involved within or apart from the structural approach, see Howard Sklar, "Narrative Structuring of Sympathetic Response: Theoretical and Empirical Approaches to Toni Cade Bambara's 'The Hammer Man'," *Poetics Today* 30, no. 3 (2009): 563-67.

[92] Katinka Dijkstra et al., "Character and Reader Emotions in Literary Texts," *Poetics* 23, no. 1-2 (1995): 141.

[93] Werner Wirth and Holger Schramm, "Media and Emotions," *Commun Res Trends* 24, no. 3 (2005): 11.

narrated in Matt 1:21. Inclusion of a prophecy has long been recognized as an effective method for heightening suspense[94] since it is a type of foreshadowing.[95]

The Zigzag Pattern of Hope and Fear

When there is continued postponement of an outcome, various plot fluctuations emphasize the likelihood of a negative result. Iwata finds a particular pattern in this type of fluctuation; it is "a kind of wavering, 'zigzag movement.' It is a way of developing plot, which irregularly goes back and forth between two opposing prospects of resolution, namely, the desired and feared outcomes. . . [T]he situation itself alternates between hopeful and hopeless outlooks."[96] This also builds on Sternberg who mentions the "seesawing argument" and "rival hypotheses" as indicated above.

Readers as Problem Solvers: Diminishing Options for Protagonist's Success

In addition to a continued zig-zagging within the plot, suspense is also developed and sustained through systematic reduction of options for the protagonist's success. Subsequent to his early work,[97] Gerrig proposes that

> one way in which authors make readers feel suspense is by
> leading them to believe that the quantity or quality of paths
> through the hero's problem space has become diminished . . .
> If authors bring about the apparent or genuine pruning of

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[94] Duckworth, *Foreshadowing and Suspense*, 44-70; Pfister, *Analysis of Drama*, 101; Stuart, "Foreshadowing and Suspense," 295-306.

[95] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 59-60.

[96] Iwata, "Creating Suspense," 138.

[97] Richard J. Gerrig, *Experiencing Narrative Worlds: On the Psychological Activities of Reading* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993), 77-90.

solution paths, or if they make the moves toward even an obvious solution appear reasonably daunting, heightened suspense will result.[98]

After a successful experimentation of test subjects, he concludes,

These results support our contention that readers experience suspense in parallel to their frustration as problem solvers. There are, of course, other ways in which authors can create suspense. Our data support the claim, however, that one reliable way to create suspense is to prune the reader's perceptions of paths toward solution.[99]

Such a removal of solutions contributes to the appearance of a hopeless situation;[100] as a result, the reader perceives the desired outcome as unobtainable,[101] which increases fear.[102]

The More Likely but Less Desirable Outcome

Added to ideas of negative outcome, "suspense occurs when the outcome of a specific situation involves a likely and yet undesirable alternative, but we hope for an unlikely and yet desirable resolution."[103] This is motivated by the uncertainty of the reader about the future in conjunction with fear that what will

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[98] Gerrig and Bernardo, "Readers as Problem-Solvers," 460.

[99] Ibid.: 471.

[100] Gerrig, *Narrative Worlds*, 83.

[101] Ibid., 86.

[102] Carroll, "Paradox of Suspense," 77-8; Prieto-Pablos, "Paradox of Suspense," 105-6; Zillman, "Psychology of Suspense," 206-7.

[103] Prieto-Pablos, "Paradox of Suspense," 106.

transpire will be negative.[104] Carroll describes this phenomenon in specific terms: "Suspense takes control where the course of events that is the object of the emotional state points to two logically opposed outcomes, one of which is evil or immoral but probable or likely, and the other of which is moral, but improbable or unlikely or only as probable as the evil outcome."[105]

The discussion of suspense in this particular work will center on the initiating event of Matt 1:21 where Jesus is to bring salvation to his "people" (the Jewish people). Yet, the leaders of the people, the crowds, the disciples, and Peter resist and ultimately reject Jesus' offer of salvation. Since there are three character types (Peter falls under the disciple category) rejecting Jesus' gospel, the options as to who will be saved diminish thereby increasing suspense. The crowds and the disciples seem to waver in their acceptance and rejection of the message proclaimed by Jesus and also in understanding who Jesus is. This wavering leads one to hope for their place in the kingdom of God and to fear that they will end up outside. As the narrative develops, each of the character types drop out of the kingdom starting with the leaders, then the crowds, and finally the disciples. This movement away from the initiating event, which takes place gradually in the narrative, creates a sense of the more likely but less desirable result that Jesus will fail in his mission. The latter part of the present study will develop these topics.

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[104] Michael J. Toolan, *Narrative Progression in the Short Story: A Corpus Stylistic Approach* (LAL 6; Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2009), 166.

[105] Carroll, "Paradox of Suspense," 76.

Surprise

Sternberg's exploration of surprise is helpful for the purposes of this study. He connects surprise with chronological gapping that is later revealed in a text; an event takes place that was not narrated but only disclosed at another point. It is an ambiguity or absence of knowledge that leads to surprise. "For *surprise*, however, the narrative first unobtrusively gaps or twists its chronology, then unexpectedly discloses to us our misreading and enforces a corrective rereading in late re-cognition."[106] In discussing narrative, he describes it again: "The third universal is 'surprise,' or the dynamics of recognition, forced on us by the belated disclosure of a gap in continuity and knowledge, so as to impel a repatterning of all that has intervened."[107] He discusses the concept yet again in different terms: "Surprise whether mild or sharp, local or plot-length, actional or cross-level, is an index of false understanding and a belated call for realignment."[108] Sternberg sees

surprise resulting from that which was "unperceived" or "mistaken."[109] Anderson speaks of the "unexpected,"[110] and Alster sees it as based on "false impressions,"[111] while Prince states that surprise is the "emotion obtained when

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[106] Sternberg, "Cognitivist Fortunes (I)," 327.

[107] Sternberg, "Telling in Time (III)," 130.

[108] Sternberg, "Cognitivist Fortunes (I)," 327-28.

[109] Ibid.: 382.

[110] Anderson, *Narrative Web*, 143.

expectations about what is going to happen are violated by what in fact does happen."[112] Cognitive psychology employs similar vocabulary: "unanticipated . . . desirable events,"[113] "unexpectedness,"[114] and "expectancy-disconfirmation."[115] When experiments involved literary texts, the descriptors utilized by experimentors are similar: "unexpected events"[116] and "schema discrepancy."[117]

In Matthew, then, a sequential reader expects Matt 1:21 to be fulfilled in the course of the narrative. As the rejection of Jesus builds in the narrative, suspense heightens, and the final command to go to the Gentiles comes as a surprise since it moves counter to the initial expectation created by the text.

[111] Baruch Alster, "Narrative Surprise in Biblical Parallels," *BibInt* 14, no. 5 (2006): 456.
[112] Gerald Prince, *A Dictionary of Narratology* (Lincoln, Nebr.: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 96. All of these various descriptions are rooted in cognitive psychology.

[113] Ortony, Clore, and Collins. *Structure of Emotions*, 125.

[114] Wulf-Uwe Meyer, Rainer Reisenzein, and Achim Schützwohl, "Toward a Process Analysis of Emotions: The Case of Surprise," *Motiv Emotion* 21, no. 3 (1997): 255; I. J. Roseman, A. A. Antoniou, and P. E. Jose, "Appraisal Determinants of Emotions: Constructing a More Accurate and Comprehensive Theory," *Cognition Emotion* 10, no. 3 (1996): 260.

[115] Joachim Stiensmeier-Pelster, Alice Martini, and Rainer Reisenzein, "The Role of Surprise in the Attribution Process," *Cognition Emotion* 9, no. 1 (1995): 6.

[116] R. Maguire, F. Costello, and M. T. Keane, "A Cognitive Model of Surprise Judgments," in *Proceedings of the 28th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society* (Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum, 2006), 536.

[117] R. Maguire and M. T. Keane, "Surprise: Disconfirmed Expectations or Representation-Fit?" in *Proceedings of the 28th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society* (Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum, 2006), 1770.

In addition to acknowledging chronological gapping and unexpectedness, most surprise theorists also view surprise as a means of narrative retrospection or reordering, what Sternberg calls repatterning. "The text as a whole must hang together and make sense to the reader, so that he is able to construct a coherent macrostructure in which each text unit has its place and is meaningfully related to the other sections of the text."[118] Freedman places this type of repatterning in the context of narrative surprise: "[I]t is an important formal feature of any good plot to move us to anticipate certain things; to mislead us into expecting the wrong things; but to induce us to believe, upon looking back, that the way things actually turned out, however surprising, was nevertheless adequately prepared for and is the only truly appropriate outcome."[119] Rabinowitz comments similarly, "[B]y the general rule of conclusive endings, readers are invited to revise their understanding of the beginning of the text so that the ending, which at first seems a surprise, turns out to in fact be prefigured."[120] Phelan is concerned with the ethics and aesthetics of surprise: "[T]he author includes materials in the progression that can retrospectively be understood as preparing the audience for the surprise; or to put this point another way, the audience can recognize that the necessary reconfiguration caused by the surprise actually fits well with the

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[118] Walter Kintsch, "Learning from Text, Levels of Comprehension, or: Why Anyone Would Read a Story Anyway," *Poetics* 9, no. 1-3 (1980): 89.

[119] Norman Friedman, *Form and Meaning in Fiction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1975), 69.

[120] Peter J. Rabinowitz, "Reading Beginnings and Endings," in *Narrative Dynamics: Essays on Time, Plot, Closure, and Frames* (ed. Brian Richardson; Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2002), 305.

beginning and the middle of the progression. . ..”[121] This is particularly true of

Matthew where the surprise comes at the very end, for end narrative theory itself

indicates that from the end there is a retrospective patterning of the text.[122]

The prophecy of Matt 1:21 that Jesus will come to save his people is seen,

from the beginning, as referring to the Jewish people, an idea repeatedly

reaffirmed in many of the prophetic passages of Isaiah that are used by Matthew

to reinforce this idea (Matt 1:23-24; 4:14-16; 8:17; 12:18-21; 20:28; 21:33-45;

26:28). Yet, the same passages can be read retrospectively as universal in intent

and are, from the end, reinterpreted. Thus, the prophecy of Matt 1:21 has two

effects; it builds suspense since it is the initiating event of the Gospel, but at the

same time, it is reread from the end as universally including the Gentiles. The

texts of Isaiah are very useful in the rereading of the Gospel, improving its

aesthetic and ethical qualities.[123]

<u>Curiosity</u>

Curiosity is the final emotion to be discussed. Since surprise causes a

retrospective rereading, one must inevitably ask what motivates such a rereading.

Sternberg proposes that, “knowing that we do not know, we go forward with our

mind on the gapped antecedents, trying to infer (bridge, compose) them in

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[121] Phelan, *Experiencing Fiction*, 95.

[122] Deborah H. Roberts, “Beginnings and Endings,” in *A Companion to Greek Tragedy* (ed. Justina Gregory; Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006), 136-37; Torgovnick, *Closure*, 15.

[123] All of this goes back to Aristotle’s idea that even that which happens contrary to expectation, even if by chance, is most astonishing when perceived as designed (*Poet*. 1431b 38).

retrospect."[124] Sternberg, here, is not interested so much in the emotion as he is in

building a very specific literary definition distinct from the recognition of

surprise. Yet he does concede that chronological play is not the exclusive cause

of curiosity in narrative. "*Curiosity*, with its dynamics of retrospection, then

adheres to any question mark that lingers and pulls our mind backward while we

go forward. The lingering retrospective puzzlement may concern a verbal

ambiguity yet unsettled, a musical dissonance, an opaque cinematic montage, a

breach of thematic or stylistic norm, *or* a felt gap in event order, among the

rest."[125] Or again,

> The withholding of information about the past, especially if
> it deforms the plot line – the effect appearing before or without
> the cause – at once stimulates the reader's *curiosity* about the
> action, the agents, their life and relations below the surface,
> the world they inhabit. To make sense of them, he will try to
> resolve the gaps; failing that, he will look forward to new
> disclosures, so that a gradual release of clues will keep him
> happily busy on the horns of ambiguity.[126]

For Sternberg, curiosity is "deliberately and operationally singled . . . out in

having it label the process of retrospective gap-filling."[127] All of this builds on

his earlier comments:

> Our distinction between the two clashing components of
> suspense, hope and fear, relates to two possible expectations
> about the future resolution of a conflict; that between curiosity
> and suspense relates to the chronological direction of the
> missing and desired information (narrative past versus future);

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[124] Sternberg, "Cognitivist Fortunes (I)," 327.

[125] Ibid., 381-82.

[126]Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 259.

[127] Sternberg, "Cognitivist Fortunes (II)," 619.

while that between curiosity and surprise relates to the
perceptibility of the process of gapping and gap-filling. With
"curiosity gaps," the reader is at once alerted to the deformation
of antecedents; with "surprise gaps," in contrast, his awareness
of the gap's very existence and/or relevance and/or true
significance is retrospective, being delayed to the point of
closure rather than heightened at the point of opening.[128]

Similarly, Baroni labels the motivating emotion behind the retrospective rereading

as curiosity. Such curiosity asks the question, "Comment en est-on arrivé là?"

(How did we get here?) Such questions are "par conséquent obtenues . . . par un

obscurcissement stratégique dans la textualisation des événements . . ."[129]

(therefore obtained . . . by a strategic obscuring in the recording of events).

Cognitive studies stress that a gap in information, divergence, or misdirection will

lead readers to fill that gap out of curiosity, to understand that which has been

missed, to reconstruct the text in search of the elusive information. Cognitive

psychology indicates that curiosity is a "desire to know;"[130] it has also been based

on incongruity theory, violated expectation, resulting "from the salience of

specific missing information or understanding."[131] In order for a narrative to be

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[128] Sternberg, *Expositional Modes*, 244.

[129] Raphaël Baroni, *La tension narrative : suspense, curiosité et surprise* (Paris : Seuil, 2007), 124.

[130] Frederick F. Schmitt and Reza Lahroodi, "The Epistemic Value of Curiosity," *Educ Theory* 58, no. 2 (2008): 125-48.

[131] George Loewenstein, "The Psychology of Curiosity: A Review and Reinterpretation," *Psychol Bull* 116, no. 1 (1994): 83.

postdictable,[132] readers need to look back and to solve the puzzle of the text.[133]

This need to understand the text retrospectively is motivated by curiosity.

Unreliable Narrator

It will be argued in the following chapters that Matt 1:21 should be

reinterpreted in light of the Gospel's end in order to acknowledge a universal

significance and openness to Gentiles not at first perceived by a sequential reader.

This type of misdirection in a text is common in narrative irony, as will be

discussed in the first chapter of this study. The combination of suspense, surprise,

and curiosity will lead readers to question the reliability of the narrator. From a

literary critical perspective, when the narrative presents something and the story

stands in opposition, an unreliable narrator can be suggested on the basis of

Chatman's definition. "In 'unreliable narration' the narrator's account is at odds

with the implied reader's surmises about the story's real intentions. The story

undermines the discourse."[134] Thus the rejection of Jesus by the leaders of the

people, the crowds, and the disciples ultimately undermines Matt 1:21-23 as

originally interpreted by a sequential reader, which is emphasized by a surprise

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[132] This term was coined by Kintsch who elaborates the idea: "After the fact, once a reader has absorbed the unpredictable, he must be able to look back and explain to himself how it all fits together." Kintsch, "Learning From Text," 89-90. The term has been adopted widely in literary critical studies. See, for example, Phelan, *Experiencing Fiction*, 95 and Rabinowitz, "Reading Beginnings," 305.

[133] Jordan Litman, "Curiosity and the Pleasures of Learning: Wanting and Liking New Information," *Cognition Emotion* 19 (2005): 793-814.

[134] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 233.

ending.[135] This could also be viewed as a contradiction between that which was

to happen and that which did happen, otherwise called a *textual inconsistency*.[136]

Phelan is concerned with "[u]nderreporting, which Genette calls paralipsis,

[which] occurs when the narrator tells us less than he or she knows."[137] The

implied author knows how the Gospel will end, yet the narrator interprets Matt

1:21 in 1:22-23, giving no hint at this point that the "they" may be more inclusive

than the Jewish people, which leads to an *underreading*.[138] In the subsequent

rereading, however, Matt 1:21-23 is opened up, and the narrator's comment

regarding the angel's words (Matt 1:22-23) is seen as underreported; it is more

than the Jewish people who will obtain salvation, and a more inclusive reading

results. Phelan's underreporting stems from a "distance between the norms and

knowledge of the narrator and those of the whole text, as shaped by the implied

author and meant to be recognized by the authorial audience or implied reader."[139]

D'hoker comments:

> In his interesting study *Living to Tell about It*, Phelan manages
> to combine Booth's emphasis on authorial intention and
> Nünning's emphasis on the reader in a single approach arguing
> that the interpretation of unreliability (as a form of "rhetorical

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[135] This surprise in the narrative is recognized by Powell. See Powell, *Eastern Star*, 128.

[136] Per Krogh Hansen, "Reconsidering the Unreliable Narrator," *Semiotica* 165 (2007): 235.

[137] James Phelan, *Living to Tell About It: A Rhetoric and Ethics of Character Narration* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2005), 52.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Elke D'hoker, "The Unreliable Ripley: Irony and Satire in Robert McLiam Wilson's Ripley Bogle," *Mod Fiction Stud* 53, no. 3 (2007): 465.

reading") involves a "feedback loop among implied author's agency, textual phenomena and reader response." Phelan also draws on Peter J. Rabinowitz's concept of authorial audience as "the hypothetical ideal audience" for which the author designs the work, to suggest that narrative unreliability "require[s] the authorial audience to infer an understanding of the narration different from that offered by the narrator." Alternatively, one could harmonize both approaches by defining unreliability as the distance between the norms and knowledge of the narrator and those of the whole text, as shaped by the implied author and meant to be recognized by the authorial audience or implied reader.[140]

The narrator of Matthew is unreliable according to various definitions. Since much recent research has developed the idea of the unreliable narrator in literature, the general assumption of a reliable narrator in Matthew can be questioned. Rereading of the Gospel that leads to a new understanding of Matt 1:21 emphasizes the narrative's initial deception of the sequential reader, which is significant when defining an unreliable narrator. This type of deception takes place in various prophetic quotations and allusions to Isaiah (Matt 1:23-24; 4:14-16; 8:17; 12:18-21; 20:28; 21:33-45; 26:28).

Implied Reader as Sequential Reader

As indicated above, there is some debate regarding how the implied reader is to interpret a text or how the text is to move the implied reader. There is a tension between interpretation and emotional affect. In order to feel the text, especially the emotions under examination here (suspense, curiosity and surprise), a sequential reading of the text is necessary. This type of reading is an attempt to set aside the ending so that the text can move the reader in its own chronological

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[140] Ibid.

presentation until the end is reached. Use of the term *sequential reader*

differentiates the beginning of the text from its end and emphasizes the place of

the implied reader in that continuum. The sequential reader is open to the

manipulation of the text's gradual revelations, specifically where these revelations

come into tensions with material disclosed earlier in the narrative.

> The most important aspect of the interaction between reader and
> text is the temporal, sequential dimension. This represents an
> important modification of formalist literary theory which operated
> with a static spatial model that had been brought about by its
> objectification of the text. . .The sequential nature of reading . . .
> does require one to take seriously the ordering of material in a text
> if the text is to be understood properly. The biblical literary critic
> should therefore be sensitive to the rhetorical models and patterning
> in the text, and to the effects these have on the way readers actualize
> the story when interpreting biblical narratives such as the Gospels.[141]

This type of reading can be utilized to better understand suspense and

surprise within the Gospel. Yet the implied reader, upon completion of the

narrative, can be encouraged by a text to look back retrospectively in order to

reinterpret earlier material.

> It cannot be denied that the sequential acts by a reader include a
> final interpretive synthesis of the reading . . . and this is not to be
> rejected by a temporally based model of interpretation; such a
> model simply takes the final synthesis as part of the total response,
> and grants significance to the series of interpretations and effects
> which lead up to this synthesis.[142]

The sequential reading, which ultimately takes the end into account for

interpretation, is directly related to but slightly distinctive from a primacy reading

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[141] Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 43.

[142] Ibid., 43-44.

which will now be discussed.[143]

Primacy & Recency Effects

In order for a postdictable surprise to be effective, the sequential reader must remain unaware of the given information that retrospectively becomes "obvious." This is accomplished through the use of irony but is also made possible by a literary phenomenon called the *primacy effect*. Menakhem Perry has popularized the idea in relation to literature in his discussion of literary dynamics.[144] He postulates, regarding a literary text, based on research in psychology,[145] that

> [t]he [real] reader retains the meanings constructed initially to whatever extent possible, but the text causes them to be modified or replaced. The literary text, then, exploits the "powers" of the primacy effect, but ordinarily it sets up a mechanism to oppose them, giving rise, rather, to a recency effect. Its terminal point, the point at which all the words which have hitherto remained "open" are sealed is the decisive one.[146]

> From the early stage of reading, predictions may also arise as to the specific content of the forthcoming stages. Since we are

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[143] The sequential reader is also distinct from a first-time reader since it allows for textual rereading. A first-time reader undertaking rereading seems contradictory, although a first-time reader is very similar to a sequential reader in trying to approach the text in its chronological order, leaving the end aside until the narrative's conclusion. See Powell, *Eastern Star*, 78-79 and Edwards, *Matthew's Narrative Portrait*, 9.

[144] Menakhem Perry, "Literary Dynamics: How the Order of a Text Creates its Meanings [With an Analysis of Faulkner's 'A Rose for Emily']," *Poetics Today* 1, no. 1/2 (1979): 35-361.

[145] Abraham Luchins, "Primacy-Recency in Impression Formation," in *The Order of Presentation in Persuasion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 33-61.

[146] Perry, "Literary Dynamics," 57.

able to identify a frame and grasp a network of internal
relationships even before all the relevant material is in, we are
able to predict, at the beginning of our reading, with varying
degrees of probability and specificity, particular elements due
to appear in the sequel in order to complete the frame. When
the reader expects the appearance of specific material at a
given point in a text, there is, at first, a tendency to assimilate
what has actually appeared to what has been expected, to make
it conform as much as possible to the expectation. When this
proves impossible, and the expectation is not fulfilled, there
is a sharp confrontation between the expected and the actual,
which may sometimes lead to re-examining the particular
place in the text where this expectation arose, and correcting
it in retrospect. Unfulfilled expectations are essential for the
production of new information.[147]

At the beginning of a text, readers are constructing a system of hypotheses or

frames that can "create maximal relevancy among the various data of the text."[148]

Perry stresses, however, that the primacy effect never works on its own but must

be continually reinforced.[149] His contribution explains the nature of a postdictable

surprise that can be reread retrospectively into an early point in the text and also

the reason for which it is not initially perceived. He makes this explicit:

A verbal item then, is not comprehended in itself, but only
within the dynamics of a linking hypothesis. This fact is
most dramatically illustrated in the cases where word-forms
having one sense within a particular hypothesis receive, when
transferred at a later point in the reading-process into another
hypothesis, another sense, unrelated to the first: i.e., these
word-forms operate as homonyms.[150]

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[147] Ibid.: 52.

[148] Ibid.: 43.

[149] Ibid.: 57.

[150] Ibid.: 44.

One "consequence of this confrontation of frames is that, sometimes, only in the process of being discarded does the full range of the meanings of the first frame come to light."[151] "Ordinarily the substitution of frames does not occur instantaneously. The difficulties for the old frames gradually increases, a new frame emerges as a possibility, and by degrees – when the 'revolution' is inevitable – ends up displacing the old one. A part of the text is therefore read simultaneously 'between two frames.'"[152] This literary effect is embraced by many other literary theorists who are interested in the rhetorical effect of beginnings,[153] and it has been tested in relation to literature very recently.[154]

It is this effect that allows the initial interpretation of the prophecy of Matt 1:21 (that Jesus' people are the Jews) to retain its force until the end of the Gospel. In Matthew, this interpretation is continually reinforced by the quotation of and allusions to Isaiah (Matt 1:23-24; 4:14-16; 8:17; 12:18-21; 20:28; 21:33-45; 26:28) and also by Matt 2:6 and 15:24. It is only once the sequential reader has encountered the narrative rejection of Jesus in relation to his discourses and been exposed to Peter's final denial of Jesus at the end of the Gospel that this

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[151] Ibid.: 60.

[152] Ibid.: 61.

[153] Manfred Jahn, "Frames, Preferences, and the Reading of Third-Person Narratives: Towards a Cognitive Narratology," *Poetics Today* 18, no. 4 (1997): 456-65; Mayordomo-Marín, *Den Anfang hören*, 205; Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (ed. Terence Hawkes; London: Routledge, 2002), 121; Sternberg, *Expositional Modes*, 93-99.

[154] Howard Sklar, "Narrative Structuring of Sympathetic Response: Theoretical and Empirical Approaches to Toni Cade Bambara's 'The Hammer Man'," *Poetics Today* 30, no. 3 (2009): 561-607.

interpretation cannot be sustained, and it is ultimately impossible to assimilate

Matt 28:19 without reinterpretation of Matt 1:21. The recency effect, which

causes an unperceived reading to open up retrospectively, is very similar to

literary interpretations of irony.[155]

Irony vs. Ambiguity

Sufficient overlap exists between the terms *irony* and *ambiguity* that

distinguishing them in particular cases is difficult. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan has

provided a helpfully precise definition of ambiguity.

> While "ambiguity" fulfills all the "conditions" listed below,
> other related phenomena fulfill only some.
> 1. An ambiguous expression has two or more distinct meanings
>   operating in the given context.
> 2. The meanings of an ambiguous expression are not reducible
>   to each other or to some common denominator, nor are they
>   identifiable with each other or subsumable in a larger unit of
>   meaning which they conjoin to create or in which they are
>   reconciled and integrated.
> 3. The meanings of an ambiguous expression are mutually
>   exclusive in the context, in the sense that if one applies, the
>   other cannot apply, and vice versa.
> 4. Hence, an ambiguous expression calls for choice between its
>   alternative meanings, but at the same time provides no ground
>   for making the choice. The mutually exclusive meanings therefore
>   coexist in spite of the either/or conflict between them. The first
>   defining property can be used to distinguish between ambiguity
>   and three cognate or seemingly cognate phenomena: the
>   subjectivity of reading, ambivalence, and vagueness.[156]

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[155] Tom Thatcher, "The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel," *JSNT* 76 (1999): 57-60.

[156] Shlomith Rimmon, *The Concept of Ambiguity: The Example of James* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 49. While Rimmon presents a very specific definition of ambiguity, which helps to isolate the concept from irony, in more general use, it refers to multifarious meanings in a text, and it is the more general use of the term that will be employed in this present study.

It will become clear in later discussion regarding a sequential reading of the Gospel of Matthew that many of the relevant texts are not ambiguous but rather ironic; they are read one way at the outset and then subsequently reinterpreted.

> Real disjunction occurs in the case of irony. Here there are two opposed narratives – the one explicitly told and the other surreptitiously implied. They cannot both be true, but the reader usually has no doubt which of them is. Narrative irony consists not only of two opposed narratives, but also of two addressees (sometimes copresent in the same person), and the disjunction is not between two equally valid narratives, as it is in ambiguity, but between the invalid story of the narrator or character and the valid version established "behind his back" by the "implied author" and the reader. The moment we can assert that a narrator is unreliable and that our reading should proceed in direct opposition to his account, we have abandoned the realm of "ambiguity" for that of "irony".[157]

This definition of irony denotes two meanings, one that is valid and the other that is not, making it particularly valuable for study of Matthew's Gospel. Matthew's use of Isaiah, initially read in reference to Israel (with increased suspense as the narrative progresses), is ultimately, and in retrospect, read ironically, for the implied narrator has deceived the sequential reader and then asks that reader to go back to the beginning in order to seek a new understanding. This evaluation and understanding of Matthew through the lens of irony not only contributes to suspense, surprise, and curiosity, which is the main purpose behind its employ, but also challenges the previously discussed idea of a reliable narrator.

While useful, the difficulty with ironic interpretation is that, "since by its very nature irony tends toward subtlety, it cannot always be recognized and

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[157] Ibid., 15.

interpreted with precision."[158] As a result, based on the works of Booth, Powell

summarizes means of detection (ironic guidance):

> The reader (1) rejects the literal meaning of the words in response
> to internal or external clues, (2) tries out alternative explanations,
> (3) evaluates these in terms of what he or she believes about the
> implied author, and (4) makes a decision based on the assumed
> intentions of the author. In order to make sense of the text, the
> reader must not only consider the implied author's intentions but,
> ultimately, adopt them.[159]

These criteria will be used to evaluate Matthew's employment of quotations and

allusions to Isaiah in terms of irony. Chapter One of the current inquiry will

develop this idea in relation to ancient rhetoric.

Recognition of Allusions in the Text

Since many Matthean passages discussed in subsequent chapters of this work

contain references to Isaiah, it is important to demonstrate Matthew's dependence

upon this source in debatable instances. Richard Hays, working within the vast

field of intertextual studies, has developed and outlined some useful criteria for

the identification of source texts.[160] Subsequently, others have developed and

modified his criteria, with particular focus on the Gospel of Matthew. (Such

contributions and affirmations are mentioned in the notes.)

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[158] Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 31.

[159] Ibid.

[160] G. Aichele and G. A. Phillips, "Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995): 7-18.

1) Availability – Did the authors have access to the text in question?[161]

2) Volume – Degree of explicit repetition of words or syntactical patterns: "How distinct or prominent is the precursor text within Scripture,[162] and how much rhetorical stress does the echo receive. . . ?"[163] This also depends on the distinctiveness, prominence, or popular familiarity[164] of the precursor text.[165]

3) Recurrence – How often is the same passage cited or alluded to elsewhere, increasing credence of additional echoes?[166] Is there a clustering of citations from one special scriptural context? (Isaiah 40-55 is given as an example.)[167]

4) Thematic Coherence – "How well does the alleged echo fit into the line of argument that . . . is developing . . . This test begins to move beyond

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[161] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of the Scriptures in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), 29.

[162] Anne O'Leary adds *hook words* to this category. Anne M. O'Leary, *Matthew's Judaization of Mark: Examined in the Context of the Use of Sources in Graeco-Roman Antiquity* (LNTS 323: London: T&T Clark, 2006).

[163] Hays, *Echoes of the Scriptures*, 30.

[164] This is also mentioned and supported by Luz. Ulrich Luz, "Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew," *HTR* 97, no. 2 (2004): 131.

[165] 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* (ed. Richard B. Hays; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 36.

[166] Hays, *Echoes of the Scriptures*, 30.

[167] Hays, "Who Has Believed," 38.

simple identification of echoes to the problem of how to interpret them."[168]

5) Historical Plausibility – Could the author have "intended the alleged meaning effect? Could his readers have understood it? . . . This test, historical in character, necessarily requires hypothetical constructs of what might have been intended and grasped by particular first-century figures."[169] The aim of this criterion is to prevent anachronistic readings, but it is not a constraint on authorial intention.[170] Here, the two sides of the criterion work against each other, on the one hand allowing for authorial creativity in creating new meaning but, on the other, locking the reader within a historical time frame. Essentially, it asks: has the author made the echo in the argument clear enough to allow for new readings?

6) History of Interpretation – Have other real readers found the same echoes? It must be noted, however, that all readers have individual biases and social historical blinders; thus, this criterion should not limit the finding of echoes outside of these various interpretations.[171]

7) Satisfaction – This is the most important and most elusive criterion in locating an echo. "Does the proposed intertextual reading illuminate the surrounding discourse and make some larger sense of [the] . . . argument

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[168] Hays, *Echoes of the Scriptures*, 30.

[169] Ibid.

[170] Hays, "Who Has Believed," 41.

[171] Ibid., 43.

as a whole . . . and interactive act of discernment about the epistle as a

whole, or at least the meaning of the local context within the epistle, in

light of the proposed intertextual links?"[172]

Two articles do criticize Hays substantially for his use of the term *intertextuality*

and the term's linguistic relation to Julia Kristeva's works.

> It would be a mistake, however, to limit intertextuality to
> the domain of literary relationships. For as the following
> essays illustrate, intertextuality is very much concerned
> with a range of social practices and cultural expressions,
> including but not limited to literary texts. In the language
> of the anthropologist Clifford Geertz, a "thicker" notion
> of intertextuality circulates in this volume. This is required,
> we feel, in order to challenge the tendency especially
> among certain biblical scholars to employ intertextuality
> (along with other theoretical concepts) as a restrictive tool
> for nailing down authorial intent and literary influence (for
> example, see Buchanan, Draisma and Hays). [173]

> . . . Hays does not depart from traditional source-influence
> theory. He remains committed to the historical critical method,
> to the centrality of the author, and to an interpretation or
> meaning that finds its boundaries within the written text and
> its historical context. In Hays's approach, language remains
> subservient to human agency, readers as meaning procedures
> are by no means the focus of endless cultural codes, and
> criticism is still an ancillary activity separate from literature.
> What is more, Hays even admits that his intertextual approach
> focuses on Paul's citations of and allusions to specific written
> texts.[174]

Despite Hays' rather bland use of a philosophically rich semiotic term, however,

his method is very applicable for source-critical analysis. Since Isaiah was well

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[172] Ibid., 44.

[173] Aichele and Phillips, "Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis," 7.

[174] Thomas R. Hatina, "Intertextuality and Historical Criticism in New Testament Studies: Is There a Relationship?" *BibInt* 7 (1999): 36.

known by the time Matthew was composed, availability is not a question. Other criteria will be discussed in relation to Matthew as applicable.

THESIS OUTLINE

To demonstrate the ways in which Matthew is constructed in order to deceive the sequential reader in interpreting the prophecy of Matt 1:21 and to explore the resulting development of suspense, surprise, and curiosity, the present study employs the following trajectory.

Chapter One outlines the idea of irony in ancient rhetoric emphasizing that discourse could maintain distinctive meanings with the plain sense of a word, phrase, speech, etc. being undermined by its larger context. This foundation shows the possibility that at the time of its conception, Matt 1:21 could have had one meaning in its initial context and another when read retrospectively.

Chapter Two indicates the ways in which ancient dreams and prophecy were broadly open to ambiguity and various interpretations. It was conventional for Greek writings to record and use dreams and prophetic ambiguity to surprise readers and characters in a literary context. This examination places the dream within a genre that promoted various readings and typical responses. This reinforces the ironic reading of Matt 1:21.

Chapter Three deals with the primacy effect and its implication for interpreting Matt 1:21 relative to the quotations of and allusions to Isaiah. Matthew's quotations of Isaiah are currently interpreted from the beginning or ending of the Gospel. All of the fulfillment quotations and allusions from Isaiah, given a primacy effect, make reference to the Jews, but alternatively, given a

recency reading, are universal. This chapter indicates that the sequential reader

holds the interpretation resulting from the primacy effect up to the end, at which

point a recency reading opens up each reference to a new meaning. The primacy

reading enables a surprise ending and reinforces material contained in the next

chapter on suspense. If one anticipates a universalism from the outset, the

rejection of Jesus by his own people imputes less suspense.

The final chapter deals with a suspense reading of the Gospel of Matthew

demonstrating the ways in which suspense builds as the leaders of the people, the

crowds, and eventually the disciples reject Jesus and his message. The ethical

demands of his teachings, particularly his parables, are contrasted in the narrative

with the actions of the major characters. The leaders drop from Jesus' salvific

attempt early, while the crowds and disciples follow at the end of the Gospel.

One hopes for the fulfilment of Matt 1:21 and the salvation of the Jews up until

the end, but there is doubt after the denial of Peter. The rejection of Jesus causes

the sequential reader to move back and reread Matt 1:21 since Matthew, using the

same language in 28:20, calls readers back to this very section of the Gospel. The

surprise ending now opens the universal aspects of the various texts from Isaiah,

and the Gospel now has an open ending; there is an ongoing mission to the

Gentiles which is imperative for the church if Matt 1:21 is to be fulfilled. Thus,

suspense leads to surprise and ultimately to retrospective curiosity.

CHAPTER 1

Much of the work on the dream narratives in Matt 1:18-23 has focused on immediate contextual concerns and the rhetorical structure of the beginning of the Gospel. Yet rhetorical figures can stretch from the beginning of a work all the way to its completion. This chapter expands rhetorical interests in Matthew by showing that figured speech can run the length of a work and by demonstrating the way in which Matt 1:21 can mean one thing at the outset of the Gospel but another at its end.[175] *Figured speech* is a rhetorical category discussed by Cicero, Quintilian, Demetrius, and Pseudo-Dionysius; the most comparable terminology in English literary theory would be *verbal irony*, which comes closest in its definition regarding the concept and language.[176] A brief examination of modern and ancient critics will indicate the similarities between these categories.

Various authors working with the Gospels have examined the concept of irony extensively. The focus of these authors is on dramatic irony, and a brief examination of their work is in order at this point. *Irony in Mark's Gospel* introduces the concept of irony in a Gospel context and provides a standard definition based on the work of D. C. Muecke.[177] To quote Muecke,

1. First, irony requires that there be two or more levels of discourse,

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[175] This chapter is not a survey of all the different categories that fall under the term *irony* in the ancient world. Rather, it is an exploration of figured speech and its relation to verbal irony. For complications related to irony in the ancient world and the vocabulary involved, see René Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 212-15.

[176] See note 198.

[177] D. C. Muecke, *The Compass of Irony* (London: Methuen, 1969), 19-20.

one available to the victim of the irony, the other to the observer.
2. Irony requires that there be dissonance or tension between the two levels.
3. Finally, irony requires that someone – either the victim or the ironist himself – be innocent of the tension. In this way, the observer is invited to respond on more than a rational basis. The work of irony is ultimately a work of subtlety and shock.[178]

The main emphasis in the discussion that follows these criteria is dramatic irony and the messianic secret as emphasised by Fowler.[179] The reader knows Jesus is the Son of God and the Christ, but many characters in Mark do not.[180]

Fowler, dealing with irony in Mark, defines different types. "Irony may often be described as the experience of seeing and seeing through an incongruity, whereas paradox heightens the incongruity to the point of bold contradiction."[181] Dramatic irony occurs when "the reader perceives an incongruity between what is happening in the story and what is happening in the reader's understanding of the story, thanks to the reader's experience of the narrator's discourse."[182] He indicates that in situations of verbal irony (irony in the speech of characters), the two levels are revealed to the reader almost instantly where dramatic irony can unfold over the process of the entire narrative; it is a continued *dialectical*

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[178] Jerry Camery-Hoggatt, *Irony in Mark's Gospel: Text and Subtext* (SNTSMS 72; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 61.

[179] Robert M. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis, Fortress, 1991), 163-75.

[180] Camery-Hoggatt, *Irony in Mark's Gospel*, 93, 98.

[181] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 164.

[182] Ibid.

incongruity.[183]   Fowler concludes his definitions of irony with the assertion,

"Dramatic irony (and sometimes verbal irony, too) makes the most of its inherent

uncertainty by encouraging us to continue to ask the question, 'Is it really ironic?'

even as we proceed to answer the question, 'Assuming it is ironic, just how far

and in what direction(s) does the ironic tension lead us?'"[184]   After examining a

number of ironic passages, Fowler emphasizes the importance of the messianic

secret[185] and dramatic irony.

     The Lukan Voice: *Confusion and Irony in the Gospel of Luke* dedicates

one chapter to irony.[186]   Dawsey provides no specific definition, but he is

concerned with reversal[187] and incongruity.[188]   He sees irony in the

> incongruity between Jesus' words that God has hidden the
> kingdom from the wise and understanding and revealed it to
> babes, and the words of the prologue written in high Attic
> style to a "most excellent Theophilus" so that he might
> "know the truth concerning the things of which [he] has been
> informed" . . . On the one hand, the pattern of reversal stands
> at the center of Jesus' view. Society is being turned upside
> down, and only the very simple recognize that the awaited
> time of salvation has come. But on the other hand stands the
> dedication of the gospel, perhaps to a rich patron or even a

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[183] Ibid., 165.

[184] Ibid.

[185] Ibid., 175.

[186] James M. Dawsey, *The Lukan Voice: Confusion and Irony in the Gospel of Luke* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer, 1986).

[187] Ibid., 145.

[188] Ibid., 147.

provincial governor . . . written in a highly cultured style appropriate for an educated audience.[189]

Dawsey views Jesus' speech as filled with vulgarisms, foreign words, and Semitic elements. Jesus' voice is thus synchronized with his message.[190] Dawsey emphasizes an incongruity between the narrative's optimism regarding the extent of salvation and Jesus' pessimism, separating the voice of the narrator from that of Jesus.[191] Irony exists in the type of language and its placement. Its impact is as much on the reader as on the character addressed in the text. Expectations are thwarted. The world is turned upside down.

Alan Culpepper, in his study of the literary design of John's Gospel, includes a small section on irony.[192] He follows the definitions of Muecke as presented above but compliments this with the work of Wayne Booth:[193]

> Both Muecke and Booth describe irony as a "two-story" phenomenon. Below is the appearance or apparent meaning. Above there is a meaning, perspective, or belief that is contradictory, incongruous, or incompatible with the lower level. The victim, where there is one, is unaware of the higher level or blindly hostile to it. The reader is invited by the irony to leap to the higher level and share the perspective of the implied author. With this invitation "to come and live at a higher and firmer location" there is also "a strong sense of rejecting a whole structure of meanings, a kind of world that the author himself obviously rejects. In order to make the leap from one level to the other, the reader must take four steps: (1) reject the literal

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[189] Ibid.

[190] Ibid., 148.

[191] Ibid., 150.

[192] R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 165-80.

[193] Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*.

meaning, (2) recognize alternative interpretations, (3) decide about the author's knowledge or beliefs, and (4) choose a new meaning which is in harmony with the (implied) author's position.[194]

He further follows Muecke's definitions of verbal irony (the ironist speaking ironically), situational irony (irony arising from disparity or incongruity: incongruity between expectations and events), dramatic irony (an observer's knowledge of what a reader has to find out), and irony of dilemma (a character's dilemmas and paradoxes).[195] While much of Culpepper's discussion addresses the dramatic irony surrounding the Jewish rejection of their expected messiah,[196] he discusseses (following Booth) the relationship between the reader and irony:

> It is possible, even probable one suspects, that many readers
> will not see or share in many of the gospel's ironies. In a sense,
> therefore, they become further victims through their blindness
> or unawareness of higher planes. The discovery of new ironies
> to which one had previously been unaware does not engender
> in the reader a feeling of having been victimized, however,
> but a greater appreciation for the implied author and his work
> and a stronger sense of communion with him. The work
> therefore gains from repeated readings, since it depends more
> on dramatic irony than mystery for its effect.[197]

This brief summary of gospel studies that explore irony shows a lack of focus on verbal irony, which is closest to the usual sense of the term irony in antiquity, and for which Connop Thirlwall has provided an excellent definition:

> The most familiar species of irony may be described as a
> figure which enables the speaker to convey his meaning with
> greater force by means of a contrast between his thought and

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[194] Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 167.

[195] Ibid., 168.

[196] Ibid., 169.

[197] Ibid., 179.

his expression, or to speak more accurately, between the
thought which he evidently designs to express, and that which
his words properly signify. The cases in which this figure may
be advantageously employed are so various to include some
directly opposite in their nature.[198]

Since this type of irony is deceptive, a type of game requiring a solution,

William Empson notes,

We call it ambiguous, I think, when we recognise that there could
be a puzzle as to what the author meant, in that alternative views
might be taken without sheer misreading. If a pun is quite obvious
it would not ordinarily be called ambiguous, because there is no
room for puzzling. But if an irony is calculated to deceive a section
of its readers I think it would ordinarily be called ambiguous, even
by a critic who has never doubted its meaning.[199]

Although the above relates primarily to modern ironic theory, the concept

of irony and its use find original roots and definition in Greek and Roman

antiquity.[200] There has been much discussion surrounding Socratic irony,[201] but

the application of its meaning with regard to rhetoric begins with the pseudo-

Aristotelian *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*: 21 εἰρωνεία δ'ἐστί λέγειν τι

προσποιούμενον μὴ λέγειν ἤ τοῖς ἐναντίοις ὀνόμασι τὰ πρὰγατα προσαγορεύειν.

"Irony is saying something while pretending not to say it, or calling things by the

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[198] Connop Thirlwall, "On the Irony of Sophocles," *PhilMus* 2, no. 6 (1833): 483.

[199] William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (New York: New Directions, 1966), x.

[200] J. Opsomer, "The Rhetoric and Pragmatics of Irony/Eironeia," *Orbis* 40 (1998): 1-34.

[201] For a summary of recent discussion, see Melissa Lane, "The Evolution of EIRONEIA in Classical Greek Texts: Why Socratic EIRONEIA is Not Socratic Irony," *OSAP* 31 (2006): 49-83.

opposite of their real names" (Aristotle, *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* 1434a 17-19

[Rackam, LCL]). Although the idea of saying the opposite of what is said

becomes a commonplace definition for irony, it is not so rigorously defined by

Cicero and Quintilian. The English word *irony* translates many different Latin

and Greek words including *ironia, dissimulatio, illusio, simulatio,* εἰρωνεία, and

σχῆμα.[202] Cicero defines *dissimulatio* as words differing from thoughts, and the

linguistic game is perceived by the audience (*De oratore* 2.269). *Illusio* indicates

a situation in which the words and meaning are opposite (*Institutio oratoria*

8.6.54) and is compared to *ironia*. *Simulatio* indicates a "positive feigning of an

opinion of one's own, agreeing with an opinion of the opposing party" (*Inst.*

6.3.85).[203] Εἰρωνεία asks to be understood in a sense other than the usual or

plainest senses of the words (*Inst.* 6.2.15). As a figure, Quintilian sees irony

running through entire passages (*Inst.* 9.2.46). As a trope, irony is to postpone

temporarily the real meaning or intention of the speaker in order to gain a later

advantage.[204] The audience is to perceive this irony, as explained by Quintilian:

"[It is] revealed either by delivery, by the character of the speaker, or by the

nature of the subject. If any of these is incompatible with the words, it is clear

that the speech intends something totally different" (Quintilian, *Inst.* 8.6.54-55

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[202] Steve Mason, "Figured Speech and Irony in T. Flavius Josephus," in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome* (ed. J. C. Edmondson, Steve Mason, and J. B. Rives; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 247-49.

[203] Heinrich Lausberg, David E. Orton, and R. Dean Anderson, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric : A Foundation for Literary Study* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 404.

[204] Zoja Pavlovskis, "Aristotle, Horace, and the Ironic Man," *CP* 63, no. 1 (1968): 27.

[Russell, LCL]).[205] In two instances, however, he speaks of a figure that is

distinct from irony but is not otherwise labeled. In *Inst*. 9.1.14, the use of σχῆμα

indicates a rhetorical situation in which the speaker is saying something he is not,

or later (*Inst*. 9.2.65), that which is to be understood by the audience is not that

which the speaker is saying. It is regarded as close to *emphasis* but not identical

with it (*Inst*. 9.2.65). This understanding of σχῆμα seems closest to the definition

of irony laid out earlier in this thesis. Quintilian outlines three potential motives

for the use of *schēma*: "(1) if it is unsafe to speak openly, (2) if it is unseemly to

do so, (3) when it is employed simply for elegance and gives more pleasure by its

freshness and variety than the straightforward statement would have done"

(Quintilian, *Inst*. 9.2.66 [Russell, LCL]).

Demetrius' *De elocutione* contains similar thoughts to Cicero concerning

ironic speech, as indicated in his discussion of ἐσχηματισμένον ἐν λόγῳ. This

term is translated as *verbal innuendo* by Warrington, but probably better

translated literally as *figured speech*.[206] Demetrius, midway through his section

on figured speech, states,

> People often use words with an equivocal meaning. If you
> wanted to be like them and use invective which does not seem
> invective, there is an example in Aeschines' passage about
> Telauges. Almost the whole narrative will leave you puzzled
> whether it is meant as admiration or mockery. This ambiguous
> way of speaking, although not irony, yet has a suggestion of
> irony (εἰρωνείας ἔμφασιν). (Demetrius, *Eloc*., 291
> [Warrington, LCL])

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[205] Quintilian sees the ironic trope as more easily perceived and shorter in duration
but if extended, it becomes a figure (*Inst*. 9.2.44-47).

[206] Chiron, *Un rhéteur méconnu*, 225.

This example seems to come closest to irony: a two-level discourse where one meaning is intended, and the literal is disregarded.[207] Chiron describes this phenomenon in more detail,

> On pourrait donc dire que l'ἐσχηματισμένος λόγος se rattache aux premières valeurs rhétoriques du mot σχῆμα. Il s'agit en quelque sorte de la figure par excellence ou, du moins, d'une figure des limites, puisqu'elle consiste à ne pas dire ce qu'on dit, à ménager la possibilité de la compréhension, parfois fort finement, mais sans y aider de façon visible. On pourrait la commenter à chaque fois de deux formules: "Comprenne qui pourra" et, en un retour innocent sur soi-même, si l'interlocuteur se doute de quelque chose: "Moi? Je n'ai rein dit!" C'est la figure où, pour se référer aux valeurs ultérieures du mot σχῆμα, l'écart entre l'expression figurée et l'expression "normale" est le plus mince et où, en même temps, le discours offre l'apparence la plus éloignée possible de son sens réel.[208]

> [One could, therefore, say that the ἐσχηματισμένος λόγος is connected to the quintessential rhetorical values of the word σχῆμα. It is, in a way, the figure *par excellence*, or at least, a figure of limits, since it consists in not saying that which one is saying and also in bringing about the possibility of understanding, at times very subtly, without aiding this understanding in any visible way. One could comment on this figure, in each instance, relying on two formulas: "Understand he who can" and, innocently self-reflecting, if the interlocutor suspects something: "Me? I didn't say anything!" It is the figure in which, in order to make reference to the ulterior values of the word σχῆμα, the gap between the figured expression and the "normal" expression is the narrowest and in which, at the same time, the discourse offers the appearance of being as distant as possible from its real meaning.]

Reasons given for this type of discourse are similar to Quintilian's fear of the tyrant (*Eloc.*, 292-93).

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[207] D. M. Schenkeveld, *Studies in Demetrius On style* (Amsterdam : A. M. Hakkert, 1964), 118.

[208] Chiron, *Un rhéteur méconnu*, 226.

The idea of figured speech is most clearly defined in Pseudo-Dionysius.[209]

Ars rhetorica 8.2 states,

τὸ μέν ἐστι <u>σχῆμα</u> λέγον μὲν ἃ βούλεται, δεόμενον δὲ εὐπρεπείας ἢ δι᾽ ἀξίωσιν τῶν προσώπων, πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος, ἢ δι᾽ ἀσφάλειαν πρὸς τοὺς ἀκούοντας . . . τὸ δέ τι <u>σχῆμά</u> ἐστι πλαγίως ἕτερα μὲν λέγον, ἕτερα δὲ ἐργαζόμενον ἐν λόγοις. τρίτον <u>σχῆμά</u> ἐστι τὸ οἷς λέγει τὰ ἐναντία πραχθῆναι πραγματευόμενον.[210]

The first is the figure which says what one wishes, but which needs good taste because of the reputation of the audience or because of circumspection toward the hearers . . . The other figure says some things indirectly but means other things. The third intends the opposite of what is said.[211]

It is the second of these that comes closest to the passage of Demetrius cited above. Similarly, later, the text reiterates its divisions: "We will show all the figured speeches of the judicial, following: either the speaker says what he wants,

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[209] The understanding of Pseudo-Dionysius has received much attention in recent rhetorical literature on *schema*. Be Briej, "Pseudo-Quintilian's Major Declamations 18 and 19 : Two Controversiae Figuratae, *Rhetorica* 24, no. 1 (2006): 79-104; Pierre Chiron, "Quelques observations sur la théorie du discourse figuré dans la *texnh* du Ps.-Denys d'Halicarnasse," in *Papers on Rhetoric* (ed. Lucia Calboli Montefusco; Bologna: CLUEB, 2000), 75-94; F. Desbordes, "Le teste caché: problèmes figurés dans la déclamation latine," *REL* 71(1993): 73-86; Malcolm Heath, "Pseudo-Dionysius Art of Rhetoric 8-11: Figured Speech, Declamation and Criticism," *AJP* 124 (2003), 81-105; Michael Hillgruber, "Die Kunst der verstellten Rede," *Phil* 144, (2000): 3-21; Lucia Calboli Montefusco, "Ductus and Color: The Right Way to Compose a Suitable Speech," *Rhetorica* 21, no. 2 (2003): 113-31; D. A. Russell, "Classicizing Rhetoric and Criticism: The Pseudo-Dionysian Exetasis and Mistakes," in *Le classicisme à Rome. Aux 1ère siècles avant et après J.-C.* (ed. Helmut Flashar; EAC 25; Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1979): 113-34; D. A. Russell, "Figured Speeches: 'Dionysius,' Art of Rhetoric VIII–IX," in *Orator in Action and Theory in Greece and Rome: Essays in Honor of George A. Kennedy* (ed. Cecil W. Wooten; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 156-68; Schenkeveld, *Studies in Demetrius*.

[210] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Dionysii Halicarnasei quae exstant opuscula* (ed. Hermann Usener and Ludwig Radermacher; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1965), 295.15-20, 296.2-5; hereafter, Usener and Radermacher.

[211] Schenkeveld, *Studies in Demetrius*, 121.

but with tact, or he aims at something different from what he says, or he aims at

the opposite of what he says."[212] This is restated once more slightly later in the

work:[213]

> Τολμῶσί τινες λέγειν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἐσχηματισμένη ἰδέα λόγων.
> δεῖ γὰρ ἁπλῶς λέγειν ἢ μὴ λέγειν. καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲν πλέον τὸ
> καθ᾽ ὑπόνοιαν λέγειν. εἰ γὰρ συνίησιν ὁ ἀκούων, ἐξ ἴσου
> καθέστηκεν τῷ φανερῶς ἀκούοντι· εἰ μὴ συνίησι, πλέον
> οὐδὲν τῷ λέγοντι. ἡμεῖς δὲ φαμέν, ὅτι τοσοῦτον ἀπέχει
> ὀρθῶς λέγειν ὁ λέγων μὴ εἶναι ἐσχηματισμένους λόγους,
> ὥστε τοὐναντίον οὐδείς λόγος ἀσχημάτιστος οὐδὲ ἁπλοῦς
> λόγος οὐδείς.[214]

> Some people dare to say there is no such figured concept of
> speech[s]: one must either speak simply or not at all. For
> communicating by suggestive subcurrents achieves nothing
> extra. Either the listener understands, in which case he is on
> par with someone who has heard it spoken clearly, or he did
> not understand, in which case there is no additional advantage
> to the speaker. We on the contrary maintain that the person
> who denies that figured speech[s] exists is very far indeed from
> being correct in what he says. For there is no such thing as
> speech that is not figured. There is no such thing as simple
> speech.[215]

Between Quintilian, Demetrius, and Pseudo-Dionysius, there is some

agreement that figures or figures of speech involve a surface meaning and an

underlying message and, thus, an irony that comes very close, if it is not identical,

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[212] Usener and Radermacher, 324.1-5; Montefusco, "Ductus and Color," 130.

[213] Chapter 9 of *Ars rhetorica* is viewed, by some, as a different revision of
Chapter 8 (Usener and Radermacher, 321-373). See Heath, "Pseudo-Dionysius,"
86-90.

[214] Usener and Radermacher, 323.5-14.

[215] Translation by Frederick Ahl, "Art of Safe Criticism in Greece and Rome,"
AJP 105, no. 2 (1984): 196.

to the modern idea. Stanford, after examining many of these and other passages,

concludes:

> We must define classical irony in its use as a literary device
> as a way of making statements in such manner that the words
> must be understood otherwise than in their literal meanings.
> It may depend for its effect solely on tone, gesture, or the
> speaker's known characteristics, or it may also involve formal
> lexical or phrasal ambiguities. In every case there is theoretically
> an ambiguity between the literal and intended meanings, but
> in practice there is usually no real ambiguity – if there were
> the irony would have failed.[216]

If one were to look back in search of definitions similar to modern irony,

one would also include Quintilian's comments in *Inst* 6.3.89: "Indeed, the whole

principle of witty speech consists in expressing things in a way other than the

direct and truthful one."[217] Or, as Chiron concludes, elaborating on the

understanding of Demetrius based on Pseudo-Dionysius: "Démétrios s'avère un

témoin exceptionnel sur une question à la fois complexe, ambiguë et

extraordinairement moderne. Le 'discours figuré' dans sa forme 'pure' n'est autre

que le discours manipulateur, qui réussit lorsqu'il influence à son insu le

destinataire."[218] [Demetrius turned out to be an exceptional witness on a question

that is simultaneously complex, ambiguous, and extraordinarily modern.

"Figured discourse" in its "pure" form is nothing other than manipulative

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[216] William Bedell Stanford, *Ambiguity in Greek Literature: Studies in Theory and Practice* (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1972), 65.

[217] Linda Hutcheon, *Irony's Edge : The Theory and Politics of Irony* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 64.

[218] Chiron, *Un rhéteur méconnu*, 236.

discourse that succeeds when it influences the receiver without his/her knowledge.]

One example given by Pseudo-Dionysius is that of Agamemnon's testing of his troops in the second book of the Iliad. Agamemnon, hoping to convince the soldiers to stay with him, gives an ironic speech riddled with ambiguities and weak arguments[219] and hopes for the reverse of that which he is stating. Most notably, for Pseudo-Dionysius, "The conclusion of the speech shows particularly clearly that it is the speech of one who desires the opposite of what he says: 'Come, let us all agree with this, and flee, manning the ships, to our dear native land.'"[220] It would be the greatest disgrace were the soldiers to heed Agamemnon's advice since no warrior should willingly flee.[221] The irony in this speech is so difficult to perceive that Agamemnon's intent is temporarily lost as the troops abandon him. Subsequent to the intervention of Athena and Odysseus, however, who emphasize that soldiers should never flee in disgrace, there is eventual success, and the troops return.

Irony in the ancient world was somewhat distinct in that it could be deceptive and not immediately grasped. Another example is found in Plutarch's *Marius*. The Teutones had been destroyed by Marius, and the Cimbri are unaware. When the Cimbri came before Marius demanding territory for

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[219] "Shameful will it be for future men to learn that such a brave and great Achaean host fought a useless war in vain and to no end" (*Iliad*, 119-21). Translation by Russell, "Figured Speeches," 162.

[220] Usener and Radermacher, 321.17-20.

[221] Ronald Knox and Joseph Russo, "Agamemonon's Test: *Iliad* 2.73-75," *ClAnt* 8, no. 2 (1989): 354-55; Russell, "Figured Speeches," 160-63.

themselves and the Teutones, Marius replied, "Then don't trouble yourselves about your brethren, for they have land, and they will have it forever – the land which we have given them" (*Mar.* 24.4 [Perrin, LCL]).[222] In this instance, the voice, tone, and situation lead the Cimbri to question Marius' sincerity, but they do not know what was intended by his words. The irony was not intended to be perceived until a later point at which Marius chose to reveal it.[223]

A brief survey of gospel studies dedicated to irony indicates a general trend to focus on dramatic tensions. The texts examined here, however, indicate a type of irony that can run for an entire discourse, reinforcing the possibility that Matt 1:21 can be read in two different ways: one from the beginning of the Gospel and a second in light of its end.[224] This will be further developed in the next chapter through examination of the ways in which readers and characters within various stories were deceived by dreams and prophecies or did not perceive their true meaning until a much later point.

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[222] Plutarch states that Marius was understood as being τὴν εἰρωνείαν.

[223] A similar example is found in Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon* where Leucippe says to Sosthenes, "I pray...that you may have just such good fortune as you come and bring me now" (6.12.1-2 [Gaselee, LCL]). Although Leucippe's statement is intended negatively, Sosthenes does not understand the irony (Σωσθένης τὴν εἰρωνείαν οὐ συνείς); he takes her words literally and interprets them positively.

[224] Henderson uses figured speech to examine multiple (and distinctive) audiences in Mark's Gospel. This work is more concerned with the multiple levels of a speech to the same audience. For Henderson's examination, see Ian H. Henderson, "Reconstructing Mark's Double Audience," in *Between Author and Audience in Mark* (ed. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009): 7-28.

CHAPTER 2

The rhetoric of irony allows for at least two interpretations of a given

speech. It is a construction that plays on the way the audience conceives a speech

in relation to its entirety and particularly the end. The use of oracles and dreams

was one way that this type of irony was produced in Greek literature. Both of

these devices can guide an audience in various directions, with the end revealing

the implied author's true intentions. These intentions often run contrary to

audience expectations. That stated, in the study of Matthew's Gospel, little

attention has been paid, until recently, to the rhetoric of dream narratives in the

ancient world. While some literature is concerned with oracles and birth

narratives in biographical material,[225] these works (and others)[226] do not examine

the relationship between the dream and the entire Gospel. The most recent

publication by Derek Dodson[227] is the first work to concern itself primarily with

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[225] Ute E. Eisen, "The Narratological Fabric of the Gospels," in *Narratologia: Contribution to Narrative Theory/Beiträge zur Erzähltheorie* (ed. Jan Christoph Meister; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 200-07; Dirk Frickenschmidt, *Evangelium als Biographie : die vier Evangelien im Rahmen antiker Erzählkunst* (TANZ 22; Tübingen: Francke, 1997), 253-54, 465.

[226] Marco Frenschkowski, "Traum und Traumdeutung im Mattäusevangelium," *JAC* 41(1998): 4-47; Robert Gnuse, "Dream Genre in the Matthean Infancy Narratives," *NovT* 32, no. 2 (1990): 97-120; John S. Hanson, "Dreams and Visions in the Graeco-Roman World and Early Christianity," in *Aufstieg und Niedergamg der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung* (ed. Wolfgang Haase; New York: de Gruyter, 1980), 1395-1472; Pieter W. van der Horst, "Macrobius and the New Testament: A Contribution to the Corpus Hellenisticum," *NovT* 15, no. 3 (1973): 220-32.

[227] Dodson, *Reading Dreams*. Based on two published articles and his Ph.D. dissertation see, Derek S. Dodson , "Philo's De somniis in the Context of Ancient Dream Theories and Classifications," *PRSt* 30 (2003): 299-312; Derek S. Dodson, "Dreams, the Ancient Novels, and the Gospel of Matthew: An Intertextual

dreams and their literary function within the Gospel of Matthew. By comparing Matthean dream narratives to others contemporary with the Gospel, Dodson proposes various rhetorical implications. In his fourth chapter, Dodson examines "The Ancient, Social Context of Dreams," but he is concerned less with the role dreams play within the larger works in which they are included than with more immediate contextual implications. The current chapter of this present study expands Dodson's work by connecting dreams to larger plot structures.

Ancient Greek literature commonly utilized oracular and dream narratives ironically. Implied authors deliberately deceived the sequential reader or created a narrative in which the protagonist is deceived by these devices. The ambiguity of dreams is stressed by Josephus, Philo, and Artemidorus, and the examples to be explored here show strong affinity between ambiguous dreams or oracles and the need for interpretation emphasizing the interpreter's difficult task.

Further, the deception of characters under the influence of oracles appears in John 11:49-53 with the words of Caiaphas, and early prophecy interpretation is found in Acts 5:35-40 during the speech of Gamaliel. These texts indicate that oracles can be read in different ways, and that verbal irony, moving away from a literal reading, could be expected when inspired speech was utilized in such instances.

This tendency to play with oracle (and oracular dreams) is present in other early Greek literature. From histories of Herodotus to the plays of Euripides

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Study," *PRSt* 29, no. 1 (2002) 39-52. Derek S. Dodson, "Reading Dreams: An Audience-Critical Approach to the Dreams in the Gospel of Matthew" (PhD diss., Baylor University, 2006).

(particularly *Iphigenia taurica*), the biographies of Plutarch, and the later ancient

novel of Achilles Tatius, oracles and dreams, individually and combined, have

been seen as vague, ambiguous, metaphorical, and in rereading retrospectively,

ironic. They use a false prolepsis that ends up becoming an advanced mention.[228]

The prolepsis, indicating a future outcome, heightens expectation and was used to

misle the sequential reader, thereby increasing suspense. Yet, when the prolepsis

turns out to be false, ending in surprise, the sequential reader retrospectively

moves back to find an advanced mention. Thus, the very nature of ambiguity

within dreams was utilized in plot structure to create suspense, surprise, and

curiosity.[229]

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[228] Gérard Gennette makes a distinction between *advanced notice*, which is a
definitive prolepsis, and an *advanced mention,* which is an "insignificant seed and
even an imperceptible one, whose importance as a seed will not be recognized
until later, and retrospectively." Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse*: *An Essay in
Method* (trans. Jane E. Lewin; Ithica, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980), 76.
He uses the language of the Greek Scholia for these ideas. See Nünlist, *Ancient
Critic*, 39 and George E. Duckworth, "ΠΡΟΑΝΑΦΩΝΗΣΙΣ in the Scholia to
Homer," *AJP* 52, no. 4 (1931): 320-28. Prophetic oracles, however, function as a
mixture of these two; they are, simultaneously, an advanced notice later seen as
retrospectively false and, after reinterpretation, as an advanced mention. They
move a reader in various directions through prospection and retrospection;
depending upon where the reader is in the narrative and the way in which the
narrative is understood, the prophetic oracle is interpreted as true or false, true and
then false, or false and then true, and almost any combination of these variants, in
different respects along the chronological narrative continuum. On the use of the
advanced notice, advanced mention, and false prolepses in ancient Greek
literature, see Irene J. F. de Jong, "Aspects narratologiques des histoires
d'Hérodote," *Lalies* 19 (1999): 217-74.

[229] It has been argued that suspense is impossible to achieve in historical works
since the outcome is known. This is, however, not the case. Numerous studies
support Richard Gerrig's theory regarding the *paradox of suspense* (knowing the
outcome but still experiencing the emotion). Readers willingly engage a text by
consciously suppressing or not accessing that which is already known and
activating an *expectation of uniqueness*, suspending the concept of literary

The literary implications that result from this exploration will lay the groundwork for application of these ideas to Matthew.   In short, it was not uncommon for an oracle in literature to be ambiguous such that the audience's initial understanding was later reviewed and revised in light of newer information.

THE AMBIGUOUS NATURE OF DREAMS AND ORACLES

Explicit recognition of oracular and dream ambiguity is made by Josephus, Philo, and Artemidorus. These authors emphasize the necessity of interpretation because of the nature of the revelation (it is an oracle or dream) or the revealer (the god[s] are granting the dream).

Josephus

Josephus gives two clear examples of ambiguity, one in reference to oracular ambiguity and the other to dream ambiguity.

Jewish War 6:312-313 states,

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repetition. See Richard J. Gerrig, "Suspense in the Absence of Uncertainty," *J Mem Lang* 28, no.6 (1989): 633-48; Richard J. Gerrig, "Is There a Paradox of Suspense? A Reply to Yanal," *Brit J Aesthet* 37 no. 2 (1997): 168-74; Prieto-Pablos, "Paradox of Suspense," 99-113; Hoeken and Vliet, "Suspense, Curiosity and Surprise," 277-86; Powell, *Eastern Star*, 79-82. Rengakos emphasizes that even if the event is known, many readers still do not know how that event came about and this, too, increases suspense. See Antonios Rengakos, "Homer and The Historians: The Influence of Epic Narrative Techniques on Herodotus and Thucydides," in *La poésie grecque: métamorphoses d'un genre littéraire* (EAC 52; Geneva: Vandoeuvres, 2005), 183-214.

But what more than all else incited them to war was an
ambiguous oracle (χρησμὸς ἀμφίβολος), likewise found in
their sacred scriptures, to the effect that at that time one from
their country would become ruler of the world. This they
understood to mean someone of their own race, and many of
their wise men went astray in their interpretation of it. The
oracle, however, in reality signified the sovereignty of
Vespasian, who was proclaimed Emperor on Jewish soil.
(Thackeray, LCL)[230]

Here is a clear statement regarding the difficult nature of interpreting an oracle

expressed in a written text and, in this instance, regarding a great ruler. Equally

significant is a similar text in *Jewish War* 3:351-354:

But as Nicanor was urgently pressing his proposals and
Josephus overheard the threats of the hostile crowd, suddenly
there came back into his mind nightly dreams in which God
had foretold to him the impending fate of the Jews and the
destinies of the Roman sovereigns. He was an interpreter
of dreams and skilled in (ἦν δὲ καὶ περὶ κρίσεις ὀνείρων ἱκανὸς)
divining the meaning of ambiguous utterances of the Deity
(ἀμφιβόλως ὑπὸ τοῦ θείου λεγόμενα); a priest himself and
of priestly descent, he was not ignorant of the prophecies in
the sacred books. At that hour he was inspired to read their
meaning, and, recalling the dreadful images (φαντάσματα)
of his recent dreams, he offered up a silent prayer to God.
(Thackeray, LCL)

The "destinies of the Roman sovereigns" seems to refer to Vespasian and Titus.

This text is connected to *Jewish War* 3:400-402 where the proclamation is made

that Vespasian will be master of land and sea. Gnuse concludes that "… the

oracle in War 3.400-402 may be seen as part of the revelation in War 3.351-354,

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[230] The scriptural source of this oracle is unknown. There is a possible
dependence on either Dan 7:13-14; 9:25-26; Gen 49:10; or Num 24:17. For
discussion, see Robert Gnuse, *Dreams and Dream Reports in the Writings of
Josephus: A Traditio-Historical Analysis* (ed. Martin Hengel, Peter Schäfer, and
Pieter W. van der Horst; AGJU 36; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 140; Anthony J.
Tomasino, "Oracles of Insurrection: The Prophetic Catalyst of the Great Revolt,"
JJS 59, no.1 (2008): 86-111.

whether or not that was the historical experience of Josephus. Josephus uses both texts to legitimate himself as a prophet, much in the mode of Jeremiah, who likewise appeared to go over to the enemy."[231]

Significant and debated here is the word λεγόμενα, which seems to indicate speech. Yet, the auditory nature of Josephus' dream is generally rejected because of the later reference to φαντάσματα, which, to some, indicates its visual characteristics; thus, most opt for the translation "ambiguous messages."[232] Since we only have three references to φαντάσματα in Josephus (here and *Antiquities* 1:325; 3:62), it is difficult at best to form solid conclusions on the nature of the φαντάσματα experience. That being said, if any conclusions can be drawn, they seem to point in favor of voices and images coming together within this oracle/dream. Since *Ant* 1:325 does not say anything about the dream recounted in the text, it contributes little, but *Ant* 3:62 states, "Advancing by short stages, within three months after the departure from Egypt, he reached Mount Sinai, where he [Moses] had met with the miracle of the bush and the other visions (λοιπὰ φαντάσματα) which we have already related" (Thackeray, LCL). That which was "already related" is the vision of Moses and the burning bush recorded in *Ant* 2:265-72. Here, we will only quote a small section that indicates the clear use of speech. "Moses was terrified at this strange spectacle, but was amazed yet more when this fire found a tongue, called him by name, and communed with him

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[231] Gnuse, *Dreams and Dream Reports*, 142.

[232] Ibid., 139; Rebecca Gray, *Prophetic Figures in Late Second Temple Jewish Palestine: The Evidence from Josephus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 69.

(φωνὴν τοῦ πυρὸς ἀφιέντος καὶ ὀνομαστὶ καλέσαντος αὐτὸν καὶ ποιησαμένου λόγους)."[233] It is fairly clear that this vision is both audible and visual, yet Josephus will clarify this himself: "Moses, in consternation at that which he had seen and much more at that which he had heard. . . (Μωυσῆς δ'ἐκπεπληγμένος οἷς τ'εἶδε καὶ πολὺ μᾶλλον οἷς ἤκουσε . . .)"[234] Moving back to *J.W.* 3:51-354, there is little in φαντάσματα that necessitates a visionary experience on its own, and so λεγόμενα should be interpreted in its typical usage as a verbal utterance. (For a sample, see *Ant.* 1.105; 5. 232; 10.90; *Against Apion* 1.69; *J.W.* 6:132.) Here then, within the dream of Josephus, ambiguous words spoken required interpretation. While Josephus certainly concerns himself with the clear nature of prophecy in general (*A.A.* 1.38),[235] some oracles and oracular dreams seem to constitute an exception to the rule.[236] He indicates that oracles are misunderstood and dreams contain ambiguous speech that requires interpretation.

Philo

Philo makes similar statements regarding dreams and oracles, though he is more specific. For him, dreams in which God speaks directly are clear and straightforward. There is no angelic intermediary. "The first kind of dreams we

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[233] Gnuse, *Dreams and Dream Reports*, 281.

[234] Ibid., 283.

[235] Louis H. Feldman, "Prophets and Prophecy in Josephus," *JTS* 41, no. 2 (1990): 414-17.

[236] It may be argued on a different level that there exists a distinction between a vision (while awake) and a dream (while asleep), but since the current debate is on the mutual occurrence of a visionary experience within a dream, the lines are blurred.

saw to be those in which God originates the movement and invisibly suggests

things <u>obscure</u> to us but patent to Himself . . . (τὸ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον ἦν ἄρχοντος

τῆς κινήσεως θεοῦ καὶ ὑπηχοῦντος ἀοράτως τὰ ἡμῖν μὲν <u>ἄδηλα</u>, γνώριμα δὲ

ἑαυτῷ· . . .)" (Philo, *De somniis* 2.1.2 [Colson & Whitaker, LCL]). Philo also

mentions a second kind of dream: "The second kind of dreams is that in which our

mind, moving out of itself together with the Mind of the Universe,[237] seems to be

possessed and God-inspired, and so capable of receiving some foretaste and

foreknowledge of things to come (δεύτερον δ᾽ εἶδος, ἐν ᾧ ὁ ἡμέτερος νοῦς τῷ τῶν

ὅλων συγκινούμενος ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ κατέχεσθαί τε καὶ θεοφορεῖσθαι δοκεῖ, ὡς ἱκανὸς

εἶναι προλαμβάνειν καὶ προγινώσκειν τι τῶν μελλόντων.)" (Philo, *Somn.* 1.1.2

[Colson & Whitaker, LCL]). Philo elaborates more on this second category:

> τὰς κατὰ τὸ δεύτερον οὔτε σφόδρα τηλαυγῶς
> ἄγαν· ὧν ὑπόδειγμα ἡ ἐπὶ τῆς οὐρανοῦ κλίμακος φανεῖσα ὄψις.
> αὕτη γὰρ <u>αἰνιγματώδης</u> μὲν ἦν, τὸ δὲ <u>αἴνιγμα</u> οὐ λίαν τοῖς ὀξὺ
> καθορᾶν δυναμένοις ἀπεκρύπτετο.

> Those which follow under the second description he [Moses]
> interpreted neither with consummate clearness nor with excessive
> indistinctness. A specimen of these is the Vision that appeared
> on the heavenly stairway. For this dream was indeed <u>enigmatic</u>,
> but the <u>riddle</u> was not in very high degree concealed from the
> quick-sighted. (Philo, *Somn*. 2.1.2 [Colson & Whitaker, LCL])

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[237] Throughout *Somn.* 1, it becomes clear that in order to be "moving together
with the mind of the universe" one must have holy reason (105-108), self-control
(124-126), not being full of conceit or arrogance (211), and being humble (242-
248). Upright character seems to be the focus of a type-two dreamer, which
makes it interesting to note that, although Matthew's Gospel has very little to say
about Joseph, it specifically mentions, in the verse immediately preceding the
dream narration, that he is righteous. The significance of the dreamer and
righteousness will be expounded further in a later chapter.

We do not have the work of Philo on dreams with direct divine presence, but here, intermediary dreams involve voices, visions, and enigmas.[238] Dreams are obscure, have an inherent ambiguity, and are discernable only to those who are quick-sighted.

Artemidorus

Artemidorus is the third dream interpreter to be discussed here whose work is contemporary with, and therefore relevant to, the Gospel of Matthew.[239] The preface to Book 4 makes explicit distinctions between dream types: "A dream that has no meaning and predicts nothing, one that is active only while one sleeps and that has arisen from an irrational desire, an extraordinary fear, or from a surfeit or lack of food is called an *enhypnion*. But a dream that operates after

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[238] Dodson, "Philo's De somniis, 311."

[239] The dream taxonomy of Artemidorus received much attention around the 1930's, particularly following the work of Pack and, much later, Kessels. See Russel Geer, "On the Theories of Dream Interpretation in Artemidorus," *CJ* 9 (1927): 663-70; S. Laukamm, "Das Sitten bild des Artemidor von Ephesus," *Angelos* 4 (1928): 32-71; Daldianos Artemidoros, *Artemidori Daldiani Onirocriticon libri V* (trans. Roger A. Pack; Leipzig: Teubner, 1963); A. H. M. Kessels, "Ancient Systems of Dream-Classification," *Mnemosyne* 22, no. 4 (1969): 389-424; Roger A. Pack, "Artemidorus and His Waking World," *TAPA* 86 (1955): 280-90; Roger A. Pack, "Further Notes on Artemidorus," *TAPA* 91(1960): 146-51; Roger A. Pack, "Lexical and Textual Notes on Artemidorus," *TAPA* 90 (1959): 180-84; Roger A. Pack, "More Conjectures on Artemidorus," *TAPA* 92 (1961): 418-21; Roger A. Pack, "Textual Notes on Artemidorus Daldianus," *TAPA* 88 (1957): 189-96; Roger A. Pack, "Artemidoriana from the Escurial," *TAPA* 100 (1969): 331-36; Roger A. Pack, "Artemidoriana Graeco-Arabica," *TAPA* 106 (1976): 307-12; Roger A. Pack, "Artemidorus and the Physiognomists," *TAPA* 72 (1941): 321-34; Roger A. Pack, "On Artemidorus and His Arabic Translator," *TAPA* 98 (1967): 313-26.

sleep and that comes true either for good or for bad is called an *oneiros*."[240]

Further clarification is found in the beginning of Book 1:

> Now then, as I have explained in other works, there is great distinction between *enhypnion* and *oneiros*. And it seems advisable for me to begin now with these same things, since this work will otherwise appear unsystematic and, as it were, one without beginning. *Oneiros* differs from *enhypnion* in that the first indicates a future state of affairs, while the other indicates a present state of affairs.[241]

He continues in Book 1.2:

> Some dreams, moreover, are theorematic (direct), while others are allegorical. Theorematic dreams are those which correspond exactly to their own dream-vision. . . Allegorical dreams, on the other hand, are those which signify one thing by means of another: that is, through them, the soul is conveying something obscurely by physical means . . . *Oneiros* is a movement or condition of the mind that takes many shapes and signifies good or bad things that will occur in the future. . . To the *oneiros* category correspond the vision (ὄραμα) and the oracular response.[242]

For the purposes here, it is not useful to discuss the *enhypnion*, but the *oneiros* is

significant. Within the ὄνειρος category, we find ὄραμα, χρηματισμός, and

ἀλληγορικοὶ ὄνειροι, which are translated respectively as vision, oracle, and

allegorical dream.[243] The meanings of visions and oracles, according to the

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[240] Artemidorus Daldianus, *The Interpretation of Dreams: Oneirocritica* (trans. Robert J. White; Torrence, Calif.: Original Books, 1990), 185.

[241] Ibid., 22.

[242] Ibid., 25

[243] Gerard Boter and Jaap-Jan Flinterman, "Are Petitionary Dreams Non-Predictive? Observations on Artemidorus' Oneirocritica 1.6 and 4.2," *Mnemosyne* 60, no. 4 (2007): 590-93; E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (SCL 25; Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1951), 102-21; Christine Walde, "Dream Interpretation in a Prosperous Age: Artemidorus, the Greek Interpreter of

taxonomy of Artemidorus, cannot be ambiguous, and their fulfillment must be

immediate. In relation to the allegorical dream, Artemidorus emphasizes the

ambiguous nature of the speeches of the gods, discussing dreams that come true

but not as they were seen. This is explicit in 4.71:

> I have added this section to demonstrate that gods and all
> persons worthy of credence speak the truth in every instance,
> but sometimes they speak in riddles (ποτὲ δὲ αἰνίσσονται).
> Whenever they speak plainly, they present no problems
> and there is no need for any discussion due to the clarity of their
> speech. But whenever they speak in riddles and do not speak
> plainly, you must attempt to solve the riddles (ἑρμηωευτέον
> σοι τὰ αἰνίγματα). For it is quite understandable the gods veil
> much of what they say in mystery, since they are wiser than we
> and do not wish us to accept anything without a thorough
> examination (οὐδὲν ἡμᾶς ἀβασανίστως βούλονται
> λαμβάνειν).[244]

Since the message is neither straight forward nor clear, this type of revelation is

considered allegorical but not necessarily symbolic; it is the play in the speech of

the gods that must be examined critically.[245] Finally, regarding dreams,

Artemidorus states that "there are some dreams which cannot be interpreted

before their actual fulfillment [*Onirocritica* 4.24.15-16] . . . Before the actual

event, the dream was impossible to interpret, but once it actually came true, the

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Dreams," in *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of
Dreaming* (ed. David Dean Shulman and Gedaliahu A. G. Stroumsa; New York:
Oxford University Press, 1999), 121-42.

[244] Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica*, 224.   This will be demonstrated later when
discussing Herodotus' story of Croesus.

[245] S. R. F. Price, "The Future of Dreams: From Freud to Artemidorus," *P&P* 113,
no. 1 (1986): 113.

interpretation was quite obvious [*Onir*. 4.25.1-3]."[246] This means that

retrospection was necessary in dream interpretation.

The examples of Josephus, Philo, and Artemidorus provide room for

ambiguity in dream interpretation as concerns the Gospel of Matthew. Josephus

indicates that written oracles are ambiguous and that oracles within dreams are

ambiguous. Philo demonstrates that there is room for ambiguity, but the intended

meaning can be perceived by the astute. Finally, Artemidorus highlights the

ambiguity of divine speech emphasizing that some dreams can only be understood

in hindsight. All three authors were skeptical about deriving straightforward

meaning from dreams; given their ambiguity, interpretation was required.

IRONIC PROPHECY: PLAYING WITH DOUBLE MEANING IN EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

Within early Christian literature, the words of Caiaphus in John 11:49-53

and the speech of Gamaliel in Acts 5:35-40 serve as particularly clear examples of

an oracle and an oracular, prophetic statement that operate on two levels. Aune

defines oracles as "messages from the gods in human language, received as

statements from a god, usually in response to enquiries."[247] If this is the case,

only John's example can be defined in this manner since the oracular nature of

Gamaliel's words are only implied in Acts 5:35-40. Both texts, however, are

equally relevant to this current study on the Gospel of Matthew given that both

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[246] Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica*, 200.

[247] David Edward Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1983), 23.

are seen as verbal irony.[248]   In these examples, the implied author uses characters

to say the opposite or something very different than that which the character

intends, though this is becomes evident only when the statement is viewed within

the work as a whole.

John 11:49-52

Since the publication of Paul Duke's *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*,[249]

numerous articles and chapters have been dedicated to irony in John,[250] many

focusing on John 11:49-52, which states:

> εἷς δέ τις ἐξ αὐτῶν Καϊάφας, ἀρχιερεὺς ὢν τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐκείνου,
> εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε οὐδέν, [50] οὐδὲ λογίζεσθε ὅτι
> συμφέρει ὑμῖν ἵνα εἷς ἄνθρωπος ἀποθάνῃ ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ μὴ
> ὅλον τὸ ἔθνος ἀπόληται. [51] τοῦτο δὲ ἀφ᾽ ἑαυτοῦ οὐκ εἶπεν, ἀλλὰ
> ἀρχιερεὺς ὢν τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐκείνου ἐπροφήτευσεν ὅτι ἔμελλεν
> Ἰησοῦς ἀποθνῄσκειν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους, [52] καὶ οὐχ ὑπὲρ τοῦ
> ἔθνους μόνον ἀλλ᾽ ἵνα καὶ τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ διεσκορπισμένα
> συναγάγῃ εἰς ἕν.

> But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that
> year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, nor do you take
> into account that it is expedient for you that one man should
> die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish."
> Now this he did not say on his own initiative; but being high

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[248] The irony in both texts, however, operates distinctively from that in Matthew since, in these texts, the irony is not at the expense of the reader; rather, the reader perceives it immediately (though the full extent of the irony would not be recognized until the text was completed).

[249] Paul D. Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985).

[250] See also Saeed Hamid-Khani, *Revelation and Concealment of Christ: A Theological Inquiry into the Elusive Language of the Fourth Gospel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 74-90; James L. Resseguie, *The Strange Gospel: Narrative Design and Point of View in John* (BIS 56; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 41-59 (notes on irony and ambiguity).

priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. [251]

The irony here relies on the Greek ὑπὲρ, meaning "instead of" and also "on behalf of."[252] There is little to discuss here regarding irony; one meaning is intended by Caiaphas and another understood by the sequential reader. Clearly, Caiaphas is not proclaiming Jesus' atoning sacrifice to the council. It is verbal irony developed on a play of words. It is oracular in that Caiaphas is giving a word from God (ἐπροφήτευσεν). The character Caiaphas is ignorant of the full meaning of his words.

Equally significant here is the use of τοῦ λαοῦ and τὸ ἔθνος and the way in which these terms are interpreted by the narrator. For John, the terms λαός and ἔθνος are used synonymously in the text. The narrator comments only on the ἔθνος in verse 52. Severino Pancaro, on identifying the referent τοῦ λαοῦ in combination with τοῦ ἔθνους of verse 52, focusing on μόνον ἀλλ᾽ ἵνα καὶ τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ διεσκορπισμένα συναγάγῃ εἰς ἕν, concludes, "The children mentioned in John xi.52, are – contrary to what has been traditionally been held – neither the Gentiles nor the Jews of the dispersion as such, but rather: all those (whether Jew or Gentile) who would be united into this new people by the death

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[251] NASB will be used unless otherwise noted.

[252] Resseguie, *The Strange Gospel*, 56.

of Christ."[253] Significant debate has developed over the semantic range of λαός

and ἔθνος, the most detailed study of which has been published just recently.[254]

This debate is centered on τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ and τὰ διεσκορπισμένα. "The

children of God" has been used earlier in John in reference to all those who

receive Jesus as opposed to his own who rejected him (John 1:11-12). Yet, there

is some ambiguity here; are those who received him a smaller subset of the

majority who rejected him, or are they a distinctive subset making reference to a

universal openness of the gospel to all? Since Gentiles do not play a major role in

the Gospel, a primacy reading focuses on Jews; as the narrative moves forward to

John 10:16, however, the sequential reader is not given the identity of those "not

of this fold," so perhaps these are the Jews of Diaspora as well. Yet the words of

Caiaphas call readers back to John 1:11-12.

> Therefore, it seems best to conclude that the "dispersed
> children of God who are to be gathered into one" (11:52b)
> is a multifaceted designation that is capable of referring to
> a number of different entities: the designation refers to the
> first reader (those who have been gathered by means of the
> witness of the disciples) and all subsequent believers (who
> will be gathered by means of the community's witness). In
> light of John's historical and social context and the
> corresponding emphases of the narrative itself it must be
> maintained that a specific concern for the gathering of Israel
> in the Diaspora and Israel's unification is at play in 11:52b
> (cf. 10:16), although ultimately, as argued, the designation
> "children of God" could connote a wider referent.[255]

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[253] Severino Pancaro, "People of God in St John's Gospel," *NTS* 16, no. 2 (1970): 114-29.

[254] John A. Dennis, *Jesus' Death and the Gathering of True Israel: The Johannine Appropriation of Restoration Theology in the Light of John 11:47-52* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 247-318.

[255] Dennis, *Gathering of True Israel*, 318.

At an earlier point in his work, Dennis also stated, "Thus, the designation 'children of God,' although primarily a reference to restored Israel, is a concept that can be and surely was expanded beyond ethnic Israel in its soteriological extension."[256] Dennis comes to this conclusion based on John 1:12 in which there is an expressed emphasis on receiving (ἔλαβον) Jesus and believing (πιστεύουσιν).[257] The narrative salvific openness is stressed elsewhere in John apart from the passages discussed above. Universal language is applied to the mission of Jesus (to the "world" in John 1:9, 10a; 3:16-17 and to "all" in John 12:32; 17:2).[258] The requirement for salvation is never stated on ethnic grounds (John 3:15, 16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:35, 40, 47; 7:38; 11:25, 26; 12:44, 46; 14:12), and the universal aspects of Jesus' salvation are emphasized when Gentiles are introduced as characters in the text (John 12:19; 12:32).[259] Thus, John 11:52 employs language that usually refers to Jews but extends its meaning to include

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[256] Ibid., 310.

[257] R. Alan Culpepper, "The Pivot of John's Prologue," *NTS* 27, no. 1 (1980): 28, 31.

[258] On the universal nature of Jesus' mission in John, see Edward W. Klink, III, *The Sheep of the Fold: The Audience and Origin of the Gospel of John* (SNTSMS 141; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 220-38.

[259] See Johannes Beutler, "Greeks Come to See Jesus (John 12:20f)," *Bib* 71, no. 3 (1990): 333-47; H. B. Kossen, "Who Were the Greeks of John xii 20," in *Studies in John* (ed. W. C. Van Unnik; Leiden: Brill, 1970), 97-110. Yet, see also J. Louis Martyn, "A Gentile Mission that Replaces an Earlier Jewish Mission?" in *Exploring the Gospel of John: In Honor of D. Moody* (ed. R. Alan Culpepper and C. Clifton Black; Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox, 1996), 124-44.

Gentiles when the Gospel's universal paradigm is considered retrospectively.[260]

We encounter here an ironic prophecy where one meaning seems to play on the

naiveté of Caiaphas whose words mean significantly more than he intends.

Another irony also exists based on ambiguity surrounding λαός, which seems

focused on Jesus' Jewish mission, but opens up and becomes more inclusive upon

the work's completion. The implied author emphasizes both of these ironies by

developing their strength as the work is completed.[261]

Acts 5:38-39

In addition to John 11:49-52, through exploration of early Christian

literature, one notes a second irony with dual reference in Acts 5:38-39. Despite

having received less attention than John 11, it remains significant since it is an

ironic statement, indicating more than is intended. The implied author plays with

the naiveté of Gamaliel and, as the success of the gospel becomes evident in its

geographical and numeric spread, the words of Gamaliel become retrospectively

ironic. The caution he imposes on the Sanhedrin implies that the Christian

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[260] Finally, the redaction of the Old Greek in John 6:45 where "your sons" is removed gives it a universal implication; see Edwin D. Freed, *Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John* (NovTSupp 11; Leiden: Brill, 1965); Martinus J. J. Menken, *Old Testament Quotations in the Fourth Gospel: Studies in Textual Form* (CBET 15; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996), 67-77. The mention of Gentiles in John 7:35 and 12:20 also seems to indicate universal aspects in the narrative.

[261] Unfortunately, the statement of purpose included in John 20:31 is not particularly helpful because of its own ambiguities and its relationship to various readings of the Gospel. See D. A. Carson, "Syntactical and Text-Critical Observations on John 20:30-31: One More Round on the Purpose of the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 124, no. 4 (2005): 693-714 and the notes and reference therein.

movement will come to nothing if it is left alone. In Acts 5:38-39, Gamaliel

states,

> καὶ τὰ νῦν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπόστητε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τούτων
> καὶ ἄφετε αὐτούς· ὅτι ἐὰν ᾖ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἡ βουλὴ αὕτη ἢ τὸ
> ἔργον τοῦτο, καταλυθήσεται, εἰ δὲ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐστιν, οὐ δυνήσεσθε
> καταλῦσαι αὐτούς, μήποτε καὶ θεομάχοι εὑρεθῆτε. [262]

> And so in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these
> men and let them alone, for if this plan or action should be of
> men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, you will not be
> able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting
> against God.

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[262] A number of difficulties exist with interpretation of this text. First, there is
some debate regarding the way in which one should read the two conditional
clauses in Greek. Since the author moves from ἐὰν ᾖ to εἰ δὲ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐστιν, the
difference in emphasis is one from possibility to probability; this has been
interpreted to mean that Gamaliel stands behind the later interpretation, viewing
the apostolic preaching as from God. The move from a third class conditional to a
first class conditional as evidence for Gamaliel's position is not convincing,
however, since grammatically a first class conditional is only posited as true for
the sake of argument; it is not a statement of fact in relation to reality. Daniel B.
Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New
Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1996), 689-712; see the extended
discussion on this passage in Max Zerwick, *Biblical Greek: Illustrated by
Examples* (SPIB 114; Rome: Editrice Pontifico Istituto Biblico, 2001), 104.
Further debate is caused by hermeneutical issues surrounding the relationship
between Luke and Acts. Is Acts "Luke-Acts" or is it a more independent sequel
with variations and differences from Luke? The presuppositions involved in
reading this text are outlined clearly by William Lyons. He posits that many
readers do not realize the hermeneutical difficulty with direct reading of Luke's
narrative characterizations into Acts, particularly as relates to portrayal of the
Pharisees, of which Gamaliel is clearly one. Since some argue that Acts' position
on the Pharisees is much more positive than that of Luke, there is no irony in
Gamaliel's statement; he is only stating that which he believes, and there is
nothing more to his words: the work of the apostles is from God. Even if the
Gospel of Luke cannot be used to taint one's general interpretation of the
Pharisees, however, there may be enough in the immediate narrative to give
readers a clear picture of Gamaliel's irony. William John Lyons, "The Words of
Gamaliel (Acts 5:38-39) and the Irony of Indeterminacy," *JSNT* 20 no. 68 (1997):
23-49.

There is very little in the speech that would lead the sequential reader to hold Gamaliel in positive esteem. He is honored by all the people in Acts 5:34, but in his own speech (Acts 5:37), he states that Judas of Galilee rose up and drew people away (καὶ ἀπέστησεν λαὸν ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ);[263] since those who honor Gamaliel and those who quickly stray to follow another are identified by use of the same language, the sequential reader becomes confused regarding the nature of the people, and the value of their honor is put into question; thus, the speech coming from Gamaliel's own mouth taints the narrator's earlier comments. Second, the examples he provides are in no way positive: "the logic of his argument from historical antecedents draws an (implicit) analogy between the Christian messianic movement and two failed messianic movements."[264] Padilla concludes,

> What Gamaliel *himself* believes about the matter can be gauged
> by the two examples he marshals to compare the Jesus movement,
> namely Judas and Theudas: both were illegitimate and both failed.
> It is thus incorrect to conclude that Gamaliel was on the side of the
> apostles or that he was a friend towards them. If then Gamaliel is
> portrayed as seeing the Christian movement as negative, as outlined
> above, he is looking forward to its failure. His words then which
> seem to argue against the success of the apostle actually affirm the
> movement for the reader. "Therefore, for readers who were
> familiar with the whole of Acts and the endurance of time and
> unabated growth of the Christian movement described therein,
> *Gamaliel's statement was a challenge that had answered itself.*
> This was thus proof that the Pharisee had unwittingly said more
> than he knew . . . and affirmed, ironically, that the movement

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[263] Osvaldo Padilla, *The Speeches of Outsiders in Acts: Poetics, Theology and Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 113.

[264] John A. Darr, "Irenic or Ironic: Another Look at Gamaliel before the Sandhedrin (Acts 5:33-42)," in *Literary Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays in Honor of Joseph B. Tyson* (ed. Richard P. Thompson and Thomas E. Phillips; Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1998), 135-36.

had divine roots.[265]

Finally, Luke Timothy Johnson has pointed out that when Gamaliel uses ἀνέστη θευδᾶς and ἀνέστη Ἰούδας ὁ Γαλιλαῖος in his speech, he is employing a verb used of Jesus' resurrection in Acts 2:24, 32; 3:22, 26, further reducing Jesus to a would-be prophet.[266] Gamaliel is saying that the apostolic movement will come to nothing, but if it is from God (with the implication that it is not), it will continue. Daniel Marguerat summarizes its relation to Acts 1:8: "L'intérêt du principe de Gamaliel, pour ce qui concerne notre sujet, vient de ce qu'il associe la reconnaissance de la volonté divine à la destinée du groupe qui se réclame de Jésus."[267] (The principal interest of Gamaliel, as concerns our subject, comes from the way in which he associates the recognition of the divine will with the destiny of the group that proclaims Jesus.) Gamaliel's proclamation is, therefore, prophetic insofar as it restates the initial prophecy and this prophecy is oracular since it predicts a future event and is given by God, an aspect the sequential reader understands. For the purposes of this thesis, it is another example of verbal irony in that the words of Gamaliel are reversed and used to affirm the gospel when one reads text as a whole.[268]

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[265] Padilla, *Speeches of Outsiders*, 129.

[266] Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (ed. Daniel J. Harrington; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992), 103.

[267] Daniel Marguerat, "Le Dieu du Livre des Actes," in *L'évangile exploré: mélanges offerts à Simon Légasse à l'occasion de ses soixante-dix ans* (ed. Simon Légasse and Alain Marchadour; Paris: Éditions du cerf, 1996), 312.

[268] It can only be classified as an indirect oracle since it restates that which was made clear in Acts 1:8, and the extent of divine influence is retrospective based on

These two examples from early Christian literature indicate that some prophetic texts are read as verbally ironic. In John, a play on the word ὑπὲρ leads the reader to understand the true nature of Caiaphas' words. The reader has some idea that Jesus will die for his people (John 1:29; 10:11, 15, 17),[269] but the passion narrative fills out these references. The idea of Gentile inclusion within the term λαός is emphasized when considering the entire Gospel. In Acts, Gamaliel's speech includes verbal irony regarding the success of the Christian movement; it reinforces the initial prophecy, but the extent of its irony is only realized when read from the end of the book.

IRONY IN EARLY GREEK NARRATIVES: DREAMS AND ORACLES

The term αἴνιγμα is commonly used in discussing prophetic oracles (Aristophanes, *Equites* 196; Euripides, *Ion* 533; Euripides, *Supplices* 138) and oracular dreams (Herodotus, *Historiae* 5.56), and these αἰνίγματα are to be solved by interpreters (Plato, *Timaeus* 72b).[270] Thus, oracles or oracular dreams carry hidden meaning that requires skilled interpretation.[271] They are generally ambiguous (having more than one meaning), metaphorical (a word or phrase is

the ending of Acts. John A Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 120.

[269] John Dennis, "Jesus' Death in John's Gospel: A Survey of Research from Bultmann to the Present with Special Reference to the Johannine Hyper-Texts," *CBR* 4, no. 3 (2006): 349-60.

[270] Sarah Iles Johnston and Peter T. Struck, eds. *Mantikê: Studies in Ancient Divination* (RGRW 155; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 160-65.

[271] Julia Kindt, "The Delphic Oracle: A Poetics of Futures Past between History, Literature and Religion," (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2003), 44.

shifted from its normal use to a new context where it brings about new meaning),[272] or vague, containing little that can be deciphered: usually a very difficult metaphor or extremely ambiguous statement.[273] It is undisputed that the prophecy of Delphi, in a literary setting, was recorded as ambiguous.[274] The oft-quoted phrase of Heraclitus, "the lord whose oracle is in Delphi neither declares nor conceals, but gives a sign (σημαίνει),"[275] holds implication for all types of oracles. As Aune has commented,

> He means simply that oracles require interpretation. The
> ambiguity of oracular speech undoubtedly contributed to
> the widespread belief that an oracle would always be fulfilled,
> even if in a totally unexpected manner. The obscurity of
> oracles meant that any particular interpretation was regarded
> with some skepticism until the fulfillment was obvious. Many
> ancient oracles seem designed less to reveal than to conceal the
> will of the gods.   Ambiguity and unclarity were widely regarded
> as characteristically appropriate.[276]

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[272] These definitions are based on Kindt, "Futures Past," 46-53 who is dependent on the definitions of Quintilian (*Inst*. 7.9; 8.6.8).

[273] The divisions of allegory, metaphor, and oracle are given by Plutarch (καὶ τὰς ἀλληγορίας καὶ τὰς μεταφορὰς; *Moralia* 409), and the vague nature of the oracles is continually emphasized as well (2x ἀσάφεια in *Mor.* 407 among other terms)

[274] Hugh Bowden, *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle: Divination and Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univeristy Press, 2005), 49-51; Elton Barker, "Paging the Oracle: Interpretation, Identity and Performance in Herodotus' 'History'," *G&R* 53, no. 1 (2006): 1-28; Giovanni Manetti, *Theories of the Sign in Classical Antiquity* (ASem; Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1993), 14-35.

[275] Charles H. Kahn, ed. *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus: A New Arrangement and Translation of the Fragments with Literary and Philosophical Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 42-3.

[276] Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 51.

More specifically in relation to this text, Jean-Pierre Vernant states,

> … the oracle in reality does not tell the future any more than it
> hides it; it only signifies it (σημαίνει). It allows it to be spoken
> by hiding it; it lets it be divined by means of an enigmatic word,
> of a "spoken" that functions like a sign, but an obscure sign, as
> difficult for human intelligence to decode as the events
> themselves about which they come to consult. The ambiguity of
> the oracular word reintroduces into mortal time this
> fundamental opacity, this necessarily hazardous character of
> previews and projects that is divination's task to attenuate, if
> not to abolish.[277]

Many have noted the ambiguous nature of oracles and dream texts[278] and there exist numerous studies on their purpose, emphasizing the distinction between mortals and gods;[279] part of this distinction emphasizes the inability to discern divine speech. Various Greek authors have availed themselves of this ambiguity and interpretive difficulty to deceive characters and the sequential reader, thereby creating irony.

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[277] Jean Pierre Vernant and Froma I. Zeitlin, *Mortals and Immortals: Collected Essays* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991), 315.

[278] Stanford, *Ambiguity in Greek Literature*, 135-45. Shadi Bartsch, *Decoding the Ancient Novel: The Reader and the Role of Description in Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 81-108; Hans Klees, *Die Eigenart des griechischen Glaubens an Orakel und Seher. Ein Vergleich zwischen griechischer und nichtgriechischer Mantik bei Herodot* (TBAW 45; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1963), 68-91; Konrad Ohlert, *Rätsel und Rätselspiele der alten Griechen* (Berlin: Mayer & Müller, 1912); H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell, *The Oracular Responses* (vol. 2 of *The Delphic Oracle*; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1956), xiv-xv, xxvii-xxviii; Simon Price, "Delphi and Divination," in *Greek Religion and Society* (ed. P. E. Easterling and J. V. Muir; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 149-51.

[279] Julia Kindt, "Oracular Ambiguity as a Mediation Triple," *Classicum* 34, no. 1 (2008): 23-34.

Herodotus and Oracular Expectations

The most famous ancient example is Herodotus' story of Croesus in which Croesus is deceived by the oracle and surprised at the outcome. Croesus wants to see if Apollo has knowledge of his doings and so, using ingredients that could not be anticipated, makes a tortoise and lamb mixture. Only the Delphic oracle was able to perceive correctly what he had done and states it in poetic verse (*Histories* 1.47-48), which proves to Croesus that the oracle is true (ἀψευδὴς) (*Hist.* 1.49). So, in the next question to the oracle, he asks if he should go to war with the Persians, and the response is, "ἤν στρατεύλειν ἐπὶ Πέρσας, μεγάλην ἀρχὴν μιν καταλὺσειν·" ("If he should send an army against the Persians he would destroy a great empire" Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.53 [Godley, LCL]). Herodotus emphasizes that the oracle is true (ἀληθεία, *Hist.* 1.55). Since Croesus wishes to destroy the enemy, he views this prophecy as favourable but then inquires as to the length of his rule, to which he receives the reply, Ἀλλ᾽ὅταν ἡμίονος Βασιλεύς Μήδοισι γένηται . . . ("Lydian, beware of the day when a mule is lord of the Medians . . .") (Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.55 [Godley, LCL]). Croesus also finds this very encouraging for a mule will never be king of the Medians. Through narrative aside, however, the sequential reader learns that Croesus lost the battle and that he had misunderstood the oracle (*Hist.* 1.70, 71).

In *Hist.* 1:75, after a final consultation of the oracle, Croesus receives a κίβδηλος (deceptive) answer.[280] At this point, the sequential reader, being aware

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[280] Jonas Grethlein, "Philosophical and Structuralist Narratologies – Worlds Apart?" in *Narratology and Interpretation: The Content of Narrative Form in*

of Croesus' destruction, must follow the action and watch the great empire fall, retrospectively understanding the oracular deception (*Hist*. 1.86). Finally, the unexpected answer to the mule metaphor (Cyrus) is given, solving the curiosity gap for the sequential reader and Croesus (*Hist*. 1.91).

The entire story causes the sequential reader to reflect back on the earlier words of Solon: "We must look to the conclusion of every matter and see how it shall end, for there are many to whom heaven has given a vision of blessedness, and yet afterward brought them to utter ruin" (Herodotus, *Hist*. 1.32 [Godley, LCL]). The sequential reader is also called back to an oracle given in *Hist.* 1.32 that the fifth generation of Gyges would suffer the vengeance of Heracleidae. There is some debate regarding whether or not this oracle would have been in the reader's mind as Croesus' losses mount,[281] but it is a test for readers to keep the oracles of the past in mind as they move forward in the literature and to retrospectively reflect. The entire story reveals to the sequential reader that which it demonstrates to Croesus: all things must be read from the end. In this story, the metaphorical oracular application of the mule surprises the sequential reader who, motivated by curiosity, looks back, along with Croesus, to see the ways in which

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Ancient Literature (ed. Jonas Grethlein and Antonios Rengakos; TCSV 4; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 163.

[281] Greithlein argues that it is possible for a reader to make the connection as the narrative progresses but admits it is only an implicit foreshadowing for an attentive reader: "Narratologies," 162-63. Christopher Pelling believes it is an "odd reader" who would have continued this thought forward into the Croesus narrative: "Educating Croesus: Talking and Learning in Herodotus' Lydian Narrative," *ClAnt* 25, no.1 (2006): 162-63. Elton Barker states, "Herodotus' narrative on Croesus' test is not just about the failure of the king to get the oracle right; it's also about testing the reader's *reading* ability." Barker, "Paging the Oracle," 26-27.

the oracles were stacked against him. Croesus and the sequential reader both are

reminded that one should deliberate well regarding oracles so as not to be without

understanding (*Hist.* 1.91).[282] At its completion, the story encourages readers to

apply the wisdom of Solon: σκοπέειν δὲ χρὴ παντὸς χρηματος τὴν τελευτήν . . .

("We must look the conclusion of every matter, and see how it shall end . . ."

Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.32 [Godley, LCL]).

Retrospection and Deception in Euripides

Similar to Herodotus, Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* presents

protagonist, Iphigenia, as well as the sequential reader with interpretive

difficulties and surprises; it also demands a rereading or new understanding of

initial expectations. Iphigenia's dream and its interpretation are translated as

follows:

> I dreamt that I had escaped from this land and lived in Argos,
> and that as I slept within my maiden chamber the flat expanse
> of the earth began to heave and roll. I fled the house and,
> when I stood outside, I saw the cornice of the palace topple
> and all the house, from its column tops down, cast in ruins to
> the ground. Only one pillar of my ancestral home, it seemed,
> was left standing (μόνος δ᾽ἐλείφθη στῦλος), and from its capital
> it seemed to grow a head of blond hair (κόμας ξανθὰς) and to
> take on human speech. And I, honouring this office I have of
> killing foreigners, sprinkled (ὑδραίειν) it with water to consign
> it to death, weeping as I did so.   This is how I interpret the
> dream: Orestes is dead – it is he I consecrated for sacrifice
> (κατηρξάμην) – for the pillars of a house are its children, and
> those who are sprinkled (χέρνιβες) by my lustral basin are killed.

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[282] Leslie Kurke, "'Counterfeit Oracles' and 'Legal Tender': The Politics of
Oracular Consultation in Herodotus," *CW* 102, no. 4 (2009): 436-38. The
necessity of careful consideration regarding the meaning of an oracle is
emphasized throughout the history (i.e., the Spartans in *Hist.* 1.66.2ff , 1.67ff, and
7.41ff). Barker emphasizes the need for interpretive collaboration on oracles:
"Paging the Oracle," 1-28.

(Euripides, *Iphigenia taurica* 1.44-59 [Kovacs, LCL])

This dream presents numerous difficulties for those hearing the play, the first being Iphigenia's false interpretation of the dream regarding her brother. In the very next scene, the audience is confronted with Orestes (*Iph. taur.* 1.67). The dream already demands reinterpretation now that Orestes is alive. The pillar remains standing in the dream as does Orestes, and Iphigenia has made a grave mistake. The dream, however, moves the plot forward, actually motivating Iphigenia to sacrifice her own brother. "This device of *misinterpretation* leads to a truly tragic situation; Iphigenia hardens her heart against the entrance of any human kindness when the capture of the stranger Greeks, Orestes and Pylades, is announced: as the result of the dream she will show no pity (*Iph. taur.* 348-350)."[283] From this point on, Iphigenia is bringing to fulfillment a dream that she thinks has already taken place in the past. The audience must watch in horror as she is about to sacrifice her own brother, creating a second interpretation of the dream. Here, the audience is left with possible uncertainty as to whether or not her dream will come to fruition as they hope for Orestes' survival but fear his impending death. This suspense is substantiated by the oath Orestes has received from Phoebus stating that Orestes is to go to the land of the Taurians, steal the statue of Artemis, and bring it to the land of Athens; after this, the oracle notes that he will receive "respite from his labours" (ἀμπνοὰς ἕξειν πόνων, *Iph. taur.*

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[283] William S. Messer, *The Dream in Homer and Greek Tragedy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1918), 93.

1.92).[284] The audience is left hanging, torn between two possible outcomes; the

dream implies "Orestes will be sacrificed, whereas the oracle implies that he will

be saved."[285] Both are sufficiently ambiguous to leave an open future. Further

increasing suspense, Orestes states that he was deceived by the oracle (ψέυδω

711); without the support of the oracle, fear increases as the scene moves toward

his death.[286] Orestes and Iphigenia, however, finally recognized one another

(769-827), and there is renewed hope of escape.

Here, the dream demands a third interpretation that will encompass

Iphigenia's planned escape. She must clean Orestes from blood guilt using sea

water.

> The shift in interpretation is made possible by the polysemy
> of the word ὑδραίνειν ('to sprinkle', 54 in the dream. The
> act of sprinkling turns out to be a reference not to the
> purification of Orestes before he is sacrificed, but to Iphigenia's
> washing of Orestes with seawater. In the rest of the play other
> terms are used for the sprinkling of a foreigner before he is
> sacrificed: κατάρχομαι ('consecrate someone for sacrifice') –
> Iphigenia uses the word in her interpretation of the dream (56) –
> and χερνίπτομαι ('sprinkle someone with holy water, purify or
> dedicate thereby'). These terms, in contrast to ὑδραίνω
> specifically denote the activity of consecrating the sacrifice.
> ὑδραίνω , on the other hand, derived from ὕδωρ, just means
> sprinkle with water and often refers to ritual cleansing in the
> other passages in which this rare verb is used. And so, here
> too, in the end the sprinkling in the dream seems to refer to the

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[284] Translation by Caroline P. Trieschnigg, "Iphigenia's Dream in Euripides'
Iphigenia Taurica," *CQ* 58, no. 2 (2008): 467. She also emphasizes the ambiguity
of this phrase and its relation to death in Euripides, *Trachiniae* 76-81, 166-72,
824-26, 1169-73.

[285] Richard Hamilton, "Prologue Prophecy and Plot in Four Plays of Euripides,"
AJP 99, no. 3 (1978): 283.

[286] Karelisa V. Hartigan, *Ambiguity and Self-Deception*: *The Apollo and Artemis
Plays of Euripides* (SKP; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990), 91-2.

purification of Orestes from matricide, which is elsewhere referred to as ἁγνίσαι (1039), μεταστήσω φόνου (1177) and νίψω φόνον (1230, cf. 1338).[287]

The sequential reader has been manipulated through the primacy effect of the sacrificial language Iphigenia employed while interpreting ὑδραίνω in her dream. When the expected does not happen, the recency effect forces the audience back in order to find the correct interpretation. Similar to Solon in Herodotus, Iphigenia's words remind the reader that the unexpected should be expected: πάντα γὰρ τὰ τῶν θεῶν ἐς ἀφανὲς . . . "All that the gods dispense is obscure in its outcome. . ." (Euripides, *Iph. taur.* 475 [Kovacs, LCL]).[288]

Alexander, Caesar, and Pompey: The Manipulation and Ambiguity of Oracles

Examples of ambiguous oracles and dreams occur often in Plutarch's *Lives*, and the accounts of Alexander, Caesar, and Pompey contain many. Alexander characteristically used this ambiguity to his favour. Arriving at Delphi on the inauspicious days, when oracles were not to be delivered, he summoned the prophetess. At her refusal to come, he tried to drag her to the temple, to which she responded by stating, Ἀνίκητος εἶ, ὦ παῖ ("you art invincible, my son") (Plutarch, *Alexander* 14.4 [Perrin, LCL]). Although context seems to indicate a

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[287] Trieschnigg, "Iphigenia's Dream," 471. It is also indicated as a possibility but not elaborated in Matthew Wright, *Euripides' Escape-Tragedies. A Study of Helen, Andromeda, and Iphigenia among the Taurians* (London: Oxford University Press, 2005), 286-87.

[288] Earlier interpreters also included Iphigenia's pouring out of libations as a possible fulfillment. See Hartigan, *Self-Deception*, 97. For further discussion on the use of dream deception in Euripides, see Hamilton, "Prologue," 277-302.

reference to his persistence, Alexander seems to take it as indicating he is unconquerable, and he is satisfied with the prophecy.

A second oracle comes to Alexander at Ammon where the prophet makes a slip of the tongue. "And some say that the prophet, wishing to show his friendliness by addressing him with "O paidion," or *O my son*, in his foreign pronunciation ended the words with "s" instead of "n" and said, "O pai Dios" or *O son of Zeus*" (Plutarch, *Alex.* 27.5 [Perrin, LCL]). Thus, Alexander comes out with a very fortuitous word play. Another reference to Delphi comes as Alexander enters Persis of Persia; there, he finds a guide whose father was a Lycian (*Alex.* 37.1-2). He retrospectively relates this to a prophecy received when he was young that a "lycus," or *wolf* would be his guide during a march against the Persians. Yet another play on words comes out of a dream during which he captures a satyr (Σάτυρος); Alexander's dream interpreters divided the word into its parts: Σὴ γενήσεται Τύρος - "Tyre is to be yours" (Plutarch, *Alex.* 24.5 [Perrin, LCL]). Alexander and his interpreters are playing with language, utilizing mistakes and ambiguities to their advantage, and at times, using retrospective analysis to solve an oracle's meaning.[289]

Caesar has numerous dreams, but Plutarch, viewing Caesar's symbolic dream of sex with his mother as particularly ambiguous, moves this episode in his account of Caesar's life. Instead of placing the dream at the time of Caesar's quaestorship in Spain (Suetonius, *Divus Julius* 7.2; Dio, 41.24), he moves it to the

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[289] The types of ambiguity with which Alexander is playing were common among the Greeks according to Quintilian. The prophecy about the wolf would be classified under homonymy and the prophecy regarding the satyr is based on the division of words (*Inst*. 7.9.1-3).

night before the crossing of the Rubicon and emphasizes that the dream is improper (ἔκθεσμον).[290]

> He dispenses with the sole, propitious interpretation given it
> by Suetonius and Dio – mastery over one's country, leaving
> this interpretation possible, but suggesting the ill-boding
> meaning it had for Hippias before Marathon in Herodotus,
> vi, 107 where Hippias took the dream to prophesy his success
> and death in his motherland at a rich old age, but died shortly
> after.[291]

As a result of this new placement, the sequential reader is left unsure regarding the dream's intended interpretation. The text is left open, and the correct interpretation is "beautifully uncertain" since the dream seems to emphasize two outcomes.[292] This dream then constitutes part of a narrative that builds anticipatory suspense, and the plot for Caesar's life begins shortly after his victory.

> Pompey also had a very ambiguous dream.
>
> That night Pompey dreamed that as he entered his theatre
> the people clapped their hands, and that he decorated the
> temple of Venus Victrix with many spoils. On some
> accounts he was encouraged, but on others depressed, by
> the dream; he feared lest the race of Caesar, which went
> back to Venus, was to receive glory and splendour through
> him. (Plutarch, *Pompeius* 67.1-2 [Perrin, LCL])

This dream heightens a fear of loss but also raises hope for victory. Pompey and the sequential reader will know the true nature of the dream only subsequent to

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[290] The translation "unlawful" may better reflect Caesar's actions against the senate (Plutarch, *Caesar* 31.1-2) and his injustices to come.

[291] F. E. Brenk, "The Dreams of Plutarch's Lives," *Latomus* 34 (1975): 346.

[292] Christopher Pelling, "Tragical Dreamer: Some Dreams in the Roman Historians," *G&R* 44, no.2 (1997): 201.

the decisive battle. If the reader is already aware of the outcome, suspense is raised regarding the manner in which it comes about since the dream foreshadows the end.

Given this sampling of Plutarch's work, he clearly views oracles and dreams as enigmatic and open to various interpretations, emphasizing this to such an extent that he moves dream accounts in order to highlight their inherent ambiguity. Retrospection, in each of these stories, permits the characters and/or the sequential reader to understand the dream/oracle's meaning.

Greek Romance and Oracular Retrospection

The final dream in this brief survey is that of Clitophon in Achilles Tatius' romance. When Clitophon wishes to embrace Leucippe but is turned away, he states, "How long are we to be deprived of the rites of Aphrodite?" (Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 4.1.2-3 [Gaselee, LCL]). It is Leucippe's dream, guaranteeing her marriage to Clitophon if she remains a virgin until adorned as bride, that motivates her refusal. After this, Clitophon's dream is narrated:

> Hearing her dream, I remembered that I too had a similar vision (προσόμοιον ἰδὼν ἐνύπνιον); during the night just past I thought I saw before me Aphrodite's temple and the goddess's image within it; but when I come near to make my prayers, the doors were shut. I was distressed at this, but then a woman appeared exactly like the statue (ἄγαλμα), saying; "At present you cannot enter the temple, but if you wait for a short time, I will not only open it to you but make you a priest of the goddess. (Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 4.1.5-8 [Gaselee, LCL])

The sequential reader will most likely take προσόμοιος as similar in meaning to Leucippe's, that there will be a time for them to unite sexually. Clitophon's dream signifies that "he will soon have sex (become an initiate of the goddess of

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love) with his virginal (closed doors) wife. As a result he stops bothering her at present. Clearly their marriage and the consummation of their love is being foreshadowed, and, after all, this is the conclusion of all the romances in one form or another."[293]

Yet, as the book progresses, Clitophon sees Leucippe beheaded by pirates and buries her body (*Leuc. Clit.* 5.7-8.1). Clitophon believes then that Fate has robbed him of his bride (*Leuc. Clit.* 5.11.1-3). The sequential reader, however, is assured of Clitophon's loyalty to Leucippe, even in her death, based on his oath that he will have nothing to do with a woman until he returns to Ephesus (*Leuc. Clit.* 5.12.3; 5.14.3). Subsequent to his arrival in Ephesus with Melite, he receives a letter from Leucippe stating that she is alive, and he once again vows his chastity (*Leuc. Clit.* 5.20.5; 5.21.1). The body he had buried was not hers. Melite, however, being in love passionately with Clitophon, mounts a powerful, rhetorically emotive argument for pity in attempt to persuade him to sleep with her. At this point, the sequential reader is held in suspense, hoping Clitophon will uphold his vows while fearing he might not. To the reader's great surprise, Melite's arguments prove exceedingly powerful, and, despite having remained steadfast for so long, he succumbs to her.

The primacy effect sets the sequential reader up for this wonderful deception. In retrospect, the reader realizes that Melite is a perfect fulfillment to Clitophon's dream. She is described as being beautiful as a statue (ἄγαλμα, 5.11.5), she looks like Aphrodite (τὸ βλέμμα . . . Ἀφροδίσιον, 5.13.2), and there is

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[293] Bartsch, *Decoding*, 90.

continued mention of mystery rites (*Leuc. Clit.* 5.15.6; 5.16.3; 5.25.6, 5.26.3).[294]

Satyrus' words in *Leuc. Clit.* 5.11.4 become prophetic; he asks Clitophon to have

pity on the soul (ἐλεῆσαι ψυχὴν) of Melite who is on fire (φλέγω) for him. All of

this comes back in Melite's arguments that ultimately win him over (ἐλεέω

5.26.2; πῦρ 5.26.2, 10). Finally, a hint of Clitophon's possible failure appears in

his letter to her: . . . ἔι τις ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν ἀνδράσι παρθενία . . . "if there be any

virginity in men" (Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 5.20.5 [Gaselee, LCL]).

The sequential reader, having been deceived by the original dream, must

reinterpret it according to the signs that have been present all along. Achilles

Tatius employs the dream as a plot device in order to induce suspense and

surprise, setting up a wonderful postdictable rereading of Clitophon's sex with

Melite.[295]

Herodotus, Euripides, Plutarch, and Achilles Tatius use dreams and

oracles in calculated fashion, directing the sequential reader back to their narrative

beginnings and encouraging resolution of initial interpretive difficulties through

retrospective rereading. Toward the end of the Croesus narrative, Herodotus

offers the sequential reader a true understanding of the oracles through

unexpected metaphorical application.   Euripides allows the sequential reader to

fall first for Iphigenia's initial dream interpretation and then for a modified

interpretation at Orestes' near-consecration for sacrifice before finally revealing

the surprise salvation of Orestes through Iphigenia's cleansing; the end was

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[294] Ibid., 92.

[295] For further discussion on dream narratives in *Leucippe and Clitophon*, see Bartsch, *Decoding*, 80-108.

foreseeable from the beginning, but Euripides creates and manipulates suspense along the narrative, driving the audience towards his surprise ending. Plutarch uses the ambiguity of Pompey's dream to heighten suspense and raises suspense in a similar way by stressing the ambiguity of Caesar's dream before his crossing of the Rubicon; both are interpreted in retrospect. In the Alexander stories, language ambiguity, particularly the use of word plays, informs oracular interpretation, and the oracle regarding the wolf is clearly retrospective. When Achilles Tatius locates Clitophon's dream amidst various signs of him remaining a virgin, suspense is created as he is confronted by a beautiful woman with the rhetoric of love. The point at which Clitophon ultimately gives in brings the sequential reader to an experience of postdictable surprise.

These narratives indicate that Greek literature assumed a place for reader manipulation. Authors deliberately crafted texts to provoke false anticipation that, when the expected outcome fails to realize, demands correction through retrospective reinterpretation. Next, it will be shown that the narrative of Matthew 1:19-23 fits into this convention; it leads the sequential reader to suppose that the "people" are the Jews but requires a hermeneutical reassessment at the narrative's end.

CHAPTER 3

Dreams and oracles were employed in narrative, as has been discussed, to deceive the sequential reader temporarily, opening a path of developing expectations only to surprise with a fulfillment that could not be anticipated except retrospectively. A reading without retrospection provides only part of the interpretive paradigm necessary to understand the text as a whole, and in many instances this type of looking back begins only subsequent to the surprise. In retrospection, some meanings initially open to readers are closed and others significantly reinterpreted in light of the narrative's ending (the *recency effect*).

In Matthew, within the initial dream (Matt 1:21) and at each instance in which Isaiah is explicitly quoted with reference to Gentiles in the Gospel, an inception-oriented reading tends toward a negative evaluation of the Gentiles: Galilee is oppressed by Gentile rulers (Matt 4:15) or Gentiles are to fall under judgment (Matt 12:18). Those quotations that do not emphasize an explicitly negative perspective towards Gentiles (Matt 1:23, 8:17) draw reader attention away from the Gentiles with a context that focuses on Jewish salvation. These verses, read this way under the primacy effect, allow for the surprise of Matt 28:19-20.

Subsequently, a retrospective reading of the same texts inverts the initial perspective and overturns expectations, opening the entire Gospel to further reconsideration of Gentile inclusion. The "people" of Matt 1:21 becomes inclusive, the "they" of Matt 1:23 is broadened, "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Matt 4:15) encourages the sequential reader to reflect upon the centurion in Matt 8:5-

13, and Matt 12:18 can be reread focusing on justice. Thus, the surprise leads to a retrospective rereading of the advanced mentions in the text.

All of Isaiah's fulfillment quotations in Matthew are ironic in that they speak the opposite of their intention, and they are oracles, texts from God speaking of the future, that are applied by the author to the story of Jesus. Each of these oracles emphasizes the primacy effect of the dream narrative even while dreams themselves are open to reinterpretation. All of the advanced mentions referring to Gentile inclusion are in the context of or directly within a quotation from Isaiah[296] (Matt 1:23-24, 4:14-16; 12:17-21). The inclusive ambiguity of Matt 8:17 has been largely ignored, though it will be discussed here. Examination of the fulfillment quotations will proceed according to narrative order.

The same sequential reader deception that allows for a narrative's postdictable surprise can also be located in Matthew's echoes of Isaiah (Matt 20:28; 21:33-45; 26:28), and these will also be discussed. The implied author of Matthew, using the verbal irony of Isaiah throughout, establishes a clear narrative trend that temporarily deceives the sequential reader.

EMPHASIZING PRIMACY EXPECTATIONS – NARRATIVE BEGINNING

Literature related to the impact of the primacy effect in Matthew's Gospel tends to focus on Matt 1:21-23, with interpretation of the word λαός serving as

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[296] The quotations to be discussed all begin with an introductory phrase including πληρόω (fulfill). Calling them fulfillment quotations helps the reader reflect on how it has come about. See Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary* (ed. Helmut Koester; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 120-21.

the prominent center of debate. The primacy reader is concerned about the initial setting of the verse in its given context.

What is it about Matt 1:21-23 that leads the sequential reader to interpret "his people" either as the Jewish people or as Gentiles? James Phelan presents one of the clearest descriptions of an opening from a narrative perspective:

> Beginnings, however, involve more than igniting the engine
> that drives the plot. They provide exposition about character
> and setting, they invite readers to move from the world outside
> the novel to the world of the novel, and they establish
> relationships among authors, narrators, and audiences. In order
> to recognize the multiple functions of novelistic openings, four
> different aspects of beginning may be identified. The first
> two focus on the "aboutness" of the narrative and on the textual
> dynamics, while the second two focus on the reader's activity.[297]

The sequential reader is placed into a narrative space and begins to produce expectations based on information presented in the opening. Thus, the opening brings to mind a series of questions and expectations.[298]

> Yet, "[n]ot all questions and answers that belong in the
> unifying network of erotetic narrative are of the same
> order. Some questions orchestrate our attention to the
> emerging story from one end to the other; others organize
> larger parts of the tale, but not the tale in its entirety, and
> others are of a still smaller gauge. Questions that structure
> an entire text or, at least most of it, we can call 'presiding
> macro-questions.'"[299]

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[297] James Phelan, *Beginnings and Endings (Theories and Typologies of How Novels Open and Close* (ed. Paul Hudson, Christopher Schellinger, and Marijke Rijsberman; vol. 1 of *Encyclopedia of the Novel*; Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998), 96.

[298] H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* (2d ed.; CIL; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 57-58.

[299] Noël Carroll, "Narrative Closure," *PhSt* 135, no. 1 (2007): 5.

These macro-questions in Matthew relate to interpreting Matt 1:21, and the

expectations revolve around Jesus carrying out the promised salvation. For

Powell, Matt 1:21is essential to understanding Jesus' salvific ministry and death:

> The passion narrative, then, is not simply an epilogue
> attached to the end of Matthew's Gospel, but is the goal of
> the entire narrative. Matthew's reader comes to realize that
> this is in fact the purpose of Jesus' life and ministry: he has
> come to give his life as a ransom for many (20:28). This
> affirmation recalls the angel's proleptic announcement at
> the narrative's beginning that Jesus would 'save his people
> from their sins" (1:21). This, then, is what the story is
> about.[300]

Similarly, Carter, dependent on Menakhem Perry,[301] finds this verse to be pivotal

for interpreting the Gospel in relation to Jesus' salvific mission:

> Verse 1:21c ("he will save his people from their sins") will
> be the focus verse. Located in the opening chapter, this birth
> and naming announcement, spoken to Joseph by an
> authoritative "angel of the Lord," commissions the yet-
> unborn Jesus to his life work. It defines the main character's
> name in salvific terms . . . The verse, located in the Gospel's
> opening chapter, exercises a "primacy effect" whereby
> content located at the beginning of the Gospel shapes its
> audience's expectations, understandings, and questions
> throughout the whole work.[302]

The questions therefore arise: "When and how will Jesus save his people from

their sins?"[303] Carter also indicates that numerous questions are left open in the

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[300] Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 46.

[301] Perry, "Literary Dynamics," 351-361.

[302] Warren Carter, *Matthew and Empire: Initial Explorations* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press, 2001), 76; for a similar elaboration, see also Warren Carter, *Matthew: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1996), 93.

[303] Anderson, *Narrative Web*, 154.

narrative. "While the audience learns from the opening narrative block that Jesus

is commissioned by God and what he is commissioned by God to do, it does not

know whether the adult Jesus will carry out the divine commissioning or how he

will do so."[304] The birth narrative (the narrative beginning) nudges the sequential

reader in one direction since, at this point, the "the people" are the Jewish people.

Joel Willitts has also attempted a beginning-focused reading:

> . . . [T]he present study takes its cue from Brown's approach
> highlighted above, and more recently from W. Carter, who
> stresses the "primacy effect" of the Gospel text. Thus, rather
> than reading the text *backwards*, I attempt to read it
> narratively and in sequence allowing the *beginning* of the
> Gospel, with its Davidic Messianism, to be the interpretive
> key for the whole.[305]

RECENCY EFFECT AND RETROSPECTION: NARRATIVE ENDING

Equally significant for understanding the Gospel is a retrospective

rereading. Carter, after discussing Matt 28:17-20, returns to Matt 1:21 and

concludes, "In Jesus God's purposes open up to Jew and Gentile. God's saving

will create a people, the church, consisting of those who actively embrace God's

purposes as manifested in Jesus (Matt 4:17-22; 9:9; 10:1-4). It is these people, all

the people, whom Jesus is commissioned to save from sin."[306] Luz comments on

Matt 28:16-20: "It seems to me that I, to a greater extent . . . read Matthew's

narrative in light of its ending. This is because I believe that endings reveal what

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[304] Warren Carter, "Jesus' "I Have Come" Statements in Matthew's Gospel," *CBQ* 60, no. 1 (1998): 49.

[305] Joel Willitts, *Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-King: In Search of 'the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel'* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 30.

[306] Carter, *Matthew: Storyteller*, 197.

a narrative wants to say."[307] At Matt 28:19-20, he states, "In the prologue there are clear "signals" that point to the coming Gentile mission."[308] For Luz, however, the clear signals are retrospective.[309] "As signals I understand unusual individual features in narratives that often overshoot the mark in the context and whose meaning is not clear to the readers in the immediate context. . . They remain open and point beyond themselves."[310] Luz does not use the term *prolepsis* since "Matthew does not offer the anticipation, either explicitly or merely suggested, of later events."[311] Here, he is speaking in language similar to Genette's *advanced mention*. Davies and Allison also comment on Matt 28:19-20, emphasizing a retrospectively grasped Gentile inclusion earlier in their work:[312] "Nothing is superfluous, yet nothing more could be added without spoiling the effect. The grand denouement, so consonant with the spirit of the whole Gospel because so full of resonances with earlier passages, is, despite its terseness, almost a compendium of Matthean theology."[313] Many literary critics

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[307] Ulrich Luz, "Has Matthew Abandoned the Jews? A Response to Hans Kvalbein and Peter Stuhlmacher Concerning Matt 28:16-20," in *The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles* (ed. Jostein Adna and Hans Kvalbein; WUNT 1/127; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 66.

[308] Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28: A Commentary* (ed. Helmut Koester; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 630.

[309] Ibid.

[310] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 8.

[311] Ibid.

[312] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:210.

[313] Ibid., 3:687.

also support reading from the narrative's end as a culmination of the entire work.[314] As will be demonstrated below, a primacy reading sees the passages of Isaiah found in Matthew as focused on Israel and its salvation,[315] but a recency reading opens interpretation to include the Gentiles. The recency readings stressed in this section are based not on tensions to the mission of Jesus (which will be examined in the next chapter), but rather on the way in which later information in the Gospel, particularly Matt 28:19-20, causes the sequential reader to change initial interpretations.

THE FULFILLMENT QUOTATIONS

Matthew 1:21-23

Primacy Interpretations

Matt 1:23 is the first quotation of Isaiah in Matthew's Gospel, setting the stage for many of the others that follow. James Phelan, again discussing narrative beginnings, emphasizes the place of "Exposition: This includes everything - even the front matter illustrations and epigraphs – that provides information about the story world, the characters (traits, past history, and so on), the setting (time and place), and events of the narrative. Exposition is the inclusive term that also

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[314] Robert F. Berkhofer, *Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 121; Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1984), 94; Friedman, *Form and Meaning*, 69; Rabinowitz, "Reading Beginnings," 303; Torgovnick, *Closure*, 1-2.

[315] Richard Beaton, *Isaiah's Christ in Matthew's Gospel* (SNTSMS; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 107.

covers background and orientation."[316] Placing Matt 1:21-23 in context, the

genealogy serves as an introduction to or exposition of Jesus' heritage and past

history. The general outline of this genealogy has been recently examined by Joel

Kennedy:

> Verse 17 indicates the structure of the genealogy, and in
> that sense also points to the narrative qualities inherent in
> the genealogy. The structure is broken into historical periods
> that are significant for the author. These historical periods
> serve as key moments in the history of Israel. It starts with
> Abraham, the father of the nation and the beginning of God's
> covenant relationship with his people. With David, Israel's
> history reaches a climax by receiving "the king" who had been
> promised by Torah (Gen 17:6, 16; Deut 17: 14-20; cf. Acts
> 13:20-22). Following this high point, Israel's history then takes
> a turn toward disaster that ends with the Babylonian exile. Both
> kingship and full independent nationhood are ended. But for
> Matthew the story has not ended because as both the genealogy
> and verse 17 point out, another rise toward a new and final
> climax takes place, ending with the Christ.[317]

Repschinske emphasizes the same point:

> The description of Jesus as the son of David and Abraham
> and the emphasis on the Davidic descent serve to show
> Jesus as a member of Israel and as having the same importance
> to Israel as David and Abraham had. Nevertheless, the church,
> or a new people of God, has so far not entered the story.
> Consequently, any supposition that λαός in this case refers to
> the church must look for confirmation elsewhere. For the reader
> ὁ λαός αὐτου is, at this point, the people from whom Jesus
> comes. The phrase suggests that in his saving activity Jesus
> will be taking possession of his people, this people is Israel.[318]

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[316] Phelan, *Beginnings and Endings*, 97.

[317] Joel Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel: Use of Israel's History in Matthew 1:1-4:11* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 79.

[318] Boris Repschinski, ""For He Will Save His People from Their Sins" (Matthew 1:21): A Christology For Christian Jews," *CBQ* 68, no. 2 (2006): 256.

Jesus is a Jewish Messiah for the Jewish people, and the surrounding narrative

supports this interpretation. The genealogy and its immediate contextual

interpretation form the narrative backdrop to Matt 1:21-23.

> τέξεται δὲ υἱόν, καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν· αὐτὸς
> γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν. τοῦτο
> δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ
> προφήτου λέγοντος· ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἕξει καὶ
> τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὅ
> ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.

> "And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus,
> for it is He who will save His people from their sins." Now all
> this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the
> prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "Behold, the virgin shall be
> with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name
> Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us."

The word play related to the name "Jesus" meaning "God's salvation" is

commonly recognized,[319] but questions arise regarding how the salvation spoken

of in the prophecy would take place. Further compounding the problem, this

verse is the only instance in the Gospel where salvation (σῴζω) and sin are

mentioned together.[320] Those who emphasize a reading from the beginning

emphasize the genealogy and move to Matt 2:6 in which the "people" are clearly

defined. Matt 2:6 states, "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, Are by no means

least among the leaders of Judah; For out of you shall come forth a Ruler, Who

will shepherd My people Israel" (τὸν λαόν μου τὸν Ἰσραήλ). The people who

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[319] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:91-92.

[320] Daniel M. Gurtner, *The Torn Veil: Matthew's Exposition of the Death of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 126-37; Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom*, 224-27.

112

Jesus has come to save are, thus, Israel.[321] Second, it is argued that λαός always

refers to Israel throughout the Gospel,[322] which reinforces this initial

understanding. Cousland summarizes the occurrences.

1. In the phrase ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς τοῦ λαοῦ (2:4) or οἱ
   ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ λαοῦ (21:23; 26:3; 26:47;
   27:1)
2. In four fulfillment citations (2:6; 4:16; 13:15; 15:8)
3. In the mouths of the Jewish leadership (26:5; 27:64)
4. In the redactional verses at 4:23 and 27:25
5. In the mouth of the angel (1:23)[323]

The primacy effect of the genealogy, in conjunction with the above two

arguments, leads one to conclude that λαός equals the Jews.[324]

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[321] J. R. C. Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSupp; Leiden:
Brill, 2002), 78; Matthias Konradt, *Israel, Kirche, und die Volker Im
Mattausevangelium* (WUNT 215; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 403; Luz,
Matthew 1-7, 95.

[322] Cousland, *The Crowds*, 75-76; Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom*, 225.

[323] Cousland, *The Crowds*, 77.

[324] The linguistic necessity of Matt 1:21 referring only to the Jews can no longer
stand when the entire Gospel is acknowledged (see below). Readings concerned
with dominant usage based on word counts of λαός can be challenged when the
Gospel's own usage is given priority. Second, numerous passages in the Old
Greek that parallel λαός and ἔθνος, referring to Gentile nations, have gone
unexamined; of these, many have an eschatological context that may fit well with
the passion narrative (1 Chr 16:20; Ps 32:1; 56:10; 66:1-8; 104:13, 44; 108:3;
149:7; Is 1:4; 2:4; 18:7; 60:5; Ezek 36:15; Dan 3:4; Mic 4:3; 5:6-7.) This is a
very unfortunate lacuna in Matthean studies, and this list is not all-inclusive, but
represents a sample only. These examples indicate that the Greek of λαός is much
more inclusive than is generally acknowledged. Certainly, the Greeks had no
hesitation applying it to themselves. Plutarch makes this comment regarding his
time: "For the Greeks still call a public hall 'leïton,' and the general populace
'laos' (καὶ λαὸν τὸ πλῆθος)" (*Comparatio Thesei et Romuli* 26.3 [Perrin, LCL]).
There are also many references in the Old Greek where the term designates
various non-Jewish groups (Judg 18:10, 27; Ruth 1:15; Ps 2:1, 17:44, Isa 1:7;
Ezek 35:6; Mic 4:13; 2 Esd 9:1, 2, 10:2, 11). Even Josephus uses the term in

Recency Interpretations

On the other hand, reading Matthew 1:23 in light of the Gospel's end leads one to include Gentiles within the term λαός as will be argued in this section on the following grounds:

1. The reader can identify him/herself as the referent of μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.

2. The use of λαός as exclusively Israel in Matt 2:6 is undermined by using intertextual cues provided in the initial context of the Old Greek.

3. The use of the third person possessive personal pronoun with λαός (τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ) is generally reinterpreted by the pronoun's later usage.

4. Matthew's ironic use of "Israel" in Matt 2:13-15 demonstrates that a one-to-one correspondence to any referent should not be assumed for any given term, undermining the proposition that λαός must always refer to the Jewish people.

5. In an oracular dream narrative, a literal interpretation of λαός should not be assumed.

Additional arguments in support of this point will be discussed elsewhere:

1. The term λαός is more broadly inclusive (than indicating Israel alone) in Matt 4:15-16 (elaborated during discussion of Matt 4:14-16).

2. λαός is redefined through the understanding of ἔθνος as a new people to which the kingdom will be handed in Matt 21:43 (explored later in this chapter).

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reference to Gentiles (*Ant.* 2.301; 11.212 and *Bellum judaicum* 6.439). The semantic range clearly allows for Gentile inclusion.

3. The narrative leaves the Matt 1:21 prophecy unfulfilled if λαός is read as the "Jewish" people. The next chapter will indicate ways in which the recency effect calls for a new reading of this text in light of the increasing opposition of the Jews.

The Reader as Referent of μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός

ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἕξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us." (Matt 1:23)

Within its immediate context, this fulfillment quotation contains two ambiguities. Since the oracle comes after the dream in which the the angel commands Joseph to call the child Jesus, some interpret Matt 1:25 (Joseph's naming of Jesus) as the fulfillment of the oracle.[325] This perspective is difficult to maintain given that the plural of καλέσουσιν would, in such a case, be fulfilled by a singular subject. Krupp comments, "In looking about for the subject of καλέσουσιν the implied reader logically assumes τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ of 1:21, i.e., those whom Jesus saves from their sins will perceive in him and with them the

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[325] See discussion in Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 100-01; France, *Matthew*, 57-58; Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:213-14. There is also the alternative reading καλέσεις in the Greek of Isaiah A and B (D, Bohairic mss., Origen, Eusebius). This second singular interpretation seems to view the names Jesus and Emmanuel as equivilent. The difficulty with this interpretation is the narrative that follows (Matt 1:25), which reiterates Matt 1:21 and makes no reference to Matt 1:23. Further, at the end of the Gospel (Matt 28:20), Jesus' presence goes with the disciples to create the church. The idea of Emmanuel develops a distinctive meaning here, one that is associated with mission and is, perhaps, confessional.

presence of God, and ascribe to him the sense of 'Emmanuel – God with us.'"[326]

Or even clearer: "Die Erzähladressaten werden sich also fragen: Wer sind jene, die Jesus "Immanuel" nennen werden? Vom Kontext her kommt nur ὁ λαός in Frage (1,21b), das zwar grammatikalisch eine Singularform ist, aber in einer *constructio ad sensum* durchaus pluralen Charakter hat (vgl. τῶν ἁμαρτῶν αὐτῶν)."[327] (The narratees will ask themselves, "who is it that will call Jesus, Emmanuel"? In this context the only possibility is ὁ λαός, which though grammatically it is in the singular form, yet, in a constructio *ad sensum*, it has a clearly plural character [τῶν ἁμαρτῶν αὐτῶν].)[328] This grammatical observation is supported by others.

> The so-called *constructio ad sensum*, without following any fixed rules, was very widespread in Greek from early times and is found in the NT as in the papyri. . . (1) The principal instance is that in which a collective, embracing a plurality of persons in a singular noun, is construed as if the subject were plural. Such collectives are masculines ὄχλος, λαός, feminines like στρατιά, οἰκία, neuters like πλῆθος, σπέρμα.[329]

If this identification of λαός as the implied subject of καλέσουσιν is correct and initially identified with Israel by a primacy reading, a rereading may be required

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[326] David D. Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God's People in the First Gospel* (SNTSMS 90; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 58.

[327] Mayordomo-Marín, *Den Anfang hören*, 270.

[328] For a similar understanding, see Miler, *Les citations d'accomplissement*, 30.

[329] Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert Walter Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 74.

as the narrative unfolds.[330] The sequential reader will look in the Gospel for this

confession to take place, but as the narrative moves forward, it never actualizes

itself.

> Since 1:23 is a prediction not of a literal naming by Joseph,
> but of a corporate recognition (indefinite future plural
> καλέσουσιν) by the people of Jesus that he is 'God with us',
> in the saying in 18:20 Jesus therefore himself anticipates
> that corporate recognition by the members of the ἐκκλησία.
> He effectively reiterates the narrator's prediction of Matthew
> 1:23 by looking forward to a time when the gathering of his
> people 'in the name of' the Emmanuel Messiah Jesus will
> constitute the forum for his presence. 1:23 remains unfulfilled
> in the plot, but 18:20 also reinforces its expectation through
> anticipation.[331]

This same anticipation continues beyond the end of the narrative and is reinforced

by Matt 28:20 (ἰδού ἐγὼ μεθ᾽ ὑμῶν εἰμι). The connections between the

beginning and end are based on Jesus' presence. Inclusio ". . . is a . . . technique

in which a word or phrase occurring at the beginning of a poem is repeated at its

close."[332]

> The conception of Jesus and his redemptive work dominates
> his Gospel. His characteristic title for Jesus is Immanuel –
> a name foretold by Isaiah (Is 7,14) and explained by Mt at the
> outset of his Gospel as meaning, "God with us" (Matt 1:23).
> At the very close of his book, the Evangelist records the
> promise of the glorified Christ upon his departure from this
> world: "I will be with you always, to the very close of the age"
> (28:20). Thus we have an *inclusio* which gives the spirit of
> the whole work.[333]

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[330] Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 61; Mayordomo-Marín, *Den Anfang hören*, 270.

[331] Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 191-92.

[332] Charles H. Lohr, "Oral Techniques in the Gospel of Matthew," *CBQ* 23, no. 4 (1961): 408-9.

[333] Ibid., 410.

Malina further links Matthew's beginning and end narratives as follows:

1. The Davidic sonship (Matt 1:1; 1:17; 2:2) of Jesus is fulfilled in Jesus being granted all authority (Matt 28:18).

2. The genealogy is connected with the promise to Abraham that through him all nations would be blessed (Gen 17:18; 22:18), and the gospel spreading to all nations is referenced in Matt 28:18.

3. Both sections are concerned with Gentiles: the Magi in Matt 2 and the Gentile mission of Matt 28:19.[334]

With the commission to the nations, readers become aware that *all* readers, not only themselves, are part of the intended audience. Since the narrator in Matthew is virtually identical with the implied author, which leads to little distinction between the implied reader and the narratee,[335] the narrator addresses the implied reader at the same time as the narratee. At the conclusion of the Gospel, there is a further collapse of literary categories in that the real reader and implied reader converge in the Great Commission; the presence of Jesus destroys any temporal distinction emphasized in the narrative.[336] The real reader is called, at the end of Matthew, to actualize the commandments within the text of

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[334] H. Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi* (2d ed.; NTAbh; Münster: Aschendorf, 1984), 321-23; Bruce J. Malina, "Literary Structure and Form of Matt 28:16-20," *NTS* 17, no. 1 (1970): 87-103. For further similarities between Matt 1-2 and 27-28, see Brian M. Nolan, *The Royal Son of God: The Christology of Matthew 1-2 in the Setting of the Gospel* (OBO 23; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprech, 1979), 104-8.

[335] Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 165, 209.

[336] Ibid., 229.

Matthew, to go forward and make more disciples, thus joining in the mission of the eleven.[337] Yet, at that very point where presence is promised and the collapse of distinctions between real and implied readers takes place, one is redirected back to Matt 1:23 and the promise of Emmanuel. The implied reader leads the real reader to see him/herself in Matt 1:21. Further, the real reader recognizes that he/she is not the only real reader since the proclamation of the gospel is to go to all the nations. Jesus' presence is inclusive of all readers willing to accept the message of the gospel, which leads to a universal reading of λαός.

Luz desires to separate the λαός of Matt 1:21 from the "they" of Matt 1:23 so that the referent of "people" is the Jews.[338] This is a primacy reading. A recency reading, however, opens up the referent of "God with us," "people," to all readers, since the text is, at that point, read outside the temporal plain of the implied author. "La réalité du salut, et donc l'accomplissement, ont atteint un groupe que constitue le référent du pronom personnel *nous* (1,23). Ce groupe, que Mt ne désigne jamais comme peuple, ne s'identifie pas au peuple d'Israël. Le narrateur, pour le moins, en fait partie ainsi que des judéo- et des pagano-chrétiens."[339] (The reality of salvation, and therefore its accomplishment, have reached a group that makes up the referent of the personal pronoun *us* (1:23). This group that Matthew never designates as a people does not identify itself with the people of Israel. The narrator, at the very least, is part of it along with Jewish

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[337] Dorothy J. Weaver, *Matthew's Missionary Discourse: A Literary Critical Analysis* (JSNTSS; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 52-53.

[338] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 96.

[339] Miler, *Les citations d'accomplissement*, 28-29.

and Gentile Christians.) Matt 28:19-20 emphasizes the ethnic mixing of the future church from which the anticipated confession is to come about. The narrative is reinterpreted from the end by a comingling of the implied and real readers.

Undermining an Exclusive Interpretation of Matthew 2:6

The recency effect in Matthew is concentrated on Matt 28:19-20 and the mission to the nations. A hinge verse for the primacy reading of "people" as the Jewish people is Matt 2:6: "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler, who will shepherd My people Israel." Most comments regarding this passage focus on the tensions between the birth of Jesus and the plot of Herod to kill him, ignoring an intertexual examination;[340] the two surrounding fulfillment quotations, however, have been interpreted extensively in relation to their sources.

Some have viewed Matt 1:23's use of "Immanuel" (Isa 7:14) and "God with us" (Isa 8:8) from the Old Greek as a narrative background to the entire story of Matthew. [341] Similarly, Matt 2:15 is interpreted as Jesus fulfilling the history

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[340] Bauer, "Kingship of Jesus," 306-23; Richard J. Erickson, "Divine Injustice? Matthew's Narrative Strategy and the Slaughter of the Innocents (Matthew 2:13-23)," *JSNT* 19, no. 64 (1996): 5-27; R. T. France, "Herod and the Children of Bethlehem," *NovT* 21, no. 2 (1979): 98-120.

[341] Stefan Alkier, "From Text to Intertext: Intertextuality as a Paradigm for Reading Matthew," *HvTSt* 61, no. 1-2 (2005): 1-18; on the contextual reading of the source from which a quotation has been derived and its relevance in a new context, see Warren Carter, "Evoking Isaiah: Matthean Soteriology and an Intertextual Reading of Isaiah 7-9 and Matthew 1:23 and 4:15-16," *JBL* 119, no. 3 (2000): 130; James Hamilton, "'The Virgin Will Conceive': Typological Fulfillment in Matthew 1:18-23," in *Built upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of*

of Israel; "Out of Egypt I called my son" applies an Israel-oriented quotation to Jesus, thereby connecting the story of Jesus to that of Israel, particularly in relation to the temptation narrative.[342]

Nolland has hinted at a connection between Matt 2:6a and Matt 28:18. Since Matt 2:6a alludes to Micah 5:2, one only has to look at the context of Micah 5 to realize that "the universally-to-be-recognized significance of the messiah, which Matthew is marking with his Magi account, is well paralleled in the 'he will be great to the ends of the earth' in Mi. 5:4."[343] Nolland's connection (influenced by a recency reading) is more directed toward the Magi and their coming from afar to worship Jesus than toward Matt 28:19. Nonetheless, as recognized by Nolland, the Hebrew of Mic 5:4 (5:3 Hebrew and OG)

עַד־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ and the Greek (ἕως ἄκρων τῆς γῆς) clearly indicate that the "ends

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Matthew (ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008); Ulrich Luz, "Intertexts," 119-37; Rikki Watts, "Immanuel: Virgin Birth Proof Text or Programmatic Warning of Things to Come (Isa. 7:14 in Matt 1:23)?" in *From Prophecy to Testament: The Function of the Old Testament in the New* (ed. Craig A. Evans; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2004).

[342] Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:261-63; Jacques Dupont, *Die Versuchungen Jesu in der Wüste* (ed. Herbert Haag, Rudolf Kilian, and Wilhelm Pesch; SBS 37; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Biblewerk, 1969), 20; Birger Gerhardsson, *The Testing of God's Son (Matt. 4: 1-11 & par): An Analysis of an Early Christian Midrash* (ConBNT; Lund: Gleerup, 1966), 22; Martin Hasitschka, "Verwendung der Schrift in Mt 4,1-11," in *The Scriptures in the Gospels (*ed. C. M. Tuckett; Leuven: Leuven Unversity Press, 1997), 489; Kennedy, *Recapitulation of Israel*, 140-47.

[343] Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 115.

121

of the earth" is in view. The "people Israel" in Matt 2:6 is the focus, but the intertextual context expands the rule of Jesus.

Thus, Chae concludes, "The immediate context is only concerned by... Despite this, it is only the context of Matthew's quotation of Micah... intertextual reading of Matt 2... the Magi from the east (Matt 2:1-12), which can be considered proleptic, that is, as the first-fruits of the Gentiles, if viewed in the light of Mic 5:4b (cf. Matt 28:19)."[344] Thus, the exclusivity of λαός is undermined by the universal context of Micah. This is significant in a rereading since the clearest verse for identifying the "people" as Israel is undermined by its own original context.

Further undermining a primacy reading of Matt 1:21 that views "people" as referring only to the Jews is the intertextual quotation of 2 Sam 5:2 (OG) with slight modifications in Matt 2:6b: ὅστις ποιμανεῖ τὸν λαόν μου τὸν Ἰσραήλ. The word ὅστις is most likely redactional from the hand of Matthew, and the "change from the 2nd to 3rd person in the verbal form . . . necessary on account of the new context."[345] Within the story of Matthew, this verse not only announces who the "people" are, but also, in its context within the narrative, " . . . assumes an anti-Jewish sharpness: although the scribes of the people of God recognize that they are talking about the hoped for messianic shepherd of God's people Israel,

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[344] Young S. Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd: Studies in the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism, and in the Gospel of Matthew* (WUNT 2/216;Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 185.

[345] Martinus J. J. Menken, *Matthew's Bible* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004), 259-60.

instead of acting on that knowledge they become Herod's accomplices."[346]

This point gains further strength given that, in the context of 2 Samuel 5:2-3, all the elders of Israel (πάντες οἱ πρεσβύτεροι Ισραηλ) anoint David king over Israel (τὸν Δαυιδ εἰς βασιλέα ἐπὶ πάντα Ισραηλ). In Matthew, the chief priests and scribes are allied with Herod as ruling over the people and are seen as part of a conspiracy to remove the true king, Jesus. This tension can be emphasized retrospectively when the sequential reader arrives at Matt 27:41 where the scribes and rulers of the people are present at the cross as a corporate group against Jesus, mocking him with the elders (οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς . . . τῶν γραμματέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων καὶ Φαρισαίων). The contrast of the rulers portrayed in 2 Sam with those of Matthew is striking; in 2 Sam, the elders are positively disposed toward their ruler, David, while in the quotation's new location in Matt 2:6, the rulers of the people are negatively engaged with Jesus, the son of David (Matt 1:1, 6, 17). Although the opposition between the rulers and Jesus is not great at this point in the narrative, the foundation is laid for further narrative tension regarding the salvation of the Jews, ultimately yielding to a new interpretation of Matt 1:21-23.

The Third Person Possessive Pronoun: A Gospel Progression

Use of the personal possessive pronouns further undermines the exclusivity of Matt 1:21, and the research on this subject has been summarized by Lidija Novakovic. She emphasizes that λαός, apart from Matt 2:6, "never appears accompanied by a genitive of a noun or a pronoun. Matthew speaks about Jesus' *ekklesia* (μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν - Matt 16:18) or his kingdom (τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ -

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[346] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 113.

Matt 13:41; 16:28; 21:20)."[347] She goes on to include Matt 21:43 and the giving

of the kingdom to a new nation as evidence that Matt 1:21 encompasses both Jews

and Gentiles.[348] Thus, although the sequential reader may think that "my people"

is Israel at the outset, toward the end of the Gospel, the church is connected with

Jesus as his community. As the Gospel progresses, the personal pronoun

continually clarifies the meaning of "his people." Since the church is to carry out

the Great Commission, which began with the disciples, and consists of those who

now carry out Jesus' salvific plan to the nations, the nations become the church

and thereby participate in the salvation of Jesus (Matt 1:21). An end narrative

reading will incorporate "my church" into the semantic range of "people".

Irony and Metaphorical Reversal in Matthew 2:13-15

> Ἀναχωρησάντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος κυρίου φαίνεται
> κατ᾽ ὄναρ τῷ Ἰωσὴφ λέγων· ἐγερθεὶς παράλαβε τὸ παιδίον
> καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ φεῦγε εἰς Αἴγυπτον καὶ ἴσθι ἐκεῖ
> ἕως ἂν εἴπω σοι· μέλλει γὰρ Ἡρῴδης ζητεῖν τὸ παιδίον τοῦ
> ἀπολέσαι αὐτό. ὁ δὲ ἐγερθεὶς παρέλαβεν τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν
> μητέρα αὐτοῦ νυκτὸς καὶ ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς Αἴγυπτον, καὶ ἦν
> ἐκεῖ ἕως τῆς τελευτῆς Ἡρῴδου· ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ
> κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος· ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐκάλεσα
> τὸν υἱόν μου.

> Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord
> appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise and take the
> Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there
> until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to

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[347] Lidija Novakovic, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick: A Study of Jesus as the Son
of David in the Gospel of Matthew* (WUNT 2/170; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck,
2003), 66.

[348] Robert Horton Gundry, *The Old is Better: New Testament Essays in Support of
Traditional Interpretations* (WUNT 178; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 116;
Donald Alfred Hagner, *Matthew. 1-13* (WBC 33a; Dallas, Tex.: Word Books,
1993), 20; Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 81-82; Novakovic, *Messiah,* 66.

destroy Him." And he arose and took the Child and His
mother by night, and departed for Egypt; and was there
until the death of Herod, that what was spoken by the
Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "Out
of Egypt did I call My Son." (Matt 2:13-15)

This text appears after the Magi's dream warning them about Herod and focuses
on Jesus' geographical movement to avoid danger. Scholars have often wondered
why this fulfillment quotation does not occur subsequent to the exit from Egypt
which does not occur until Matt 2:21. A solution to this dilemma has been
outlined by Joel Kennedy who views the geographical references to Israel as
verbally ironic, saying the opposite of that which they are intended to mean.[349]

His idea of intentional reversal and its relation to Matt 2:15 was only
recently proposed, and it is dependent on a close reading of the verse: "and was
there until the death of Herod, that what was spoken by the Lord through the
prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'Out of Egypt did I call My Son.'"[350] The
typology of the infancy narrative and its relation to the exodus of Israel has
commonly been recognized.[351] Kennedy, however, demonstrates a typological
reversal in the narrative: Egypt has become Israel and Israel has become Egypt.

Ever since Stendahl emphasized the significance of geography in his

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[349] Kennedy, *Recapitulation of Israel*, 129-47.

[350] NAS.

[351] Erickson, "Divine Injustice," 13.

analysis of Matthew 1-2,[352] commentators have been trying to understand the placement of Matt 2:15 since it seems to present a geographical incompatibility with the surrounding narrative. Matt 2:13 clearly states that Joseph is to take his son to Egypt (φεῦγε εἰς Αἴγυπτον) while the fulfillment quotation indicates that God has called his son out of Egypt (ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐκάλεσα τὸν υἱόν μου). The majority of interpreters emphasize that Matthew uses the quotation to reflect upon that which will follow in the narrative,[353] even though this approach contrasts with Matthew's treatment of other quotations in Matt 2:6 and 2:18. Kennedy, on the other hand, takes εἰς Αἴγυπτον as a reference to Israel, indicating the ways in which Israel has become the new Egypt:[354] He demonstrates that Herod is the new Pharaoh in that he kills the children of Bethlehem as Pharaoh did the sons of Israel (Matt 2:16 and Exod 1:22). Further, Herod will die, and Jesus will return to Israel as Moses returned to Egypt after Pharaoh's death (Matt 2:20 and Exod 4:20). The killing of the children in Matt 2:16-18 is followed by: "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; and she refused to be comforted, because they were no more." Rachael's lament was for those in exile abroad in its original context, yet Matthew's reading concerns those who are killed in their own land. Here, there is another reversal. Knowles summarizes: "Ignoring altogether

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[352] Krister Stendahl, "Quis et Unde," in *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche: Festschrift für J. Jeremias* (ed. W. Eltester; Berlin: Töpelman, 1960).

[353] Kennedy, *Recapitulation of Israel*, 128-31.

[354] On Moses typology throughout Matthew, see Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993).

the original context of the passage, he uses Rachel's lament to suggest a correspondence between the suffering of the children of Israel in Exile (as well as of the infants in Egypt, on the analogy of Moses' infancy) and the suffering of the children of Israel under Herod."[355] While general motifs seem to indicate a relationship, further evidence is found in the word-for-word correspondence between Matt 2:20 and Exod 4:19.[356]

Matt 2:20   λέγων Ἐγερθεὶς παράλαβε τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ
καὶ πορεύου <u>εἰς γῆν Ἰσραήλ</u> <u>τεθνήκασιν</u> γὰρ <u>οἱ ζητοῦντες</u>
<u>τὴν ψυχὴν</u> τοῦ παιδίοὑ

"Arise and take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child's life are dead."

Exod 4:19   εἶπεν δὲ κύριος πρὸς Μωυσῆν ἐν Μαδιαμ βάδιζε ἄπελθε <u>εἰς</u>
<u>Αἴγυπτον</u> <u>τεθνήκασιν</u> γὰρ πάντες <u>οἱ ζητοῦντές</u> σου <u>τὴν ψυχήν</u>[357]

And the Lord said to Moyses in Madian, 'Go! Return to Egypt! For

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[355] Michael P. Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel: The Rejected-Prophet Motif in Matthaean Redaction* (JSNTSup 68; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 52.

[356] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:271; Erickson, "Divine Injustice," 15; George M. Soares-Prabhu, "Jesus in Egypt : A Reflection on Mt 2:13-15.19-21 in the Light of the Old Testament," *EstBib* 50, no. 1-4 (1992): 238.

[357] Clearly, this text was available to the readers of Matthew. Although οἱ ζητοῦντες τὴν ψυχήν μου occurs regularly in the Psalms (34:4, 37:13, 39:15, 69:3), it does not occur elsewhere with τεθνήκασιν. The reference itself fits perfectly within the context of Herod being cast as the new Pharaoh in relation to the killing of the children and other Exodus imagery linking it to the surrounding narrative.

all those who were seeking your soul are dead.'[358]

Joseph is not taking Jesus out of Egypt, but rather, out of Israel. The reversal in the narrative has been noticed by many[359] but the application avoided. When the references to the Exodus narrative, the placement of the quotation, the Greek echoes, and the direct opposition of Egypt and Israel are all taken into consideration, Kennedy's conclusion seems a straightforward understanding of the text.

> Like Moses, Jesus flees "Pharaoh," seeking refuge in another land. However, unlike Moses, his refuge is in literal Egypt, having fled the metaphorical Egypt in Judah. Moses was instructed after the death of Pharaoh to return to Egypt, but here Joseph is instructed after the death of Herod to return to the land of Israel. The ironic reversal undoubtedly continues, because Joseph is returning to what continues to be metaphorical Egypt. In fact, it still contains similar dangers and threat for Joseph's family, now through a son of Herod, which mitigates his removal to Galilee, and finally his settlement in Nazareth.[360]

If Israel can become Egypt and Egypt Israel, clearly the author is capable of including more within a word than simply its literal or surface level meaning. In this example, we have a clear case of irony in which the opposite of that which is said is the intended meaning.

An ironic interpretation of Matt 2:13 can support a reading of irony in 1:23 by showing the close connections between the dream narratives of Matt 1:19-23

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[358] Quotes from the Old Greek are from the New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS).

[359] Erickson, "Divine Injustice," 14. Robert Horton Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1994), 38; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 119; Bernard Brandon Scott, "The Birth of the Reader," *Semeia* 52 (1990): 95.

[360] Kennedy, *Recapitulation of Israel*, 152.

and 2:13-14. There are six dreams in Matthew (Matt 1:20; 2:12, 13, 19, 22, and

27:19). Only Matt 1:18b-24, 2:13-15, and 2:19-21 can be considered dream

reports for they contain the content of the dream. Dodson has criticized the

examination of dream forms by Raymond Brown[361] and Robert Gnuse[362] for not

being sensitive to categories appreciated by ancient readers. Despite this, their

works still stand as excellent discussions of that which Matthew's implied reader

could be led to expect from a dream report. They indicate the ways in which such

a reader could interpret the text internally through observation of constant and

cohesive patterns as well as overlapping vocabulary.

First, in terms of Matt 1:19-23 and 2:13-14, parallel structure and themes

are evident.

Matt 1:20-21

1. Vocative: "Joseph, son of David"
2. Assurance: "do not fear" (μὴ φοβηθῇς)
3. Command: "to take" (παραλαβεῖν)
4. Object: "Mary your wife" (Μαρίαν τὴν γυναῖκά σου)
5. Explanation
    a. Reason: "for (γὰρ) that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit," Development: "she will bear a son," (τέξεται δὲ υἱόν)
        i. Naming: "and you shall call his name Jesus," (καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν)
        ii. Mission: "for he will save his people from their sin" (αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν).

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[361] Raymond Edward Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1993), 108.

[362] Gnuse, "Dream Genre," 104-05.

Matt 2:13

1. Command: "rise" (ἐγερθεὶς) "take" (παράλαβε)
2. Object: "the child and his mother" (τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ)
3. Direction: "and flee to Egypt and remain there till I tell you"
4. Explanation: "for (γὰρ) Herod is about to search for the child to destroy him" (ζητεῖν τὸ παιδίον)[363]

Additionally, one notes significant use of identical vocabulary.

Matt 1:20-22   ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐνθυμηθέντος ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος κυρίου κατ᾽ ὄναρ ἐφάνη αὐτῷ λέγων· Ἰωσὴφ υἱὸς Δαυίδ, μὴ φοβηθῇς παραλαβεῖν Μαρίαν τὴν γυναῖκά σου· τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου. τέξεται δὲ υἱόν, καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν· αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν. τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος·

Matt 2:13-15   Ἀναχωρησάντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος κυρίου φαίνεται κατ᾽ ὄναρ τῷ Ἰωσὴφ λέγων· ἐγερθεὶς παράλαβε τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ φεῦγε εἰς Αἴγυπτον καὶ ἴσθι ἐκεῖ ἕως ἂν εἴπω σοι· μέλλει γὰρ Ἡρῴδης ζητεῖν τὸ παιδίον τοῦ ἀπολέσαι αὐτό. ὁ δὲ ἐγερθεὶς παρέλαβεν τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ νυκτὸς καὶ ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς Αἴγυπτον, καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ ἕως τῆς τελευτῆς Ἡρῴδου· ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος· ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐκάλεσα τὸν υἱόν μου.

The overlap includes seventeen identical words, two verbs in different forms, and the fact that both begin with a genitive absolute.[364] If it is accepted that Matt 2:15 makes Israel into Egypt, then we are faced with a fulfillment citation that reverses the simple meaning of the dream narrative and its context. Similarly, Matt 1:23 interprets the dream oracle and seems to make "people" more inclusive by the use

[363] Ibid., 110-11.

[364] Hendrikus Boers, "Language Usage and the Production of Matthew 1:18-2:23," in *Orientation by Disorientation* (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1980), 217-34; Charles Thomas Davis, "Tradition and Redaction in Matthew 1:18-2:23," *JBL* 90, no. 4 (1971): 404-21; Soares-Prabhu, "Jesus in Egypt," 225-49. The similarities have been noted by many. William Varner, "A Discourse Analysis of Matthew's Nativity Narrative," *TynBul* 58, no. 2 (2007): 209-28.

of Emmanuel as discussed above. One can add to this Matthew's redactional use of καλέσουσιν within the fulfillment citation of Matt 1:23 where the Greek tradition is changed from καλέσεις to make it third person plural and more inclusive. It seems then that, in these fulfillment citations, there is an interpretation of the event preceding, which adds more to the meaning of a given word (people) or seeks to invert the meaning of a word (Egypt vs. Israel).

The chief cohesive argument posing opposition to this perspective and enforcing an older German explanation is that of Menken.[365] He indicates that three fulfillments take place after the fulfillment citations by comparing Matt 1:20-25 and 21:1-7 with 2:13-15 and using the formula presented in the first two examples as: "1) an order, 2) a fulfillment quotation and: 3) an execution of the order which also implies the realization of the quotation."[366] In Matt 1:20-25, Joseph is told to name the child, there is a fulfillment quotation, and the command is fulfilled. In Matt 21:1-7, Jesus commands the disciples to obtain a donkey, there is a fulfillment quotation, and the donkey is retrieved.

Yet, as discussed above, Matt 1:23's reference to a corporate confession seems to refer back to Matt 1:21 and is not fulfilled in the narrative undermining this similarity. Second, Matt 2:13-15, does not follow the pattern as clearly as Menken suggests because of an intervening second fulfillment quotation (Matt 2:18-19) which never happens elsewhere. Menken proposes that the command of

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[365] Martinus J. J. Menken, "'Out of Egypt I Have Called My Son': Some Observations On the Quotation From Hosea 11.1 in Matthew 2.15," in *Wisdom of Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 143-52.

[366] Ibid., 148.

Matt 2:15 could not be carried out in its entirety since Joseph was to remain in Egypt until God told him for Herod was seeking to kill Jesus, and so the completion of the action takes place after the quotation. While it is true that the action in the narrative finds completion only in Matt 2:20-21, the narrator actually implies complete obedience to the command already in 2:15 by stating "and was there until the death of Herod." Menken does not comment on Matt 2:15 but recognizes the intervening fulfillment quotation implicitly, "The pattern of Matt 1:20-25 and 21:1-7 is present here in a somewhat modified form."[367] Finally, it should be noted that, in Menken's two examples, if it is accepted that Matt 1:23 is fulfilled by 1:25, the fulfillment of the fulfillment quotation takes place in the very next verse, yet in Matt 2:13-15, his supposed fulfillment takes place six verses later. In light of all this, it seems more straightforward to take this passage in its current position as an indication of reversal.

Although this point does not immediately help the sequential reader note the play in the dream narrative and quotation of Isaiah in Matt 1:23, it allows for a similar pattern retrospectively where the meaning of oracle presents various interpretive possibilities, in this case geographic reversal triggered by the early persecution of Jesus and the Jews under Herod.

Ironic Implications of Oracular Dream Narrative

Finally in this discussion of Matt 1:21-23, similarities can be observed between the Gospel of Matthew and material included in the previous chapter on oracular dreams. In the discussion of Josephus' *Jewish War* 6:312-313, divine

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[367] Ibid.

utterances were viewed as ambiguous. This adds significant weight to the phrase

τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου, which only occurs in Matt 1:23 and Matt 2:15, both times in

relation to texts that, when compared with their surrounding narrative, are

oracular in that they predict the future and are emphasized as coming from God.

Thus, it should not be surprising that the sequential reader faces interpretive

difficulties and surprises.   In Matt 1:21, there is the ambiguous "people," and in

2:15 there is the reversal of Israel as Egypt. Philo indicated that dreams sent by

mediators concerning the future also contained riddles.   Matthew is very

concerned about the future goal of Jesus' salvific purpose (Matt 1:19-23),

evidenced through use of the future tense in Matt 1:21 (γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν

αὐτοῦ), and the message comes by means of an ἄγγελος κυρίου. As mentioned in

the previous chapter, Artemidorus also emphasized that the gods and others

worthy of credence speak in riddles, which again emphasizes the potential

ambiguity of the oracle in Matt 1:21. In the literary examination of Herodotus,

Euripides, Plutarch, and Tatius narratives, it was established that oracles and

dreams were open to ambiguity and retrospection. Here, Matthew utilizes the

same techniques of rhetorical ambiguity and retrospection to similar ends.

　　　　The sequential reader is perhaps also given a hint regarding the ambiguous

nature of the dream in Matt 1:21-23 since Joseph is called a "righteous man." In

some dream literature, upright character and self-control were significant. It has

already been indicated that Philo was concerned with the character of Jacob.

Much earlier, Plato made the following statement in reference to dreamers:

> He's calmed down his passionate part and doesn't go to
> bed in an emotionally disturbed state because he's been

angry with someone. In other words, he's quietened down
two aspects of himself, but woken up the third – the one in
which intelligence resides – and that's how he takes his rest;
and, as you know, in this state he can maximize his contact
with the truth and minimize lawlessness of the visions he
sees in his dreams.[368]

For Plato, it was important to remove appetites and passion, leaving only the

intelligence before seeking sleep, an idea that he developed and subsequently

applied to ethics. Cicero's writing in *De divinatione* also links character to

dreaming. From the mouth of Quintus comes, "But, for my part, I am inclined to

think that such a power is not to be attributed either to a diseased stomach or to a

disordered brain. On the contrary, it is the healthy soul and not the sickly body

that has the power of divination" (Cicero, *Div.* 38.81-82 [trans. William

Armistead Falconer, LCL]). Further clarification follows:

> Therefore, just as a man has clear and trustworthy dreams,
> provided he goes to sleep, not only with his mind prepared
> by noble thoughts, but also with every precaution taken to
> induce repose; so, too, he, when awake, is better prepared
> to interpret truly the messages of entrails, stars, birds, and
> all other signs provided his soul is pure and undefiled.
> (Cicero, *Div.* 52.121 [trans. William Armistead Falconer, LCL])

Similarly, Artemidorus is very clear on character:

> You must bear in mind, moreover, that men who live an
> upright, moral life do not have meaningless dreams (enhypnia)
> or any other irrational fantasies but rather dreams that are by
> all means meaningful (oneiroi) and which generally fall into
> the theorematic category. For their minds are not muddled by
> fears or by expectations but, indeed, they control the desires
> of their bodies. In short enhypnia and other irrational fantasies
> do not appear to a serious man.[369]

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[368] Plato, *Republic* (trans. Robin Waterfield; OWC; Oxford: Oxford University
Press, 1998), 314.

[369] Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica*, 185.

The status and character of the individual was held as significant for correct

dream interpretation.

Joseph's righteousness in relation to dream literature has almost never

received comment.[370] Only Frenschkowski expands on "der gerechte Joseph" and

its relation to the "Offenbarungsdialog" in the dream narratives.[371] Here, the

medium of revelation is emphasized, since only Joseph hears the voice of divine

revelation in a dream; the Magi and Pilate's wife do not hear a voice in the

narrative. The righteousness of Joseph is mentioned just prior to the dream

narrative in order to enforce that the dream narrative must come to pass; it must

be true. The inclusion of such reinforcement indicates that there may be reason,

later in the narrative, to doubt the dream and to question its ability to predict the

future. Why state that the dream must come to pass if the realization is never to

be questioned in the narrative? In short, the explicit mention of Joseph's

righteousness may hint to the sequential reader that the oracle can be interpreted

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[370] For possible Greco-Roman readings of his righteousness, see Dale C. Allison, "Divorce, Celibacy and Joseph (Matthew 1:18-25 and 19:1-12)," *JSNT* 49, no. 1 (1993): 3-10. On divorce law and early Christian traditions, see Raymond Edward Brown, "The Annunciation of Joseph (Matt 1:18-25)," *Worship* 61, no. 6 (1987): 482-92; R. Bulbeck, "The Doubt of St. Joseph," *CBQ* 10, no. 3 (1948): 296-309; Arthur Calkins, "The Justice of Joseph Revisited," in *Kecharitōmenē* (Paris: Desclée, 1990), 165-77. On obedience in general, see P. P. Kotzé, "Structure of Matthew 1-13: An Exploration into Discourse Analysis," *Neot* (1977): 1-9. For a current discussion of Joseph's righteousness, see Robert G. Olender, "Righteousness in Matthew with Implications for the Declaration of Joseph's Righteousness and the Matthean Exception Clauses" (PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008); Ceslas Spicq, "'Joseph, son mari, étant juste'," *RB* 71, no. 2 (1964): 206-14.

[371] Frenschkowski, "Traum und Traumdeutung," 4-47.

multifariously, thereby allowing for a rereading. Without this acknowledgement,

a straightforward reading of the oracle has led some to conclude,

> Mt 1:21 is to be understood accordingly, in light of Matthew's
> salvation history: Jesus is to save his own people, that is the
> historical Israel, from their sins. . . [T]he developing conflict
> between Jesus and his opponents . . . pictures the total failure
> of Jesus' original prophetic program and highlights the
> impenitence of the historical Israel.[372]

Yet, the character of the dreamer does not allow the prophecy to fail. A

recency reading does not see the Gospel's conclusion as a tragedy but as its

intended outcome, however unfortunate; the ministry of Jesus is a success in that

the prophecy is fulfilled when the Gospel is read from the end

Conclusions on Matt 1:23

This discussion of Matt 1:19-23 touches on many areas of the Gospel,

demonstrating that defining the "people" of Matt 1:21 is notoriously difficult.

One's approach to the texts has significant interpretive impact. In Matt 1:23, the

use of "God with us" and "they" can be seen as relating to the "people," but in

Matt 28:20, the presence of Jesus goes forth into the nations, expanding the

referent of "they." Where a primacy reading sees the "people" as Israel,

connecting them to the genealogy and to Matt 2:6, a recency reading focuses on

an intertextual relationship between Mic 5:4 and the nations in Matt 28:19. A

primacy reading sees "my people" as further clarification of "people,"

exemplified in the genealogy. Yet the later use of the personal pronoun in the

Gospel is more often in relation to the Kingdom of God and later to the church,

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[372] Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom*, 225-26.

which helps redefine the "people" of Matt 1:21. Emphasizing Matthew's use of
dream oracle and reversal in Matt 2:15 makes the irony of Matt 1:21 more
plausible. Finally, the mention of Joseph's righteousness means that the dream of
Matt 1:21 cannot fail.

Matthew 4:15-16

> γῆ Ζαβουλὼν καὶ γῆ Νεφθαλίμ, ὁδὸν θαλάσσης, πέραν
> τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν, ὁ λαὸς ὁ καθήμενος
> ἐν σκότει φῶς εἶδεν μέγα, καὶ τοῖς καθημένοις ἐν χώρᾳ καὶ
> σκιᾷ θανάτου φῶς ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς.

> "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way
> of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles--"The
> people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, And
> to those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death,
> Upon them a light dawned."

Matt 4:15-16 has not generated as much discussion in relation to λαός as
has Matt 1:21, primarily due to some interpreters moving from Matt 1:21 to 2:6
for clarity and then moving forward with the referent as Israel throughout the rest
of the Gospel, as indicated above. In this case, no further discussion is deemed
necessary. Added to the clarification of Matt 2:6 is that, historically, Galilee had
few Gentiles, so from this perspective, it is read as Galilee under the rule of
Gentiles. Numerous scholars acknowledge, in Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν, a reference
to the Gentile mission. In "light has dawned," they find reference to the Gentile
Magi, and when approaching Matthew 8, they highlight Jesus' inclusion of the
centurion of exemplary faith. Yet, these readings are usually indicated to be
retrospective.

Primacy Interpretations

Warren Carter has argued that the context of this passage is concerned with the rule of Herod and his death, followed by the rule of Archelaus (Matt 2:22) and the arrest of John the Baptist (Matt 4:12). Matthew 4:16, in this context, serves as a reference to political rule and oppression, and as a result, a possessive genitive is used for interpretation. Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν is an indication of this rule and should be translated as "Galilee under the rule of the Gentiles."[373] Granting the political tensions between Jesus and Herod already mentioned regarding his attempt on Jesus' life, this is very plausible and fits well with a primacy reading of the text. Second, scholars often note that Galilee was not primarily inhabited by Gentiles, thereby making a genitive of content (the most common reading) implausible.

> The use by some modern scholars of the Isaian depiction 'Galilee of the Gentiles' (Isa 8:23) as an accurate description of the population at the time of Jesus, is therefore, wholly unfounded. Inscriptions suggesting a pagan ethos are almost entirely lacking in Galilee proper following the aggressive Judaization by the Hasmoneans, and the few that have been found come from territories of the surrounding pagan cities such as Tyre and Sidon on the coast, Banias in the north and Scythopolis/Bethsean to the south.[374]

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[373] Warren Carter, "Matthew and the Gentiles: Individual Conversion and/or Systemic Transformation?" *JSNT* 26, no. 3 (2004): 266.

[374] Seán Freyne, "Galilee, Jesus and the Contribution of Archaeology," *ExpTim* 119, no. 12 (2008): 577; Mark A. Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For a complete discussion see Mark A. Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee: Population of Galilee and New Testament Studies.* (SNTSMS; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Akira Ogawa, *L'histoire de Jésus chez Matthieu: la signification de l'histoire pour la théologie matthéenne* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1979), 60-61.

Thus, Carter seems correct in his grammatical assessment as relates to the politics of Matt 1-4 and the ethnic makeup of Galilee. The assessment is equally plausible when one reads it reflecting on Matt 10:5-6 and 15:24, passages in which Jesus' ministry is restricted to Israel.[375] Despite these strengths, Carter's interpretation is a minority opinion since others tend to read this section in light of the end of Matthew.

Recency Interpretations

Gnilka assesses Matt 4:15-16 from both a primacy and a recency reading perspective. He states that λαός refers to the Jews in its immediate context,[376] but he continues, "Im „Galiläa der Heiden", von dem schon der Prophet redete, war der Übergang angezeigt. Im Gesamtaufbau des Evangeliums darf ein Zusammenhang zwischen der prophetischen noch verhaltenen Ansage und dem Missionsbefehl 28:19f gesehen werden."[377] (In "Galilee of the Gentiles," about which the prophets spoke, a transition was suggested. Within the overall composition of the Evangelist, one can see a connection between the underlying prophetic message and the great commission of 28:19f.) The possibility of Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν retrospectively foreshadowing Matt 28:19-20 is strengthened by four common arguments:

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[375] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:384.

[376] Joachim Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (HTKNT; Freiburg: Herder, 1986), 1:98.

[377] Ibid.

1. A focus on Galilee at the end of the Gospel where the call to the

   nations takes place

2. The use of the term "light" within the Gospel

3. Jesus and the centurion

4. Jesus' withdrawal in the Gospel

Galilee and Matthew 28:19-20

Matt 4:15 makes mention of Galilee, which, at the end of the Gospel, is

the place of Jesus' resurrection activity. Within the Gospel more generally, Jesus

states that he will be killed and go to Galilee (Matt 26:31-32), the angel tells the

women at the tomb that Jesus will be in Galilee (Matt 28:5-7; 28:10), and it is in

Galilee that the commission to all the nations takes place (Matt 28:19). Viewed

from the end of the Gospel, the narrative of Matt 4:15-16 fully opens: from

Galilee, the mission to the Gentiles is to begin. Yet, since it is foreshadowed so

clearly in Matt 4:15-16, the sequential reader may look for further signs. The

significance of Abraham's mention in the genealogy becomes evident, the

proclamation of John the Baptist takes prominence (Matt 3:9), and the mention of

Abraham at the table in Matt 8:11 can be seen more clearly as indicative of

Gentile inclusion.[378] After the mention of Abraham (Matt 8:11) and the coming

of the nations from the east and the west, the sequential reader recalls the Gentile

Magi coming from the east who, thus, take part in the blessing of the nations.[379]

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[378] Eung Chun Park, *The Mission Discourse in Matthew's Interpretation* (WUNT 2/81; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 179-82.

[379] Christoph Burchard, "Miszellen: Zu Matthäus 8, 5-13," *ZNW* 84 (1993): 280.

From this vantage point, it seems that Matt 4:15-16 was intended to point toward the Gentile mission. The ending and the connection to Matt 4:15-16 open up a new layer of the Gospel, all of which will be developed below.

Matthew 4:15-16 in Relation to Light: The Magi and Beyond

In Matt 4:16, there is explicit mention of light (φῶς ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς), and many interpreters question how this is fulfilled in the surrounding context. There are two additional Matthean passages that refer to light and also most likely include Gentiles as characters or referents. The first is Chapter 2 in which the Magi see a star in the east. Most commentators identify the Magi as Gentiles,[380] and the only extensive challenge to this supposition has been presented by Sim.[381]

<u>*Excursus: David Sim and the Magi*</u>

Sim's arguments regarding the negative portrayal of Gentiles in Matthew have been accepted widely in relation to specific passages within the Gospel. Sim has, however, overstated his case by trying to make as much of the Gospel as possible negative toward Gentiles. In trying to emphasize this consistency, he is obligated to change the ethnicity of Matthew's positively-portrayed Gentile Magi. This alteration disallows a connection between Gentiles, light, and Matt 4:15-16, and so it must be addressed here.

A significant portion of Sim's argument assumes that Matthew cannot rely on verbal echoes but must use fulfillment quotations in order to reference

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[380] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:228.

[381] David C. Sim, "The Magi: Gentiles or Jews?" *HvTSt* 55, no. 4 (1999): 980-1000.

Scripture. Where many commentators have observed allusions to Num 24:17 in the star the Magi follow and to Ps 60, 72 in relation to the gifts offered by the Magi (and these verses contain Gentile implication), Sim dismisses this because no fulfillment quotation is included. Sim, however, provides no justification as to why Matthew must make direct quotations in order to have the Scriptures in mind.[382]

Yet it is not upon the echoes that scholars have based their primary arguments for the Gentile status of the Magi. Taking his argument further, Sim tries to undermine the use of astrology and its association with foreign lands by stressing Jewish interest in astrology. Although there is concern with astrological phenomena within Judaism,[383] Sim can never state that the individuals involved in Jewish astrology are called Magi because of a lack of evidence. Sim also does not distinguish between the polemical use of μάγος as ascribed to a Jewish individual in Acts 13 and the term's employment to describe the ancient practices of astrology (Matt 2:2, 9-10) and dream interpretation (Matt 2:12) by Gentiles.[384]

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[382] Ideas of intertexual allusions and Matthew have been developed significantly by Leroy Andrew Huizenga, *The New Isaac: Tradition and Intertextuality in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSupp 131; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 43-74; see also Leroy Andrew Huizenga, "Obedience unto Death: The Matthean Gethsemane and Arrest Sequence and the Aqedah," *CBQ* 71, no. 3 (2009): 507-26; Sim, "The Magi," 999.

[383] Annette Yoshiko Reed, "Abraham as Chaldean Scientist and Father of the Jews: Josephus, Ant. 1.154-168, and the Greco-Roman Discourse about Astronomy/Astrology," *JSJ* 35, no. 2 (2004): 119-58; Jeffrey S. Siker, "Abraham in Graeco-Roman Paganism," *JSJ* 18, no. 2 (1987): 188-208; Sim, "The Magi," 986.

[384] Becker stresses the ethnographic sense of the expression and its connection to Medean tribes or Persia; Michael Becker, "Magoi - Astrologers, Ecstatics, Deceitful Prophets: New Testament Understanding in Jewish and Pagan Context,"

Since μάγος could cover a variety of practices,[385] only context can define the term. Sim mentions "magus Simon" very ambiguously in the context of Acts 8:9-24, a misleading attribution since the term μάγος is not used in the New Testament in relation to Simon.[386] He tries to lessen the impact of the Magi's use of the title "king of the Jews" since this attribution is used only by Gentiles in the narrative.   He attempts to achieve this by developing the way in which Josephus uses the term.[387] Yet, Matthew discriminates, reserving the title "King of the Jews" for use by Gentiles (Matt 27:11, 29, 37) and "King of Israel" for use by Jews (Matt 27:42) regardless of Josephus' usage. Sim proposes that Matthew does this only because he is following Mark in these instances, but ironically, he undermines his own argument by stressing elsewhere,

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in *Kind of Magic* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 92-93, 98-99. This list is expanded by Jong but is still foreign in nature; Albert de Jong, *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature* (RGRW 133; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 393-94.

[385] Becker, "Magoi," 87-106.

[386] Acts 8:9 uses a participle of μαγεύω, and Acts 8:11 uses the dative of μαγεία, both of which clearly refer to Simon's magical practices; this makes him quite distinct from the Magi described in the Gospel of Matthew.

[387] Sim emphasizes that two Jews, on different occasions, attribute the title, "King of the Jews," to someone, though here again, he avoids the contextual relationship to Gentiles. One occasion is the presentation of a gift to Pompey from Alexander Jannaeus or his son Asristobulus (*Ant.* 14:36). Yet, if the gift was an inscription to be displayed, does it not make sense that the foreign title was used since Pompey, being a Gentile, would not refer to himself as King of Israel? The second example given is of Manahem (*Ant.* 15:373), but this story takes place in the greater context of Herod receiving the kingdom from Caesar. "King of the Jews" may fit as the appropriate title in this context to Josephus' readers. This is not to say that Josephus does not use the titles "King of the Jews" and "King of Israel" interchangeably (which he does in *Ant.* 7:72 and 7:76), but the examples Sim gives may have a narrative audience (gift given to a Gentile) and/or context (kingdom granted by a Gentile) that naturally leads to a shift by Josephus.

A . . . criticism of this interpretative principle is that it draws too rigid a distinction between tradition and redaction. The original redaction critics worked on the assumption that Matthew expressed his own views only in those sections of the Gospel where he modified his sources. On the other hand, it was considered that nothing of value could be learned about him when he followed his sources closely; in these cases he was merely reproducing his source material. Yet this approach is based upon a false understanding of editorial practice. As a writer with many sources at his disposal, Matthew had the freedom to choose how he would employ them. He was free to revise or omit any section of his sources, or to accept it as it stood . . . Hence each practice, revision or retention of source material, is a redactional procedure in its own right, and each conveys important information about Matthew's interests and concerns.[388]

Finally, Sim avoids one of the most significant discussions: the relation of Persian Magi to the proclamation of kingship. Although he claims to address the seven most prominent arguments, this one is a particularly strange oversight given that Davies and Allison dedicate two pages to the topic.[389] For Luz and others, the specific comparison of the Magi to the Armenian king Tiridates and his journey to recognize Nero is seen as a plausible memory for initial readers, heightening the idea of Gentile recognition of kings.[390] Aus summarizes some of the details:

1. Dio Cassius relates that Tiridates worships Nero (Matt 2:11) on two occasions and he leaves by a different way (Matt 2:12).

2. Suetonius also mentions the worship of Nero.

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[388] David C. Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism: The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 231; Stanton, *Gospel for a New People*, 41-42.

[389] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:230, 33-34.

[390] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 105.

3. Pliny titles Tiridates a μάγος who brought others with him, increasing the number and paralleling Matthew.[391]

Hengel and Merkel conclude, after examining this text, that the Magi "sind für Mattäus so etwas wie die Repräsentanten der heidnischen Weisheit und Religion."[392] (The Magi "are for Matthew something like the representatives of Gentile wisdom and religion . . .") They do not see a direct influence of this history on the Matthean text but believe it can illuminate the understanding of Matt 2:1-12. Since, then, it seems plausible both internally to the sequential reader by the reference to the "King of the Jews" occurring only on the lips of Gentiles, and externally, to second century real readers regarding the Magi and Nero, that the Magi are justifiably identified as Gentiles.

Given the Gentile identity of the Magi, the imagery surrounding the "light to the people" of Matt 4:16 includes Gentiles; the Gentile Magi become the first to see a light in the Gospel.[393]

Matt 2:2   *εἴδομεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀστέρα ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ*

Matt 4:16   *ὁ λαὸς . . . εἶδεν φῶς . . . φῶς ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς.*

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[391] Roger D. Aus, "The Magi at the Birth of Cyrus, and the Magi at Jesus' Birth in Matthew 2:1-12," in *Religion, Literature, and Society in Ancient Israel, Formative Christianity and Judaism* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1987), 112-13.

[392] Martin Hengel and Helmut Merkel, "Die Magier aus dem Osten und die Flucht nach Ägypten (Mt 2) in der antiken Religionsgeschichte und der Theologie des Matt," in *Orientierung an Jesus* (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1973), 152.

[393] 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), 220 (note 357); Konradt, *Israel, Kirche,* 296; Miler, *Les citations d'accomplissement*, 96; Guido Tisera, *Universalism According to the Gospel of Matthew* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1993), 95.

Further, this text is often connected to Matt 5:14 (ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου):

"Das Licht, das mit Jesus zunächst dem jüdischen Volk aufstrahlte, ist für die

Welt bestimmt."[394] (The light that comes with Jesus that initially first shone to the

Jewish people is destined for the world.) Thus, there are two connections between

Gentiles and light within the early stages of the Gospel.

<u>Jesus and the Centurion</u>

Further extending Gentile inclusion in the λαὸς of Matt 4:15, it will be

argued that this verse also looks forward to the inclusion of the centurion in Matt

8:5-13. The centurion narrative is connected thematically with Matt 4:15-16 since

it is an advanced mention which when retrospectively interpreted is positive

towards Gentiles. Luz comments, "Jesus' prediction awakens the suspicion that

later the Gentiles will come to the God of Israel, while Israel will remain on the

outside. At this point our verses are an initial flash . . . ; salvation for the Gentiles

will come only at the end of Jesus' activity on behalf of Israel."[395]

Numerous narrative connections will be examined. Once these

connections are established, the ministry of Jesus is extended to a specific Gentile,

creating another advanced mention of the end.

1. The crowds who follow Jesus connect the narratives

2. There are numerous verbal similarities between Matthew 4, 8, 9.

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[394] Deines, "Die Gerechtigkeit," 218; see also Heinz Giesen, "Galiläa--mehr als eine Landschaft: bibeltheologischer Stellenwert Galiläas im Matthäusevangelium," *ETL* 77, no. 1 (2001): 35; Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium*, 1:98.

[395] Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20: A Commentary* (ed. Helmut Koester; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 11.

3. The setting for the two narratives are geographically connected

4. Matthew 8:11-12 is read retrospectively as positive toward the Gentiles

The Crowds

In Matt 4:14-16, the prophecy is fulfilled by Jesus' entrance into Capernaum. Yet, as the narrative continues, the people on whom the light continues to dawn expands from Capernaum to all of Syria (Matt 4:24),[396] and finally, the text states that the great crowd (καὶ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ ὄχλοι πολλοὶ) following Jesus was "from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan" (Matt 4:25). This same crowd is present at the Sermon on the Mount starting in Matt 5:1 (ἰδὼν δὲ τοὺς ὄχλους), is mentioned again in Matt 7:28 (οἱ ὄχλοι), and noted once more in Matt 8:1 (ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ ὄχλοι πολλοί). It seems also that this crowd forms the audience for Jesus' words in Matt 8:10-11 (εἶπεν τοῖς ἀκολουθοῦσιν·).[397] The following of the crowd continues in Matt 8:18 (ὄχλον), 9:8 (οἱ ὄχλοι), and again in 9:36 (τοὺς ὄχλους). It has been noted that, in two instances in the Gospel, there are similarities to Matt 5:1:

Matt 5:1   ἰδὼν δὲ τοὺς ὄχλους ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος, καὶ καθίσαντος αὐτοῦ
            προσῆλθαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ·

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[396] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 167 (see note 18).

[397] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 2:13-14; Florian Wilk, *Jesus und die Völker in der Sicht der Synoptiker* (BZNW 109; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001).

Matt 8:18 (where only his disciples follow)[398]

ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὄχλον περὶ αὐτὸν ἐκέλευσεν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς

τὸ πέραν.

Matt 9:36 (after which Jesus only addresses his disciples)

ἰδὼν δὲ τοὺς ὄχλους ἐσπλαγχνίσθη περὶ αὐτῶν

These similarities may indicate a separation from the crowd in Matt 5:1, but in

light of Matt 7:28, it is difficult to maintain that the crowds were not being

addressed at all by Jesus in the intervening narrative.[399]

Verbal Similarities

In two sections, Matthew also connects the end of Chapter 4 with the

middle of Chapter 8 and end of Chapter 9:

Matt 4:24   Καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ἡ ἀκοὴ αὐτοῦ <u>εἰς ὅλην τὴν Συρίαν</u>·

Matt 9:26   καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἡ φήμη αὕτη <u>εἰς ὅλην τὴν γῆν</u> ἐκείνην·

Matt 9:31   Οἱ δὲ ἐξελθόντες διεφήμισαν αὐτὸν <u>ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ γῇ</u> ἐκείνῃ.

More parallels include the identical wording of the summary statements:

Matt 4:23   Καὶ περιῆγεν ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Γαλιλαίᾳ διδάσκων <u>ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς</u>

<u>αὐτῶν καὶ κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ θεραπεύων</u>

<u>πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν</u> ἐν τῷ λαῷ.

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[398] Luz sees the grammar of this verse as ambiguous, and the crowds may be called to go with Jesus to the other side. Ulrich Luz, *Studies in Matthew* (trans. Rosemary Selle; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 229-30.

[399] Warren Carter, "The Crowds in Matthew's Gospel," *CBQ* 55, no. 1 (1993): 57-59; Frans Neirynck, "Matthew 4:23-5:2 and the Matthean Composition of 4:23-11:1," in *Interrelations of the Gospels* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990), 34-35.

Matt 9:35   Καὶ περιῆγεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὰς πόλεις πάσας καὶ τὰς κώμας διδάσκων

<u>ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς</u>

<u>βασιλείας καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν.</u>

Finally, there is the repeated reference to healing:

Matt 4:24   . . . καὶ <u>προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας</u> ποικίλαις

νόσοις καὶ βασάνοις συνεχομένους [καὶ] <u>δαιμονιζομένους</u> καὶ

σεληνιαζομένους καὶ παραλυτικούς, καὶ <u>ἐθεράπευσεν</u> αὐτούς.

Matt 8:16   <u>προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δαιμονιζομένους</u> πολλούς· καὶ ἐξέβαλεν τὰ

πνεύματα λόγῳ καὶ <u>πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας ἐθεράπευσεν,</u>[400]

> The summaries 4.23 and 9.35 are both anticipatory and
> retrospective summaries. They are linked together as an
> inclusion and with what precedes and follows each. They
> both conclude a section of narrative and anticipate what
> is to come. In addition to creating temporal plot
> connections, they also provide motivational/causal linkages
> for the implied reader.[401]

The narratives are, thus, significantly connected beyond simply the crowd; they

are also connected by word and theme. This is not to say there is no break in the

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[400] The above similarities are noted by many. Anderson, *Narrative Web*, 148-51;
Margaret Hannan, *The Nature and Demands of the Sovereign Rule of God in the
Gospel of Matthew* (LNTS; London: T&T Clark, 2006), 68-69; Jack Dean
Kingsbury, "Observations on the 'Miracle Chapters' of Matthew 8-9," *CBQ* 40,
no. 4 (1978): 566-68; Klaus Stefan Krieger, "Das Publikum der Bergpredigt (Mt
4,23-25): Ein Beitrag zu der Frage: Wem gilt die Bergpredigt?" *Kairos* 28, no. 1-2
(1986): 98-119; Miler, *Les citations d'accomplissement*, 98; William G.
Thompson, "Reflections on the Composition of Mt 8:1-9:34," *CBQ* 33, no. 3
(1971): 365-68; M. Trimaille, "Citations d'accomplissement et architecture de
l'évangile selon S. Matthieu," *EstBíb* 48, no. 1 (1990): 52-54; Wilhelmus
Johannes Cornelis Weren, "The Macrostructure of Matthew's Gospel: A New
Proposal," *Bib* 87, no. 2 (2006): 191-92; Florian Wilk, "Eingliederung von
'Heiden' in die Gemeinschaft der Kinder Abrahams : die Aufgabe der Jünger Jesu
unter 'allen Weltvölkern' nach Mt 28,16-20," *ZNT* 8, no. 15 (2005): 55.

[401] Anderson, *Narrative Web*, 151.

crowd. Matt 9:23-25 seems to make reference to a different crowd, that is, those involved in mourning the ruler's daughter. Then, it seems to return to the larger crowd in Matt 9:36. All of this is to indicate that the ministry of Jesus to the centurion takes place in the setting of that same crowd.

The Geographical Setting

Also connecting Matt 8:5 and 4:16 is the geographical setting of the narratives. The centurion comes to Capernaum where the initial prophecy was fulfilled by Jesus.[402] It should not be seen as exceptional to find a Gentile in the crowd since Jesus' ministry in Matt 4:25 extended to the Decapolis.[403] In Matt 8:10, the faith of the centurion is commended in contrast with that of all of Israel (παρ᾽ οὐδενὶ τοσαύτην πίστιν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ εὗρον), showing how Jesus' light has spread. The following narrative (Matt 8:16) emphasizes the fulfillment of Matt 4:15-16 by reiterating Matt 4:23-24. After examining these and other similarities, Thompson concludes, "Matthew understood these miracles as an integral part of Jesus' messianic ministry which he has carefully situated in Galilee and centered around Capharnaum by the sea (4:12-17)."[404] There is a tension between the centurion and Jesus since Matt 8:7 (καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ἐγὼ ἐλθὼν θεραπεύσω αὐτόν) is most likely to be taken as a question, "Shall I come and heal him?" as opposed to an affirmative statement, "I will come and heal

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[402] Tisera, *Universalism*, 103.

[403] Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 200-01; Gundry, *Matthew*, 65; Donald Senior, "Between Two Worlds: Gentiles and Jewish Christians in Matthew's Gospel," *CBQ* 61, no. 1 (1999): 14; Wilk, Eingliederung von 'Heiden'," 55.

[404] Thompson, "Reflections," 386.

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him."[405] Yet, the affirmation of his faith is decisive.[406] The connection to the crowd, Capernaum, and the continued linkage of chapter 9 to chapter 4 all reinforce the centurion's inclusion among the λαός which, unlike in Matt 2:6, is never clearly defined.[407]

Gentile-Positive Retrospective Rereading

It is not only the centurion's inclusion in the λαός that links the two narratives under discussion here; the further inclusion of Gentiles is emphasized by the following couplet in Matt 8:11-12:

> λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἥξουσιν
> καὶ ἀνακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακὼβ ἐν
> τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν, οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας
> ἐκβληθήσονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον· ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ
> κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων.

> "And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west,
> and recline *at the table* with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,
> in the kingdom of heaven; [12] but the sons of the kingdom shall
> be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be
> weeping and gnashing of teeth."

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[405] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 2:22; Amy-Jill Levine, *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthean Social History: Go Nowhere among the Gentiles: Matt 10:5b*, (SBEC; Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1988), 111-14; Tisera, *Universalism*, 108-12.

[406] Jacques Dupont, "'Beaucoup viendront du levant et du couchant. . .': (Matt 8:11-12; Lk 13:28-29)," *ScEccl* 19, no. 2 (1967): 162.

[407] Brendan Byrne, "The Messiah in Whose Name 'the Gentiles Will Hope' (Matt 12:21): Gentile Inclusion as an Essential Element of Matthew's Christology," *ABR* 50(2002): 65; Wilhelmus Johannes Cornelis Weren, "Quotations from Isaiah and Matthew's Christology (Mt 1,23 and 4,15-16)," in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997), 463.

This particular verse has generated a lot of attention since Allison has argued that the people coming from the east and west are not Gentiles but consist rather of Diaspora Jews.[408] This constitutes a primacy reading of the text. If one excludes Matt 28:19-20, and there is no mission to the Gentiles at the end of the Gospel, the verses become much less ambiguous. In this instance, Allison seems correct since the language indicates an eschatological restoration. He gives four main arguments:

1. The "many" of Matt 8:11 is never explicitly identified as the Gentiles.[409]

2. The phrase "east and west" never refers to Gentiles but to the ingathering of Israel in numerous passages (Isa 43:5; Zech 8:7; Bar 4:37; 5:5; *Pss. Sol.* 11:2; *1 En.* 57:1).[410]

3. The eschatological pilgrimage never functions as a polemic against Israel.[411]

4. In many passages of the Hebrew Scriptures the Gentiles are destined for destruction (Sir 36; 1QM 1-2; *1 En*. 90:19; *4 Ezra* 13:1-11).[412]

Each of these arguments has strength since the primacy effect focuses the mission

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[408] Dale C. Allison, Jr., "Who Comes From the East and West? Observations on Matt 8.11-12/Luke 13.28-29," *IBS* 11(1989): 158-70.

[409] Ibid., 159.

[410] Ibid., 161-62.

[411] Ibid., 163.

[412] Ibid., 163-64.

on Israel.[413] This is further emphasized in Jesus' resistance to the centurion in his initial question, as discussed above. Jesus indicates that he has not come to minister to the Gentiles (as has already been affirmed in Matt 10:5-6 and will be reaffirmed in 15:23-24).

A recency reading, however, has been provided by Olmstead who sees Allison as reading Hebrew Bible narratives into Matthew: "His argument seems to assume that traditional motifs must be employed in a traditional manner. . . Allison's reading can only be successful when earlier Jewish treatments of these motifs are given hermeneutical priority over the Matthean narrative."[414] Thus, the source for the text overrides its position within the Matthean text. Olmstead, on the other hand, reads the entire Matthean Gentile narrative with a deliberate retrospective focus:

> Because of the importance of endings in narratives, and because this ending directly addresses the Gentile question, our study of this particular plot line [the Gentile sub-plot] begins with the periscope that draws it to conclusion. Subsequently we turn to examine the development of this Gentile sub-plot in the earlier portions of the narrative, but always bearing in mind the conclusion towards which it is moving. To borrow Ricoeur's terminology, we shall be interested in "apprehending the well-known end as implied in the beginning and the well-known episodes as leading to this end.[415]

Second, there is an extended criticism regarding the meaning of the text if

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[413] Nolland follows this line of argumentation. Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 375.

[414] France, *Matthew*, 317-18; Wesley G. Olmstead, *Matthew's Trilogy of Parable : the Nation, the Nations, and the Reader in Matthew 21.28-22.14* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 205.

[415] Olmstead, *Trilogy of Parables*, 71-72.

> Jesus is contrasting the unbelieving Jewish aristocracy with
> the Jews of the Diaspora . . . Nowhere in the Jesus tradition
> is there any indication that Jesus reflects upon the unique
> situation of the Diaspora Jews as distinct from Palestinian
> Jews. One must also ask whether there was any doubt about
> the salvation of Jews in the Diaspora, and it becomes hard to
> envisage this group as a surprising reversal as to who is ultimately
> included in the kingdom.[416]

Given such a recency reading, this passage comes as a warning to the Jews who

are the "sons of the kingdom" and who will be cast into darkness but as a positive

note to the Gentiles, as was the light motif in Matt 4:16.[417] That those who are to

come to Jesus in Matt 8:11-12 are Gentiles is further supported by an end reading

of Abraham's inclusion at the table (Matt 8:11):

> If the reader starts anew in light of the mission to the
> nations [Matt 28:19-20] one then sees Abraham not only
> as the father of the Jewish people but is also reminded of
> the promises to Abraham. "Son of David, son of Abraham,"
> not only marks the first two movements of the genealogy
> but also defines the focalization. David is given prominence
> by being placed first in the title and even greater prominence
> will emerge later in the narrative. Similarly by singling out
> Abraham, the narrator also gives him a prominence that subtly
> announces a theme that climaxes at the end of Matthew's
> Gospel. Abraham is the father not only of Israel but also the
> gentiles in the figure of his first son (Gen 17:5). The final
> command of the Gospel orders the community to turn its
> attention to the gentiles, the nations (Matt 28:19, see LXX
> Gen 22:18).[418]

> Matt 3:9 makes it clear that God can rise up sons of Abraham from the

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[416] Michael. F Bird, *Jesus and the Origins of the Gentile Mission* (ed. Mark Goodacre; LNTS; Edinburgh; T&T Clark, 2006), 90.

[417] Blaine Charette, *The Theme of Recompense in Matthew's Gospel* (JSNTSup 79; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 142.

[418] Scott, "Birth of the Reader," 85.

stones.[419] An often overlooked connection between Abraham and the centurion is

their faith. Abraham is often remembered for his faith(fulness) (Gen 15:6; Sir

44:19-21; *Jub.* 14:6; 1 Macc 2:52; and most clearly in Philo: *De Abrahamo*

262.273; *Legum allegoriae* 3, 22; *De mutatione nominum* 177.186).[420] This

rereading of the Abraham narrative then goes farther back from Matt 3:9 into the

genealogy itself where the four women mentioned retrospectively become

Gentiles and partakers of the promise to Abraham who is mentioned in Matt

1:1.[421] All of this leads to a complete narrative flip; since, in retrospect, Matt 4:16

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[419] Florian Wilk, "Die Gestalt des Abraham im Neuen Testament," in
Interreligiöser Dialog : Chancen abrahamischer Initiativen (ed. Reinhard Möller
and Hans-Christoph Gossmann (Berlin: Lit, 2006), 64-65. For discussion of this
verse in relation to the centurion, see Daniel Marguerat, *Le jugement dans
l'évangile de Matthieu* (Genève: Editions labor et fides, 1981), 256; Jean
Zumstein, *La condition du croyant dans l'évangile selon Saint Matthieu*
(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 370.

[420] Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Interpretation of Genesis 15:6: Abraham's Faith and
Righteousness in a Qumran Text," in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible,
Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov* (ed. Shalom M. Paul,
et. al.; VTSup; Leiden: Brill, 2003); Terence E. Fretheim, *Abraham : Trials of
Family and Faith* (SPOT; Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press,
2007), 144-79. For other studies, see G. Walter Hansen, *Abraham in Galatians:
Epistolary and Rhetorical Contexts* (JSNTSup; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989),
175-99; Daniel J. Harrington, "Abraham Traditions in the Testament of Abraham
and in the 'Rewritten Bible' of the Intertestamental Period," in *Studies on the
Testament of Abraham* (ed. George W. E. Nickelsburg; (SCS; Missoula, Mont.:
Scholars Press, 1972); Halvor Moxnes, *Theology in Conflict: Studies in Paul's
Understanding of God in Romans* (NovTSup 53; Leiden: Brill, 1980), 118-69;
Samuel Sandmel, *Philo's Place in Judaism : A Study of Conceptions of Abraham
in Jewish Literature* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1956). For a
complete study on Abraham's faith in the Hebrew Bible up until the second
century, see Benjamin Schliesser, *Abraham's Faith in Romans 4: Paul's Concept
of Faith in Light of the History of Reception of Genesis 15:6* (Tübingen: Mohr
Siebeck, 2007), 78-220.

[421] Two recent articles summarize much of the current discussion surrounding the
Gentile status of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba and their relationship to the

points to the centurion narrative of Matt 8:5-13 and the centurion narrative can be reread in light of the end, pointing to the universal promise to Abraham, the very first verse in the Gospel of Matthew comes to mean something much more than in a primacy reading. Matt 1:21 is now seen following a universal salvific intention.[422]

Thus, the continuation of the crowd from Matthew 4 to the end of chapter 9, the use of verbal similarities and thematic parallels, and the geographical setting all connect chapters 4 and 8. A primacy reading, not emphasizing the end, sees Jesus' ministry as focused on the Jews and the centurion narrative as focused on the Diaspora.   When reread from the end, however, inclusion of the centurion in a reading of Matt 4:16 has implications for interpreting the entire Gospel.

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rest of the Gospel. See Peter-Ben Smit, "Something about Mary? Remarks about the Five Women in the Matthean Genealogy," *NTS* 56 (2010): 191-207; Sang-In Lee, "Matthew's Concern for Mission by Including the Four Women (Matthew 1:1-17)," *TTJ* 10, no.1 (2007): 49-74.

[422] Trying to find a balance between a positive or absent Gentile narrative in Matt 8:11-12 has led to a hermeneutical compromise. "Die „vielen" Gäste, die „aus Osten und Westen" zu diesem Festmahl „kommen", sind demnach nicht einfach die Völker, aber auch nicht nur Diasporajuden, sondern alle Juden und „Heiden", die infolge ihrer Stellung zu Jesus im Endgericht als „Gerechte" ausgewiesen werden" (Wilk, *Jesus und die Völker*, 116-17.) (The many guests, who come "from the east and the west" to the banquet are not simply the nations or only the Diaspora Jews, rather all the Jews and Gentiles who, because of their relationship (stance) with Jesus, will in the final judgement be declared righteous.)

Jesus' Withdrawal

Matthew makes six references to Jesus' withdrawal (ἀναχωρέω), five of which can be connected to Gentile lands or include quotations involving Gentiles.[423]

1. Matt 2:14 – Jesus departs to Egypt because of Herod

2. Matt 2:22 – Jesus withdraws to Galilee because of Antipas

3. Matt 4:12 – Jesus withdraws to Galilee after hearing of the arrest of John. This is followed by a quotation calling it "Galilee of the Gentiles."

4. Matt 12:15 – After the opposition of the Pharisees, Jesus withdraws, and this is followed by a quotation: "in his name the Gentiles will hope."

5. Matt 15:21 - After a confrontation with the Pharisees, Jesus withdraws to the area of Tyre and Sidon.

Commentators have not noted this motif often, although Levine concludes her discussion by saying, "Thus, the technical expression "to withdraw" has both ethnic and political implications. Ethnically, the term foreshadows the mission to the gentiles . . ."[424] Each instance of withdrawal is a Matthean redaction, and withdrawing in the Gospel seems to involve a narrative association or an actual

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[423] The sixth is Matt 14:13 in which Jesus is trying to escape the crowds and is unconnected with Gentiles.

[424] See also Deirdre Joy Good, "The Verb anachōreō in Matthew's Gospel," *NovT* 32, no. 1 (1990): 1-4; Levine, *Matthean Social History*, 134; Paul Ternant, "La Galilée dans le message des évangiles et l'origine de l'église en Galilée," *POC* 30, no. 1-4 (1980): 96-104.

encounter with Gentiles. Further, withdrawing usually occurs after conflict with the Jewish leadership. This conflict only intensifies as the narrative moves forward until Jesus threatens that the Kingdom will ultimately be removed from the leaders in Matt 21:43. Thus, as the conflict with the Jewish leaders intensifies and they ultimately condemn Jesus to death and the mission to the Gentiles is made explicit in Matt 28:19-20, one can reread the narrator's framing of Jesus' withdrawals as foreshadowing a Gentile mission.

Conclusions on Matthew 4:15-16

In a primacy reading, with the little information provided up to Matt 4:15-16, the sequential reader does not necessarily possess sufficient data to define λαός; reflecting back on the genealogy and reaffirmed by Matt 2:6, the sequential reader early on equates the "people" with the Jews.[425] As well, Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν would not be seen as referring to Gentile inhabitants but rather to possession or rule of the land by Gentiles.

With further reading, however, the recency effect comes into play since it is in Galilee that the mission of Jesus is announced to the nations (Matt 28:19-20). Rereading from this point leads one to notice the promise of Abraham and the blessing of the nations. Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν, from this perspective, refers to Gentile inhabitants in Galilee, and the mission moves from there to the nations. Jesus' patterned withdrawing to Galilee is connected to Gentile hopes, as becomes evident through recency reading. Through this lens, the light that is to dawn in

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[425] Gerhard Lohfink, "Wem gilt die Bergpridigt? Eine redaktionskritische Untersuchund von Mt 4,23 - 5, 2 und 7, 28f," in *Ethik im Neuen Testament* (ed. Franz Böckle and Karl Kertelge; Freiburg: Herder, 1984), 157.

Matt 4:16 can now be seen more clearly in the revelation to the Magi via the granting of the star. The light imagery expands in Matt 5:14 to include the whole world. Further, the connection of the crowds, as well as linguistic and thematic similarities between chapter 4, 5, 7, and 8-9 are given new significance since the expressed faith of the centurion includes him in the λαός. This is further emphasized by the centurion's connection to the Abraham theme, which started in the genealogy, is mentioned by John the Baptist in Matt 3:9, and recalled again in Matt 8:11-12 where Gentiles are included at the table of Abraham. Thus, one's reading approach defines the referent of λαός, as Beaton summarizes well:

> One may conclude, then, that on the narrative level, in
> these initial stages at least, "the people" are Jews. Once
> again, however, attention must also be drawn to the fact that
> the inclusion of "Galilee of the Gentiles" in 4:15 substantially
> colors the referent of λαός (4:16) and foreshadows the
> inclusion of gentiles into the people of God explicitly stated
> in 28:18-20.[426]

Matthew 8:17

> ὅπως πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἠσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος·
> αὐτὸς τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν ἔλαβεν καὶ τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν.
>
> in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet
> might be fulfilled, saying, "He Himself took our infirmities,
> and carried away our diseases."

Primacy Interpretations

The development of Matt 8:17 has often been related to Matt 1:21 because of its context in chapters 8-9. In Matt 9:2, after Jesus heals, he states, "ἀφίενταί σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι." This is seen as one of the miracles connected to Matt 8:17

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[426] Beaton, *Isaiah's Christ*, 108.

159

since it is a healing narrative[427] and to Matt 1:21 since it involves the forgiveness of sins.[428] Matt 9:1 also states that Jesus returned εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν πόλιν, which connects the narrative to Matt 8:14 and 8:5, that is, to the geographical center of Capernaum.[429] Jesus, in this perspective, is seen as fulfilling his commission of Matt 1:23 through his acts of salvation by healing as summarized in Matt 8:17.

Recency Interpretations

The discussion of Matt 8:17 has generally revolved around the role of the Jesus as the servant of Isaiah 53 rather than around who the "our" in the text addresses. There is no explicit reference to λαός, yet its connection to the prophecy of Matt 4:15-16 is still significant in light of the above connection between the narratives. Miler emphasizes this very clearly, exhibiting the contrasts in chapter 8 and connections to chapter 4:

1. La ville de Capharnaüm (8,5) où se passent les événements racontés connote l'universalité. Quand Mt la mentionne pour la première fois (4,13), il l'associe aux nations (4,15).
2. Mt a varié le type des personnages que Jésus guérit, échantillon de « tout le genre humain » :
   a. *Juifs* (lépreux, belle-mère de Pierre) vs *païens* (le centurion et son serviteur),
   b. *Jeune* (παῖς) vs *ancien* (belle-mère),
   c. *Homme* (lépreux, παῖς vs *femme* (belle-mére).
3. Dans le sommaire (8:16), le passage de πολλοί à πάντες et celui de οἱ δαιμόνιζομενοι à οἱ κακῶς ἔχοντες sont une progression généralisante et totalisante.

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[427] Günther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 171-72.

[428] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 2:38; Carter, "I Have Come," 56; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 232; Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom*, 38-39; Novakovic, *Messiah*, 75; Repschinski, "For He Will Save," 258.

[429] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 2:87.

4. L'instance de l'énonciation apparaît explicitement en 8,17. Mt met en relation un sujet αὐτός qu'il identifie à Jésus et un pronom (ἡμῶν) dont le référent dans son extension minimale n'est autre que le groupe constitué par le narrateur et les destinataires.
5. Jésus annonce la venue de multitudes (πολλοί 8,11) venant du levant et du couchant.[430]

Translation:

1. The city of Capernaum (8:5) where the narrated events occur connotes universality. When Matthew mentions it for the first time (4:13), he associates it with the nations (4:15).
2. Matthew has varied the type of characters that Jesus heals, representing all of humanity:
   a. *Jews* (leper, Peter's mother-in-law) vs. *Gentiles* (the centurion and his servant)
   b. *Young* (servant) vs. old (Peter's mother-in-law)
   c. *Man* (leper, servant) vs. *woman* (mother-in-law)
3. In the summary (8:16), the transition from πολλοί to πάντες and from οἱ δαιμόνιζομενοι to οἱ κακῶς ἔχοντες is a generalizing and totalizing progression.
4. The authority of the enunciation appears explicitly in 8:17. Matthew puts into relationship a subject αὐτός that he identifies with Jesus and a pronoun (ἡμῶν) of which the referent, in its minimal extension, is none other than the group constituted by the narrator and the narratee.
5. Jesus announces the coming of the many (πολλοί 8:11) from the east and the west.

In connection with the discussion of Matt 4:15-16, it seems Miler is correct in the correlation of these texts. The "us" in this text must include the centurion and others.[431] Often avoided or left unnoticed is the fact that this is the second time Matthew has used the personal pronoun in a citation with an ambiguous referent. The use of ἡμεῖς has already been used in Matt 1:23 (μεθ'ἡμῶν ὁ θεός); therefore, in two references to Isaiah, the same word is used to express inclusiveness. For the sequential reader, it is clear that the focus of the miracles is the Jewish

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[430] Miler, *Les citations d'accomplissement*, 108.

[431] Tisera, *Universalism*, 103-04.

161

populace, with the exception being the centurion.[432] Yet, this exception opens up

the use of λαός, making it inclusive.

Matthew 12:18-20

> ἰδοὺ ὁ παῖς μου ὃν ᾑρέτισα, ὁ ἀγαπητός μου εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησεν
> ἡ ψυχή μου· θήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπ᾽ αὐτόν, καὶ κρίσιν τοῖς
> ἔθνεσιν ἀπαγγελεῖ. οὐκ ἐρίσει οὐδὲ κραυγάσει, οὐδὲ ἀκούσει
> τις ἐν ταῖς πλατείαις τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ. κάλαμον συντετριμμένον
> οὐ κατεάξει καὶ λίνον τυφόμενον οὐ σβέσει, ἕως ἂν ἐκβάλῃ εἰς
> νῖκος τὴν κρίσιν.

> "Behold, My Servant whom I have chosen; My Beloved in
> whom My soul is well-pleased; I will put My Spirit upon Him,
> And He shall proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel,
> nor cry out; Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A
> battered reed He will not break off, And a smoldering wick He
> will not put out, Until He leads justice to victory."

Recency Interpretations

The final Isaiah fulfillment quotation in Matthew's Gospel is also the

longest and, definitively, the most inclusive (Matt 12:18-20). There is a clear

reference to the Gentiles hoping in the name of Jesus (Matt 12:21). There is some

debate, however, surrounding the interpretation of κρίσις (Matt 12:18) in relation

to the Gentiles; should it be translated judgment or justice? Here, as in Matt 8:15,

the Gospel seems to be opening up to Gentiles. Whereas in Matt 8:17, the

fulfillment related to Gentiles was contextual, here it becomes explicit within the

citation.

The two key verses within this passage and their relation to Gentiles are

Matt 12:18 (καὶ κρίσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀπαγγελεῖ) and 12:21 (καὶ τῷ ὀνόματι

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[432] Ibid., 179.

αὐτοῦ ἔθνη ἐλπιοῦσιν). Beaton is the only scholar dedicating a complete work

to these verses.[433] He presents arguments for a positive assessment of κρίσις as

justice, against which the most sustained opposing view[434] has been presented by

Sim who sees the correct translation as judgment. Both authors use the greater

context of the quotation to buttress support.

The arguments of Sim are not necessarily specific to Matt 12:18 but focus

more generally on negative portrayal of Gentiles throughout the Gospel; since

Gentiles are generally viewed in a negative light, Matt 12:18 must continue the

trend. Second, he relies on norms of usage; since Matthew usually employs the

term to indicate judgment, he must do the same here as well. Finally, Sim

examines some of the more peripheral context for examples of κρίσις meaning

judgment.[435]

Sim's arguments regarding the overall negative portrayal of the Gentiles

have been subject to much criticism.[436] He emphasizes Matt 12:18's relation to

Matt 11:20-24; 12:31-32, 36, 38-42 and the use of judgment in these passages to

apply a similar reading to Matt 12:18. The difficulties with this interpretation are

numerous. Matt 11:20-24 emphasizes that Tyre and Sidon would have repented

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[433] Beaton, *Isaiah's Christ*, 123-92.

[434] Sim, *Gospel of Matthew*.

[435] Ibid., 215-36.

[436] Byrne, "Gentiles Will Hope," 55-73; Carter, "Matthew and the Gentiles," 259-82; Dennis C. Duling, "Ethnicity, Ethnocentrism, and the Matthean Ethnos," *BTB* 35, no. 4 (2005): 125-43; Paul Foster, *Community, Law, and Mission in Matthew's Gospel* (WUNT 2/177; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 219-52; Olmstead, *Trilogy of Parables*, 71-97; Senior, "Between Two Worlds," 1-23.

in reaction to Jesus' miracles, and Sodom would have remained to this day. In

Matt 12:38-42, there is clear emphasis on the repentance of Nineveh as compared

to "this generation" and the Queen of Sheba who ἦλθεν ἐκ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς

 to hear Solomon. Thus, even though the verses emphasize judgment, they are

strikingly positive, even redemptive. Where Chorazin and Bethsaida are

condemned ὅτι οὐ μετενόησαν, Nineveh repents (Matt 12:41 - ὅτι μετενόησαν).

Considering that the verb μετανοέω occurs only five times in Matthew (3:2, 4:17;

11:20, 21; 12:41), and the very proclamation of the kingdom relies upon

repentance (Matt 4:17),[437] those passages related to Gentiles and judgment seem

to indicate the opposite of Sim's primary conclusion. Indeed the word (κρίσις) is

used, but the context seems to indicate more hope for the Gentiles than for their

comparative counterparts. Matt 11:24 states that Sodom would have remained if

it saw the miracles performed in Capernaum; this judgment contrasts boldly with

the faith of the centurion, an affirmation taking place at the same geographical

location. As a result, given the surrounding uses of judgment, it would be unusual

for a sequential reader to interpret Matt 12:18 as judgment of Gentiles.

Further, it has been stressed by Beaton that Matthew follows a particular

stylistic tendency; in every occurrence where κρίσις means judgment, it occurs in

the dative (Matt 5:21, 22; 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36, 41, 42), apart from Matt 23:33

where it follows ἀπὸ with the genitive. Yet, in Matt 12:18 and 12:20, it occurs in

the accusative, as in Matt 23:23 where, juxtaposed with mercy, it is generally

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[437] Marguerat, *Le jugement*, 259-68.

164

translated as justice.[438] The later part of the quotation in Matt 12:20 (κάλαμον

συντετριμμένον οὐ κατεάξει καὶ λίνον τυφόμενον οὐ σβέσεί) is usually

interpreted within the context of the healing of the man with the withered hand

(Matt 12:13) and the blind man who could not speak (Matt 12:22). It, thus, makes

reference to the miracles of Jesus in the helping of the injured.[439] This type of

service, culminating (ἕως ἂν) with κρίσις in Matt 12:20, is more likely connected

to mercy, as in Matt 23:23, than judgment.

Finally, this quotation, as with that of Matt 4:15-16, takes place within the

context of Jesus' withdrawal (ἀνεχώρησεν ἐκεῖθεν) from the conflict with the

Pharisees (Matt 12:15). Congruent with discussion above, this withdrawal is

connected with positive Gentile associations. There is much then in the context

and the Gospel indicating that this should be a positive, ironic reading of κρίσις.

It is in relation to this passage, when read retrospectively in light of Matt 28:20,

that Rothfuchs states, "kommt in 12, 17ff (Js 42:1ff) „universalistische" Gedanke

des ersten Evangelisten deutlich zum Ausdruch . . . verstehen" ("the 'universalist'

idea of the first evangelist can be understood as clearly expressed").[440]

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[438] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:294-95; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 123-24.

[439] Richard Beaton, "Isaiah in Matthew's Gospel," in *Isaiah in the New Testament* (ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken; London: T&T Clark, 2005), 72; David Hill, "Son and Servant: An Essay in Matthean Christology," *JSNT* 6 (1980): 11-12; Jerome H. Neyrey, "The Thematic Use of Isaiah 42:1-4 in Matthew 12," *Bib* 63, no. 4 (1982): 467-68; Novakovic, *Messiah,* 144.

[440] Wilhelm Rothfuchs, *Die Erfüllungszitate des Matthäus-Evangeliums: Eine biblisch-theologische Untersuchung* (BWANT; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969), 183.

Primacy Interpretations

In a primacy reading, the sequential reader has not become sufficiently familiar with the patterns outlined above to make many of these connections. It is only in Matt 23:23 where an alternative to the reading of κρίσις as judgment appears. Since Matt 1:23, 4:16, and 8:17 foreshadow and are seen only retrospectively as Gentile-oriented, a primacy reading and its focus on Israel and the Jews cannot be used to bolster a positive reading of κρίσις until the end of the Gospel. The withdrawal motif has occurred in Matt 2:14, 22, 4:12, and now in 12:14, but even here, Matt 4:12 is connected to Matt 4:16, which, as has been discussed, only opens up retrospectively. This leaves the move to Egypt and Nazareth, but the positive reflection upon the Gentiles is not obvious here.[441] Many of the above arguments are strengthened from the end of the Gospel once the Gentile mission becomes explicit. Interpreting κρίσις as judgment is a very viable option utilizing a primacy reading for, although the Gentiles fare well in judgment, in contrast to others, they are not removed from it. Further, as Sim has mentioned, the frame of the story also includes the Beelzebub controversy and concludes with words of judgment (Matt 12:37).

CONCLUSIONS ON THE FULFILLMENT QUOTATIONS

From the beginning (through the lens of primacy reading), Matt 1:20-23 refers to the Jewish people in light of the genealogy and Matt 2:6 in which there is clear juxtaposition of "people" with Israel. In Matt 4:15-16, the ethnic populace of the region of Galilee coupled with the oppression of the Jewish people under

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[441] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 120.

Herod and his son, as well as the capture of John, lead to the interpretation of "Galilee of the Gentiles" as a possessive genitive: Galilee under the rule of Gentiles. Matt 8:17 moves forward the promise of Matt 1:21, showing how Jesus is involved in the forgiveness of sins and, since the context involves a primarily Jewish crowd, the inference is expected. Finally, Matt 12:18-20 is seen as bringing down judgment upon the Gentile nations and oppressors, bringing the sequential reader back to Matt 4:15-16 ("Galilee under Gentile rule"), and the surrounding usages of the same word lead the sequential reader to this understanding.

From the end of the Gospel of Matthew, however, Matt 1:23 is interpreted by the promise of Jesus' presence with the disciples in their final commissioning (Matt 28:19-20). Matt 4:15-16 and the ministry of Jesus to the people can now be seen as foreshadowing the beginnings of Jesus' Gentile mission made explicit at the commission (Matt 28:19-20). From the end, Matt 8:17's "our" language emphasizes the inclusion of the centurion in the ministry of Jesus (Matt 28:19-20), and finally, Matt 12:18-20 becomes a reference to justice. As indicated, the sequential reader uses the force of Matt 28:19-20, the narrative end, to develop these various interpretations. The primacy effect works on the sequential reader's progression through the Gospel and its Isaianic fulfillment quotations to an unanticipated surprise ending (the Gentile mission), but when curiosity turns the sequential reader back to the beginning, the texts are clearly postdictable.

Moving deeper within the Gospel's construction, there are three echoes of Isaiah identified in Matthew (20:28; 21:33-45; 26:28) that function in the same way as the fulfillment quotations, adding an additional, more subtle layer to the deception that heightens suspense, surprise, and curiosity for the sequential reader.

In a primacy reading, with focus on Matt 1:21, the ransom of Matt 20:28 and forgiveness of sins in Matt 26:28 are centered on the Jews. Similarly, the judgment of Matt 21:33-45 by the removal of God's kingdom is interpreted as falling only upon the leaders of Israel. When viewed with an end-of-Gospel perspective, however, Matt 20:28 and 26:28 include Gentiles in the ransom, and the blood becomes universal. There is also an expansion of those who are to receive the judgment of Matt 21:33-45; instead of focusing only upon the Jewish leadership, it will retrospectively include all of Israel, and the Kingdom of God is given to the church.

Establishing a Relationship between Isaiah 53 and Matthew 20:28, 26:28

There are questions in scholarship surrounding the dependence of Matt 20:28 and 26:28 on Isaiah,[442] so Richard Hays' criteria for determining intertextual

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[442] C. K. Barrett, "The Background of Mk 10:45," in *New Testament Essays* (ed. A. J. B. Higgins; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), 1-18; M. D. Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark* (London: SPCK, 1967), 73-80; most recently, Huizenga, *The New Isaac*, 204-6.

relationships[443] (as discussed earlier) will be applied in these cases.[444]

Matthew 20:28

<u>Volume</u>

Considerable debate exists concerning the relationship of Matt 20:28 and Isaiah 53. The availability of Isaiah 53 is clear since part of this text was already quoted in Matt 8:17. With regard to wording, there are only a few similarities:

Matt 20:28   ὥσπερ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ

διακονῆσαι καὶ *δοῦναι* <u>τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ</u> <u>λύτρον</u> ἀντὶ <u>πολλῶν</u>.[445]

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[443] Powell emphasizes the various ways in which the Gospel of Matthew makes reference to scripture from very explicit quotation to faint echo. Examples of explicit quotation cited include Jeremiah in Matt 2:17-18, Isaiah in Matt 3:3, and David in Matt 22:43-44. Less explicit quotations include introductory statements such as "it is written" (Matt 4:4; 7:10), "have you not read" (Matt 12:3, 5; 19:4; 22:31), and "have you never read" (Matt 21:16, 42). Other quotations do not receive formal introduction or reference, as in the cases of Hosea in Matt 9:13 and Isaiah Matt 11:3-5. In terms of allusions to scripture, Matt 3:4 describes John the Baptist as Elijah (2 Kings 1:8), and in Matt 26:15, Judas uses the 30 pieces of silver to betray Jesus (Zech 11:12). These examples indicate the expected sensitivity of the sequential reader for recognition of scriptural reference. Since, however, the Gospel of Matthew is not merely a string of quotations and allusions, Hays' criteria are still relevent for the determination of those allusions that the sequential reader would recognize. See discussion in Powell, *Eastern Star*, 98-99; Luz, "Intertexts," 128-35.

[444] Hays, "Who Has Believed," 36-44. The criteria laid out by Hays (availability, volume, recurrence, thematic coherence, historical plausibility, history of interpretation, and satisfaction) will be used to explore whether these texts are, in fact, allusions. Similarities between these two Matthean passages permit their simultaneous analysis. Regarding Matt 21:33-45, the reference to Isaiah 5 in the Old Greek is uncontested, so Hays' criteria will not be addressed apart from volume.

[445] Mark 10:45 is identical, but Matthew substitutes ὥσπερ for καὶ γαρ at the beginning.

just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and

to give His life a ransom for many.

Isa 53:11 δικαιῶσαι δίκαιον εὖ **δουλεύοντα** πολλοῖς καὶ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν

αὐτὸς ἀνοίσει

to justify a righteous one serving many rightly and their sins he

shall take upon himself[446]

Isa 53:12 ἀνθ᾽ ὧν *παρεδόθη* εἰς θάνατον <u>ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ</u> καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀνόμοις

ἐλογίσθη καὶ αὐτὸς ἁμαρτίας <u>πολλῶν</u> ἀνήνεγκεν καὶ διὰ τὰς

ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν παρεδόθη

Because his soul was delivered over to death, and he was

considered with the lawless, and he took upon himself the sins of

many and because of their sins he was delivered.

Isa 53:10 אִם־תָּשִׂים אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ

and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering

Isa 53:12 הֶעֱרָה נַפְשׁוֹ לַמָּוֶת . . . וְהוּא חֵטְא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא

Because He poured out Himself to death . . . Yet He Himself

bore the sin of many

The parallel is most clear with Isa 53:12 of the Old Greek where there are four

words in common (τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ . . . πολλῶν; the distinctive is the case ἡ

ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ . . . πολλῶν). Additional similar words are also employed

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[446] For Isaiah 53, Ekblad will be used since NETS makes various emmendations. Eugene Robert Ekblad, *Isaiah's Servant Poems According to the Septuagint: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (CBET; Leuven: Peeters, 1999).

($\delta o \upsilon \lambda \epsilon \acute{\upsilon} o \nu \tau \alpha$ to $\delta o \tilde{\upsilon} \nu \alpha \iota$). Finally, since the Old Greek seems to do away with the idea of atonement (אָשָׁם) as found in the Hebrew, many see here a loose translation of the Hebrew in $\lambda \acute{\upsilon} \tau \rho o \nu$ of Matthew.

While the availability of Isaiah to Matthew is not in question, as indicated above, in this particular case, the quotation word count (Hays' criterion of volume) is not large, and the terms are used in relation to the martyrs of 2 Maccabees 2:50 ($\delta \acute{o} \tau \epsilon \ \tau \grave{\alpha} \varsigma \ \psi \upsilon \chi \grave{\alpha} \varsigma \ \acute{\upsilon} \mu \tilde{\omega} \nu$) and 6:44 ($\kappa \alpha \grave{\iota} \ \acute{\epsilon} \delta \omega \kappa \epsilon \nu \ \acute{\epsilon} \alpha \upsilon \tau \grave{o} \nu \ \tau o \tilde{\upsilon} \ \sigma \tilde{\omega} \sigma \alpha \iota \ \tau \grave{o} \nu \ \lambda \alpha \grave{o} \nu \ \alpha \acute{\upsilon} \tau o \tilde{\upsilon}$), with similar ideas in 4 Maccabees 6:29; 17:22 and 18:4, causing some to question the allusion to Isaiah in this verse.[447] Even Barrett admits, however, that the linguistic evidence parallels that of the Old Greek,[448] though he argues that the similarities are undermined by the superficial or improbable translation of the Hebrew or lack of precise similarities to the Old Greek. He states, "linguistically $\delta \iota \alpha \kappa o \nu \epsilon \tilde{\iota} \nu$ does not recall Isa. 53, or any of the Servant passages."[449] Yet, this criticism seems somewhat compromised by the similarities between $\delta \iota \alpha \kappa o \nu \epsilon \tilde{\iota} \nu$ and $\delta o \tilde{\upsilon} \nu \alpha \iota$, which are paralleled in Matt 20:28 as in Mark 10:45.[450] As well, similarities between $\delta o \upsilon \lambda \epsilon \acute{\upsilon} o \nu \tau \alpha$ to $\delta o \tilde{\upsilon} \nu \alpha \iota$ seem to invite a comparison when matched with the above parallels.

The discrepancy most discussed relates to the use of $\lambda \acute{\upsilon} \tau \rho o \nu$ since it is not a direct translation of אָשָׁם. In fact, the Old Greek never uses $\lambda \acute{\upsilon} \tau \rho o \nu$ or any of its

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[447] Barrett, "Background of Mk 10:45," 5.

[448] Ibid., 4.

[449] Ibid.

[450] R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission* (London: Tyndale Press, 1971), 118.

cognates to translate אָשָׁם.[451] This argument is typically countered by making

reference to Lev 5:6, 17-19 where compensation or payment is part of the אָשָׁם

sacrifice making it similar to a ransom.[452] This is further substantiated by Watts

who emphasizes that "Aquila uses λύτρωσις to render אָשָׁם in Leviticus 5:18 and

25 (cf. 7:1)"[453] suggesting at least semantic correspondence at a later point, or

interpretation of the meaning behind the Hebrew similar to Mark 10:45 and its

Matthean equivalent. Reference is also made to similar ideas of אָשָׁם in Num.

5:7-8.[454]

      Thus, examining the evidence using only Hays' criterion of volume, few

exact similarities stand out. Three words appear in order, but ψυχὴ is in the

accusative, and there is distinctive vocabulary separating this sequence from

πολύς. The idea of familiarity with Isaiah 53 is certain within the Gospel, yet the

ideas present in Matt 20:28 are not distinctive only to Isaiah as indicated through

reference to Maccabees.

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[451] Barrett, "Background of Mk 10:45," 5.

[452] R. T. France, "The Servant of the Lord in the Teachings of Jesus," *TynBul* 19 (1968): 26-52.

[453] Rikki E. Watts, "Jesus' Death, Isaiah 53, and Mark 10:45: A Crux Revisited," in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins* (ed. William H Bellinger, Jr. and William Reuben Farmer; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press, 1998), 139-40.

[454] Bernd Janowski, "He Bore Our Sins: Isaiah 53 and the Drama of Taking Another's Place," in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (ed. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 36-37.

Reoccurrence

Moving next to Hays' criterion of reoccurrence, Matthew's use of Isaiah is frequent and some of the passages are extensive. Beaton has outlined the clearest quotations (Matt 1:23/Isa 7:14; Matt 3:3/Isa 40:3; Matt 4:15-16/Isa 8:23b-9:1; Matt 8:17/Isa 53:4; Matt 12:18-21/Isa 42:1-4; Matt 13:13-15/Isa 6:9-10; Matt 15:8-9/Isa 29:13; Matt 21:13/Isa 56:7; Matt 24:29/Isa 13:10,14).[455] Thus, we have references to Isaiah 40, 42, 53 and 56, which, according to this criterion, supports the presence of an echo in 53.

The overall argument of the passage seems to fit with thematic coherence. How does the echo fit in with a developing presentation? One can see the significance of Matt 26:28 where Jesus makes reference to the pouring out of his blood for the sins of many. Taken as a reference to sacrifice (see below), this verse builds on Matt 20:28, bringing it closer to Isaiah 53's concern for sinners and the Servant pouring himself out (Isa 53:12).

Historical Plausibility

The historical plausibility criterion has posed one of the most significant stumbling blocks to acknowledging an echo of Isaiah 53 in Matt 20:28. There is little evidence of the text being read with a focus on suffering or, specifically, vicarious suffering, prior to the emergence of Christianity.[456] There are only hints

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[455] Beaton, "Isaiah in Matthew's Gospel," 63-78.

[456] Sydney H. T. Page, "The Suffering Servant Between the Testaments," *NTS* 31, no. 4 (1985): 148-96.

in Wisdom[457] and Daniel[458] as well as the Old Greek of Isaiah,[459] and it seems the Greek of Isaiah is the only one to maintain vicarious suffering. Thus, the influence and reading of this idea is minimal.

Excursus: The Recent Challenge by Huizenga

Leroy Huizenga has proposed recently a number of arguments to support the influence of the Hebrew of Isaiah 53 and to undermine the influence of the Old Greek so it no longer can be argued convincingly as echoed in Matt 20:28.[460] He makes a case that the Servant is more specifically identified in the Old Greek (Isa 42:1; 49:3), and the translation of עֶבֶד is not consistent; thus, he does not see עֶבֶד as a title. Moreover, the Servant does not die, the Servant is not acting under divine agency, and the Servant is also, in no way, considered a sin offering; thus, the Servant could not have been understood as applying to Jesus by Matthew's readers.[461] Unfortunately, the entire argument follows one article by David Sapp.[462] Huizenga also dismisses Calvin Ekblad's most complete work on this

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[457] M. Jack Suggs, "Wisdom of Solomon 2:10 - 5: A Homily Based on the Fourth Servant Song," *JBL* 76, no. 1 (1957): 26-33.

[458] Martin Hengel and Daniel P. Bailey, "The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period," in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (ed. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 90-99.

[459] Ekblad, *Isaiah's Servant Poems*.

[460] Huizenga, *The New Isaac*, 189-208.

[461] Ibid., 192-97.

[462] David A. Sapp, "The LXX, 1QIsa, and MT Versions of Isaiah 53 and the Christian Doctrine of Atonement," in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53*

issue[463] since he believes it over-interprets the changes to the Hebrew instead of letting the Greek speak for itself. Huizenga's own criticisms, however, are very selective regarding the sections of Isaiah 53 he chooses to address and those he chooses to avoid, particularly those sections that weaken the line of argumentation.

Identifying the Servant as Israel and Jacob is very complex when considering Isaiah as a whole.[464] Ekblad indicates that the Servant is clearly distinct from Israel by emphasizing differences. The Servant understands (Isa 52:11) while the people do not (Isa 6:9-10). Isa 53:2 in the Old Greek complicates matters significantly by referring to plural speakers as παιδίον or "little servant" who announce to the Servant that which they have heard or seen.[465] The people confess that the Servant bears the sickness resulting from their sins (Isa 53:3) and bears their sins as well (Isa 53:4).[466] The Old Greek also clearly distinguishes plural use of "your soul" in Isa 53:10 (ἡ ψυχὴ ὑμῶν) from

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and Christian Origins (ed. William H Bellinger, Jr. and William Reuben Farmer; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press, 1998), 170-92.

[463] Ekblad, *Isaiah's Servant Poems*.

[464] Suggestions for the servant include: Israel, Moses, Cyrus, an Isrelite king, and Second Isaiah, to name a few. See Randall Heskett, *Messianism Within the Scriptural Scroll of Isaiah* (LHB/OTS; New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 133-49.

[465] Ekblad, *Isaiah's Servant Poems*, 201-02. He translates it this way to stress the semantic association between παῖς and παιδίον.

[466] Ibid., 220.

the singular of Isa 53:11 (τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ).[467] This is not to say that the Servant

has no similar characteristics to Israel, but the differentiation is clear.[468]

In terms of title, while it is correct that the Servant has no constant Greek

name when accounting for all the various chapters of Isaiah, if Isa 52:13-53:12 is

read as a unit, then only ὁ παῖς μου is used of the Servant. The participal of

δουλεύω, viewed as an inconsistency by Huizenga, is most likely used in the Old

Greek to differentiate the speaker from God.[469]

Further, the death of the Servant seems clearer in the Greek than

Huizenga's examination allows. Huizenga focuses on Isa. 53:9:

 καὶ δώσω τοὺς πονηροὺς ἀντὶ τῆς ταφῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ τοὺς

πλουσίους ἀντὶ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἀνομίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν

οὐδὲ εὑρέθη δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ.

And I will give the wicked for his burial and the rich for his

death. For he did not do a lawless deed nor was deceit found

in his mouth.

He emphasizes that the Servant is delivered from death, which is in opposition to

the Hebrew where the Servant has a grave with the wicked and rich.[470] He does

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[467] Ibid., 251.

[468] Ibid., 214-15. For a recent summary of his larger work, see Eugene Robert Ekblad, "God is Not to Blame: The Servant's Atoning Suffering According to the LXX of Isaiah 53," in *Stricken by God? Nonviolent Identification and the Victory of Christ* (ed. Brad Jersak and Michael Hardin; Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2007), 180-204.

[469] Ekblad, *Isaiah's Servant Poems*, 256.

[470] Huizenga, *The New Isaac*, 195.

not, however, emphasize the future of δίδωμι regarding the time at which this is to take place. Also unmentioned is the reading of Hengel:

> Perhaps this means that the Servant himself has already been installed as their judge. The kings and the nations of 52:15 would be speechless and confused, precisely because they will have been handed over for judgement to *him* who was killed but has been exalted to be with God; in other words, we must essentially supply to δώσω an αὐτῷ, "I will hand [them] over *to him*, that is, to the Servant."[471]

Hengel's interpretation is, admittedly, rather subjective since he reads Isa 52:14-15 into this verse and the text does not contain the added αὐτός.[472] Ekblad sees the texts indicating a distant future escape from the grave as the Lord's retributive justice against the wicked and rich.[473] Huizenga also neglects to address the metaphor in Isa 53:7 ("like a sheep is led to slaughter (ὡς πρόβατον ἐπὶ σφαγὴν ἤχθη)") and the much clearer mention of the Servant's death in Isa 53:8 where "his life is removed from the earth (αἴρεται ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἡ ζωὴ)" and "he was led to death (ἤχθη εἰς θάνατον)." Sapp tries to weaken this verse by reading εἰς θάνατον as "up to the point of death."[474] Yet, in Isa 57:1-3, the Old Greek uses αἴρεται in relation to death, and the previous use of ἤχθη appears in Isa 53:7 referring to the sheep led to slaughter.[475]

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[471] Hengel and Bailey, "Effective History," 123.

[472] Ekblad, *Isaiah's Servant Poems*, 237.

[473] Ibid.

[474] Sapp, "LXX, 1QIsa, and MT," 177.

[475] Ekblad, *Isaiah's Servant Poems*, 235-37.

As for divine agency, it seems the Servant's taking of sin was self-willed in Isa 53:11-12, but in Isa 53:6, it is the Lord who "delivered him over to our sins" (καὶ κύριος παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἡμῶν).[476] Finally, Huizenga's argument that the "Servant's life is in no way considered an offering for sin"[477] is a highly exaggerated claim. While it is true that Isa 53:10b has been modified, removing the idea of the Hebrew's אָשָׁם, it does not immediately follow that the concept has been removed from the chapter as a whole. It has already been noted that the Servant was delivered up for the sins of others, and there is comparison of his sacrifice with a sheep going to slaughter, images of death that conjure an animal victim at the altar.[478] Ekblad has noted,

> The LXX's verb φέρει ("he bears") functions as a legitimate
> semantic equivalent for the MT's נָשָׂא ("he has carried").
> The LXX associates the servant's bearing of sins with the
> language of atonement in a way that is far clearer than the
> MT. There are several places in Leviticus where φέρω and
> ἁμαρτία occur together, providing the reader with a possible
> background for understanding the distinctiveness of Isaiah
> 53:4ff. The best example of the Greek Torah's use of this
> vocabulary is in Leviticus 5:6-8.[479]

Lev 5:6-8   καὶ <u>οἴσει</u> περὶ ὧν ἐπλημμέλησεν κυρίῳ <u>περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας</u> ἧς
              ἥμαρτεν θῆλυ <u>ἀπὸ τῶν προβάτων</u> ἀμνάδα ἢ χίμαιραν ἐξ αἰγῶν <u>περὶ</u>
              <u>ἁμαρτίας</u> καὶ ἐξιλάσεται <u>περὶ αὐτοῦ ὁ ἱερεὺς περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας</u>
              αὐτοῦ ἧς ἥμαρτεν καὶ ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐὰν δὲ μὴ
              ἰσχύσῃ ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ τὸ ἱκανὸν εἰς τὸ πρόβατον <u>οἴσει περὶ τῆς</u>
              <u>ἁμαρτίας αὐτοῦ</u> ἧς ἥμαρτεν δύο τρυγόνας ἢ δύο νεοσσοὺς
              περιστερῶν κυρίῳ ἕνα <u>περὶ ἁμαρτίας</u> καὶ ἕνα εἰς ὁλοκαύτωμα καὶ

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[476] Hengel and Bailey, "The Effective History," 124.

[477] Huizenga, *The New Isaac*, 195.

[478] Hengel and Bailey, "Effective History," 124.

[479] Ekblad, "God is Not to Blame," 187.

οἴσει αὐτὰ πρὸς τὸν ἱερέα καὶ προσάξει ὁ ἱερεὺς τὸ <u>περὶ τῆς</u>
<u>ἁμαρτίας</u> πρότερον

Ekblad openly recognizes the differences between the texts. Isaiah has

φέρω + the accusative where Leviticus employs φέρω + περὶ. Leviticus also uses

the future of φέρω to describe a person bringing an animal for sin while Isaiah has

the servant bearing "our sins" and suffering "for us." Yet, Ekblad concludes, "In

the LXX of Isaiah, the servant displaces the sinner and priest by becoming

himself the carrier or bearer for sin – just as the servant corresponds with the

priest who brings/carries "our sins" corresponds with "ewe lamb" or the "two

doves" which are carried for sacrifices."[480] If this intertextual interpretation is

correct, the finale of Huizenga's arguments falls, and there is no reason to exclude

the influence of the Old Greek.

Historical plausibility is also increased due to the existence of various

allusions to Isaiah 53 in Christian literature earlier than or contemporary with

Matthew. The Hebrew and Old Greek of Isaiah 53 echo within Rom 4:25 relative

to death and redemption[481] and also in 1 Cor 15:3b-5, Heb 9:28, and 1 Pet 2:21-

25.[482] As for history of interpretation, a summary of the Church Fathers has been

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[480] Ibid., 187-88.

[481] Cilliers Breytenbach, "The Septuagint Version of Isaiah 53 and the Early
Christian Formula 'He Was Delivered for Our Trespasses'," *NovT* 51(2009): 339-
51.

[482] For extended discussion on each of these references, see Otfried Hofius, "The
Fourth Servant Song in the New Testament Letters," in *The Suffering Servant:
Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (ed. Bernd Janowski and Peter
Stuhlmacher; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 163-88. See also Ellen
Bradshaw Aitken, *Jesus' Death in Early Christian Memory*: *The Poetics of the
Passion* (NTOA 53; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 31-32, 65-87.

given by Christoph Markschies focusing on large quotations that emphasize Christ as a sacrifice pouring out his blood for sin. His examples include *1 Clement* 16:7, *Barnabas* 5:1-2,[483] *Apologia 1* 50:2, *Dialogus cum Tryphone* 32:2, and many others.[484] Yet, specific interpretation of ἀντίλυτρον relating Jesus and the Servant in extended quotation does not seem to appear until Eusebius (*Commentarius in Isaiam* 2.42, *Demonstratio evangelica* 10.1.19-20).[485] Most of these texts more specifically address ideas found in Matt 26:28.

Possible Other Sources for Matt 20:28

Before any conclusions can be drawn, two additional issues surrounding Matt 20:28 warrant discussion. The first is possible dependence upon Isa 43:3b-4.[486] If this passage is Matthew's source, it would suggest that Jesus takes the place of the nations in redeeming Israel.[487] Although linguistic similarities to Matt 20:28 exist in the Old Greek, nothing in Matthew substantiates this reading

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[483] On *Barnabas* 5-6 and Isaiah, see Aitken, *Jesus' Death*, 101-15.

[484] Christoph Markschies, "Jesus Christ as Man Before God: Two Interpretive Models for Isaiah 53 in the Patristic Literature and Their Developments," in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (ed. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 225-321.

[485] Ibid., 308-09.

[486] Seyoon Kim, *The "Son of Man" as the Son of God* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1983), 50-61; Peter Stuhlmacher, *Reconciliation, Law, & Righteousness: Essays in Biblical Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 16-29.

[487] Stuhlmacher, *Reconciliation*, 24.

of Jesus' death. Thus, it completely fails the satisfaction level of Hays' criteria.[488]

The second issue is possible Matthean dependence upon 2 Macc 7:37 and 4 Macc 6:27, 17:22.[489] While parallels exist, the verbal similarities are less substantial than with Isaiah 53, and there are also some critics who argue that the sacrificial texts of 4 Maccabees are dependent on Isaiah 53. After discussing examples from Greek literature in which a human being's death brings deliverance, DeSilva comments,

> Such an environment might well have aided in the reading of the LXX Isa 52:13-53:12 as a passage that spoke no longer of the collective fate of Israel, afflicted for the sins of its own people, but as a witness to a particular righteous person within Israel whose suffering and death could be made (by his own action, 53:10b, and by God's decision, 53:6b) a sin offering that relieves the nation of the consequences of its transgressions. The appropriateness of applying this Servant Song to the Jewish martyrs is readily apparent. The disfigurement, degradation, and death (Isa 52:14 and 53:3), the idea that the wiling death of the righteous person could affect others' relationship to God for the better (Isa 53:4-6, 8, 10, 12b), the narrator's confirmation of the efficacy of this strange offering (Isa 53:10b-11), and the celebration of the suffering servant's achievement (Isa 53:12a) all parallel 4 Maccabees.[490]

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[488] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:96; Brant James Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of the Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 397-98; Watts, "Jesus' Death," 145.

[489] Barrett, "Background of Mk 10:45," 12.

[490] David Arthur DeSilva, *4 Maccabees: Introduction and Commentary on the Greek Text in Codex Sinaiticus* (SCS; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 148; David Arthur DeSilva, "Jewish Martyrology and the Death of Jesus," in *The Pseudepigrapha and Christian Origins: Essays From the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas* (ed. Gerbern S. Oegema and James H. Charlesworth; New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 63-67.

Given the cumulative weight of verbal similarities, conceptual similarities, and doubt cast on other suggestions, it is still most probable to conclude with Allison and Davies, "We do not claim that Mt. 20:28 par. is a translation of any portion of Isaiah 53, LXX, MT or targum. Rather it is a summary which describes the 'ebed who gives his life as a sin offering for many."[491] It is Isaiah 53 that forms the background for vicarious sacrifice more than any other text.[492] It is the close correspondence in content as well as the words that allow the echo to sound.[493]

Matthew 26:28

Discussion of Matt 26:28 is connected closely to that which has taken place above.

<u>Volume</u>

Matt 26:28	τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου, τὸ τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης, τὸ περὶ *πολλῶν ἐκχυνόμενον* εἰς ἄφεσιν *ἁμαρτιῶν*.
Isa 53:12 Hebrew	*הֶעֱרָה* לַמָּוֶת נַפְשׁוֹ וְאֶת־פֹּשְׁעִים נִמְנָה וְהוּא *חֵטְא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא*
Isa 53:12 OG	καὶ αὐτὸς *ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν* ἀνήνεγκεν καὶ διὰ τὰς *ἁμαρτίας* αὐτῶν παρεδόθη

There are only three words in verbal agreement with the Hebrew and two in the Old Greek. The combination of "the many" as an intratextual echo with

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[491] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:96.

[492] Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium* , 2:190-91.

[493] A. Feuillet, "Le logion sur la rançon," *RSPT* 51, no. 3 (1967): 388; France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, 127.

Matt 20:28 and the relation to sin and sacrifice, however, again invite one to compare the text to Isaiah 53.[494]

Primacy and Recency Readings of Matt 20:28 and 26:28

If these two Matthean texts are accepted as making reference to Isaiah, they continue the ambiguity created by primacy vs. recency readings discussed in the previous chapter. To whom is the "many" referring? Is it universal, encompassing Gentiles, or inclusive only of Israel? Matt 20:28 grants very little information. The questions remain open regarding who is redeemed, why they need redemption, and who is being paid. Allison and Davies conclude, "Almost every question we might ask remains unanswered."[495] Thus, the majority of commentators turn to Matt 26:28 when interpreting the meaning of Jesus' death.[496]

In Matt 26:28, much of the debate centers around εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν and its relation to γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν (Matt 1:21). Here, Luomanen sees a reference to Israel since, in his perspective, λαός refers only to Israel; thus, the many are Israel.[497] Konradt also interprets the focus as Israel by pointing back to Matt 1:21 and what he sees as the straightforward promise to the λαός who are Israel. In his view, salvation is foremost to Israel,

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[494] France, *Matthew*, 994; Konradt, *Israel, Kirche*, 364.

[495] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:100.

[496] Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium*, 2:190; Donald Alfred Hagner, *Matthew 14-28* (WBC 33b; Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1995), 583; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 546; Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 826.

[497] Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom*, 225-26.

but the context of the passage clearly incorporates the disciples who are going

forth to the nations (Matt 28:19-20). As a result, salvation is inclusive to the

nations through the disciples and, subsequently, the church.[498] Luz examines all

of the intratextual echoes and sees Matt 1:23's μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός echoed in the

promise of Matt 26:29 as well as Matt 28:20 (καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μεθ᾽ ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας

τὰς ἡμέρας ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος). Luz indicates that "the many" in this

context refers to the church, but he sees the church as sharing in the salvation that

was provided by Jesus to Israel.

> The church that is celebrating the Lord's Supper identifies
> with the disciples who are drinking from one cup, and thus
> with "for many" the church will think primarily of itself. Thus
> the meaning of "for many" (περὶ, ὑπὲρ πολλῶν) in Matthew
> and Mark is not fundamentally different from that of "for you"
> (ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν) in Luke and Paul.[499]

In the former two interpretations which rely heavily on the beginning of Matthew,

there is a focus on Israel: Israel as primary or Israel as primary with salvation

granted to the church and then Gentiles. Luz, however, who looks to the Gospel's

conclusion, emphasizes the disciples and the church sharing in the salvation

promised to Israel. Interpretations of this text once again revolve around

beginnings and endings. If the Gentile mission is emphasized and the promise of

presence is focused on Matt 28:20 then "the many" is inclusive since Gentiles will

be included in the celebration of the Eucharist, but if one focuses on the words in

Matt 1:21 and views Matt 2:6 as a definition of who the people are then "the

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[498] Konradt, *Israel, Kirche*, 364-68.

[499] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 381.

many" can be only the Jewish people. Even here, primacy and recency effects pull for control, for exclusion or inclusion of the Gentiles.

Relationship between Isaiah 5 and Matthew 21:33-45

Matthew's "Parable of the Wicked Tenants"[500] has commonly been seen as an echo of Isaiah 5:2 as well as Isa 5:4-5, 7. Verification of this dependence will proceed here in the same manner as above, using Hays' criteria.

Volume

Isa 5:2   καὶ φραγμὸν περιέθηκα καὶ ἐχαράκωσα καὶ ἐφύτευσα *ἄμπελον* σωρηχ καὶ ᾠκοδόμησα πύργον ἐν μέσῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ προλήνιον *ὤρυξα* ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἔμεινα τοῦ ποιῆσαι σταφυλήν ἐποίησεν δὲ ἀκάνθας

Matt 21:33   Ἄλλην παραβολὴν ἀκούσατε. ἄνθρωπος ἦν οἰκοδεσπότης ὅστις ἐφύτευσεν *ἀμπελῶνα* καὶ φραγμὸν αὐτῷ περιέθηκεν καὶ *ὤρυξεν* ἐν αὐτῷ ληνὸν καὶ ᾠκοδόμησεν πύργον καὶ ἐξέδετο αὐτὸν γεωργοῖς καὶ ἀπεδήμησεν.

Here, there are 11 identical words (underlined) and two words in different form (italics).

Isa 5:4-5, 7   *τί ποιήσω* ἔτι τῷ ἀμπελῶνί μου καὶ οὐκ ἐποίησα αὐτῷ διότι ἔμεινα τοῦ ποιῆσαι σταφυλήν ἐποίησεν δὲ ἀκάνθας νῦν δὲ ἀναγγελῶ ὑμῖν *τί ποιήσω* τῷ ἀμπελῶνί μου ἀφελῶ τὸν φραγμὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔσται

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[500] Klyne Snodgrass, *The Parable of the Wicked Tenants: An Inquiry into Parable Interpretation* (WUNT 27; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1983).

εἰς διαρπαγήν καὶ καθελῶ τὸν τοῖχον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔσται εἰς

καταπάτημ

ὁ γὰρ **ἀμπελὼν κυρίου** σαβαωθ οἶκος τοῦ Ισραηλ ἐστίν καὶ

ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Ιουδα νεόφυτον ἠγαπημένον ἔμεινα τοῦ ποιῆσαι

κρίσιν ἐποίησεν δὲ ἀνομίαν καὶ οὐ δικαιοσύνην ἀλλὰ κραυγήν

Matt 21:40   ὅταν οὖν ἔλθῃ **ὁ κύριος τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος, τί ποιήσει** τοῖς γεωργοῖς

ἐκείνοις;

In this comparison, there are four common words in different forms and two in the

same order.   These textual similarities, particularly between Isa 5:2 and Matt

21:33 have led many[501] to posit dependence on the Old Greek tradition. Matthew,

in fact, purposefully modifies Mark; Matthew's version of Isa 5:2

> has been assimilated to the text of the LXX: Matthew
> reverses Mark's ἀμπελῶνα ἐφύτευσεν to agree with the
> object-verb order of the LXX; the same is true of Matthew's
> φραγμὸν αὐτῷ περιέθηκεν, where he also adds an indirect
> object; and although Matthew preserves Mark's word order
> in the final Isaianic phrase, he adds ἐν αὐτῷ ('in it') in
> agreement with the LXX.[502]

Thus, in addition to the existing similarities, Matthew modifies Mark to draw the

text closer to the Old Greek.[503]   There are also thematic reflections.

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[501] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:178-79; France, *Matthew*, 810; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 620; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 39; Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 868-69.

[502] John S. Kloppenborg, *The Tenants in the Vineyard: Ideology, Economics, and Agrarian Conflict in Jewish Palestine* (WUNT 195; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 178.

[503] W. J. C. Weren, "The Use of Isaiah 5,1-7 in the Parable of the Tenants (Mark 12,1-12; Matthew 21,33-46)," *Bib* 79, no. 1 (1998): 19.

Both the stories tell the story of Yahweh's dealings with Israel. Both point to his gracious initiative in this relationship. In both stories, Yahweh waits for fruit from Israel and finds none. Again, in both stories the failure of Israel's leaders has dramatic implications for the people, upon whom judgement also falls (Isa 5:7, cf. 3:13-15).[504]

Linguistic and thematic parallels have led commentators to describe the use of Isaiah 5 here as "transparent,"[505] "clear,"[506] or showing "strong echoes."[507] Since the linguistic evidence is so strong, most accept a very strong echo in this case.[508] Gnilka even moves further to identify this reference as a quotation: "Das Zitat von Is 5,1f is geringfügig erweitert" (The quotation of Isa. 5:1 is marginally expanded) when compared to Mark.[509] This echo attracts very strong scholarly support and is undisputed.

Primacy and Recency Readings of Matt 21:43

The specific section of Matthew's parable subject to primacy and recency readings in relation to Gentiles is Matt 21:43, particularly as regards the term ἔθνος. Saldarini, followed by Kloppenborg, argues that ἔθνος in Matt 21:43

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[504] Olmstead, *Trilogy of Parables*, 110.

[505] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:179.

[506] Charette, *Theme of Recompense*, 110.

[507] Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 868.

[508] Pierre Bonnard, *L'évangile selon Saint Matthieu* (Paris: Delachaux et Niestle, 1963); France, *Matthew*; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*.

[509] Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium*, 2:225.

should be translated "voluntary association"[510] and highlights the immediate

context where the parable is addressed to the leaders (Matt 21:23), and the leaders

respond with the understanding that the parables were spoken against them (Matt

21:45). The new ἔθνος is a new Jewish leadership.[511] When approaching this

issue, other scholars refer back to Matt 8:11-12 and indicate that Gentiles must be

in view.[512] Olmstead examines the text in relation to the Hebrew Scriptures and

ἔθνος with particular reference to Gen 12:2, 18:18 and Abraham. He draws out

the role of Abraham in Matthew (1:1; 3:7-10; 8:11-12):

> If a backward glance to 3:7-10 suggests both that judgement
> will fall upon Abraham's descendants (3:9), and that it will
> fall precisely because they have persisted in their barrenness
> (3:8,10), is it not likely that the new tenants also correspond
> to the other children of whom John spoke (3:9, cf. 8:11).
> Probably we should conclude that in these new tenants, this
> new ἔθνος, God is raising up new descendants for Abraham,
> as the Baptist averred he could. A forward glance to 28:16-20,
> with its emphasis on God's faithfulness to his promises to
> Abraham, lends further credence to this reading.[513]

Olmstead re-reads the whole narrative from the end of the Gospel. He does not

state that Jews are excluded from the new people, only that the text presupposes

Gentile inclusion. The trouble with viewing the parable's judgment as directed

only against the leaders arises when the leaders bring the people to their side

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[510] Kloppenborg, *Tenants in the Vineyard*, 193; Anthony J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 59-61.

[511] Kloppenborg is difficult to interpret since he labels the new group the "Jesus movement." Kloppenborg, *Tenants in the Vineyard*, 193.

[512] Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 879.

[513] Olmstead, *Trilogy of Parables*, 95.

(Matt 27:25). Thus, the leaders' failure carries ramifications for the entire nation.[514] Second, it is difficult to place the leaders alone into ἔθνος[515] as a voluntary organization, particularly when Matthew uses the term only twice elsewhere to refer to nation, both in Matt 24:7.[516] While Snodgrass' recent interpretation of Matt 21:43 states, "The passage is quite vague . . .,"[517] in retrospection, it becomes ironic.

There is also much hypothesizing around what Matthew could have said. In the place of ἔθνος, he could have used an arthrous plural to indicate Gentiles,[518] ἐκκλησία to refer to the church,[519] or ὁ λαὸς to emphasize new leadership or new members of Israel;[520] as a result, some identify an ethical subgroup as the focus, one that includes Jews and Gentiles but focuses on neither.[521] Thus, the parable seems to have three distinct interpretations, one focusing on the Jews, one on the

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[514] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 42.

[515] France, *Matthew*, 816.

[516] Olmstead, *Trilogy of Parables*, 90-91.

[517] Klyne Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008), 297.

[518] Kloppenborg, *Tenants in the Vineyard*, 191; Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 297.

[519] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 43.

[520] Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium* , 2:43.

[521] Bonnard, *Saint Matthieu*, 317; Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium* , 2:230; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 43.

Gentiles, and one with a non-ethnic, ethical focus. Yet again, those most ready to see a Gentile focus re-read the Gospel in light of its end.[522]

FINAL CONCLUSIONS ON MATTHEW'S USE OF ISAIAH

What then can be said of all the Isaiah references in terms of ethnic inclusion and exclusion? The ambiguous passages discussed include:

Matt 1:21, 23 γὰρ σώσει τὸν <u>λαὸν αὐτοῦ</u> . . . καὶ <u>καλέσουσιν</u> τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ

Ἐμμανουήλ, ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.

Matt 4:15-16 . . . Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν, <u>ὁ λαὸς</u> ὁ καθήμενος ἐν σκότει εἶδεν φῶς μέγα, καὶ τοῖς

καθημένοις ἐν χώρᾳ καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου, φῶς ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς.

Matt 8:17 Αὐτὸς τὰς ἀσθενείας <u>ἡμῶν</u> ἔλαβεν, καὶ τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν.

Matt 12:18 <u>καὶ κρίσιν</u> τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀπαγγελεῖ.

Matt 20:28 καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ <u>πολλῶν</u>.

Matt 21:43 καὶ δοθήσεται <u>ἔθνει</u> ποιοῦντι τοὺς καρποὺς αὐτῆς.

Matt 26:28 καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ <u>πολλῶν</u>.

In each instance, these verses have been interpreted as referring only to Israel or as including the Gentiles, as having a negative inclination toward the Gentiles or a positive one, depending on the locus of interpretation: the Gospel's beginning or ending. This Isaianic ambiguity or tension has been utilized by Matthew in order to temporarily deceive the sequential reader, allowing for increased suspense that culminates in surprise upon reaching the Gospel's end; it

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[522] The discussion of Matt 21:44 has been excluded since the text is debatedly secondary. See discussion in Olmstead, *Trilogy of Parables*, 220-22.

is only in light of the concluding verses that the Gentile mission is opened explicitly. Without the end, the inclusive and universal sense of earlier verses could not be perceived. Without the end, there is little need to interpret Matt 20:28 and 26:28 as universal. Similarly, without the end, there is no need to extend the judgment of Matt 21:43 to Israel and emphasize the ethnic diversity of the church. It is this play between beginning and end that allows for an ironic interpretation and the change in meaning.

When the real reader becomes connected to the text in Matt 28:20, a general inclusiveness in the narrative language can be acknowledged upon a rereading of the Gospel. The "they" of Matt 1:23 and, thus, the people of Matt 1:21 and 4:16, as well as the "us" of Matt 8:17 can then include readers if they are moved to become disciples. This trend continues here as those who accept the call to discipleship now read themselves into "the many" and the new "ethnos." Even the Isaiah passages that may have been read negatively initially now stand out as positive (Matt 12:18). The use of universal language has been noted by others in relation to the teachings of Jesus[523] and also regarding the inclusive purposes of Jesus' death (Matt 20:28; 26:28).[524] To emphasize further the necessity of rereading Matthew's Isaiah quotations and allusions as universal, the next chapter indicates the ways in which Jesus' message to his "people" as the

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[523] Jeannine K. Brown, "Direct Engagement of the Reader in Matthew's Discourses: Rhetorical Techniques and Scholarly Consensus," *NTS* 51, no. 1 (2005): 19-35. In examining the universal application of the Gospel for readers, she includes the following techniques: audience ambiguity, narrative conclusion, generalized endings, use of questions, indefinite and inclusive language, and parables, among others.

[524] Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 218-28.

Jews is viewed as a failure; thus, the prophecy must move beyond the Jewish people to include the nations.[525]

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[525] All of this discussion above regarding Isaiah and the Gentiles takes place within the larger discussion of the way in which Gentiles are perceived in Matthew's Gospel as a whole. It should be noted that the overall discussion regarding Gentile portrayal in the Gospel is ambiguous. David Sim has reminded readers of the numerous negative statements regarding Gentiles (Matt 5:46-47; 6:7; 6:31-32; 15:26; 18:15-16). He also emphasizes the portrayal of the Gadarenes who ask Jesus to leave after an exorcism (Matt 8:28-34) as well as those of Pilate and the Roman soldiers who are responsible for the death of Jesus. He also indicates that the disciples will be persecuted by the Gentiles on two occasions (Matt 10:17-22; 24:9). See Sim, *Gospel of Matthew*, 215-36. Sim's discussion is a primacy reading focusing on Jesus' mission (Matt 2:6; 10:5-6; 15:24). According to Luz, Sim's reading is based on an interpretation of the Matthean narrative "in terms of its beginning rather than its end" (Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 52). Regarding the various positive portrayals of the Gentiles, there is much to suggest that these are advanced mentions of that which is to come; they are recognized as such retrospectively. In terms of specific terminology, Senior speaks of Gentile narratives as a *signal* (Senior, "Between Two Worlds," 6), Byrne as *foreshadowing* (Byrne, "Gentile Inclusion," 66), Ingelaere as *préparée* (J. C. Ingelaere, "Universalisme et particularisme dans l'évangile de Matthieu," *RHPR* 75, no.1 (1995): 53), and Cuvillier speaks of *signaux* (Élian Cuvillier, "Mission vers Israël ou mission vers les païens? À propos d'une tension féconde dans le premier évangile," in *Analyse narrative et bible* (ed. Camille Focant and André Wénin; BETL 191; Leuven; Leuven University Press, 2005), 252).

CHAPTER 4

The primacy effect discussed previously narrows the sequential reader's view of who Jesus' people might be and forms the foundation of Matthew's suspense narrative. Within the Gospel narrative itself, the general recalcitrance of the scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, elders of the people, crowds, disciples, and finally Peter builds suspense upon that foundation. The salvation of each group comes into serious question as the Gospel progresses, and the sequential reader becomes increasingly uncertain as to how, or even whether, Jesus will save his people. Each of these character groups and Peter as an individual character will be examined according to the criteria laid out in the Introduction in regard to suspense. As each narrative group or individual rejects, criticizes, condemns, abandons, or denies Jesus their salvation is clearly denied or strongly questioned within the narrative. These negative results do not come at the outset but there is an oscillation between coming to and accepting Jesus or his teachings (hope regarding his success) and going away and rejecting his teachings (fear regarding his failure). This oscillation increases suspense regarding Jesus' calling to save his people. As the leaders and crowds come to arrest Jesus, the disciples flee, Peter denies Jesus, and ultimate responsibility for his death is claimed by the crowds and elders of the people. This reduces Jesus' potential salvific options and increases fear that he will fail his mission (Matt 1:21). Thus the more likely but less desirable begins to take place and becomes more inevitable: Jesus will fail his mission. Peter as the first disciple will be discussed on his own because of the

extended role he plays in Jesus' salvific mandate.[526] All of this builds to the

narrative end, namely the revelation that there is a new mission to the nations.

This revelation surprises the sequential reader and immediately arouses curiosity

regarding the ways in which the implied author came to such a point. This

curiosity encourages retrospective rereading from the beginning of the Gospel.

These tensions in the building of suspense work toward this rereading since the

move to the Gentiles after Jesus' continued rejection by his own people becomes

the only way to fulfill Matt 1:21. It is the continued suspense narrative that makes

the recency effect finally take hold when Matt 28:19-20 is read; the people he has

come to save are those who rejected him and, therefore, could not have been the

people of Matt 1:21. Since Matt 1:21 states that he will save his people, the

future-oriented mission of Matt 28:19-20 now points in this new direction,

salvation of the nations.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MATT 1:21

Given that much attention has been paid to the end of Matthew's Gospel

(Matt 28:19-20), it is important to re-emphasize the significance of Matt 1:21 for

the building and development of suspense within the narrative. In addition to

Powell[527] and Carter,[528] cited previously, Kupp also focuses on the initial

prophecy as driving the narrative: "*These are the narrator's programmatic*

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[526] Suspense can transpire in any story without centering solely on the protagonist through development of other characters and their negative outcomes. See Iwata, "Creating Suspense," 171.

[527] Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 46.

[528] Carter, *Matthew and Empire*, 76; Carter, *Matthew: Storyteller*, 93.

statements for Jesus; he is the new divinely ordained mediate agent between τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ and their God. Hence the narrator asserts nothing less than that the divine salvation and presence are the focal point and *raison d'être* for Jesus' own existence. . ."[529] It is his vocational beginning:[530] "Matthew indicates the importance of this saving activity by linking it to Jesus' personal name, which God himself selects (1:21). It, thus, belongs to the very essence of Jesus' being and behavior and everything he does in the Gospel must be understood ultimately in light of that saving purpose."[531] Most pointedly, Seeley also views Matt 1:21 as pivotal to the plot of Matthew and Jesus' ministry:

> The crucial character of this verse is obvious. It occurs in the midst of a heavenly annunciation and definitively sets the tone for how Jesus is to be regarded in this story. His very name is dictated by what will apparently be his central function: rescuing his people from their sins. This linkage of appellation and function is significant, because it suggests that herein lies Jesus' special quality. He is uniquely deserving of his place at the culmination of salvation-history, because he is the one who accomplishes this salvation from sins. Function and identity are fused in "Jesus." In this sense, he is what he does: salvation.[532]

As Carter has noted, "whether" becomes a focus. With the increase in narrative tensions, the sequential reader begins to question the veracity of the Matt 1:21 statement and continually seeks a solution, one that does not arrive until the

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[529] Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 57.

[530] Andries Van Aarde, "Jesus' Mission to All of Israel Emplotted in Matthew's Story," *Neot* 41, no. 2 (2007): 425.

[531] Bauer, "Kingship of Jesus," 310.

[532] David Seeley, *Deconstructing the New Testament* (BIS 5; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 22.

end. The primacy effect of Jesus the Jewish messiah, born to Jewish parents, emphasized by the genealogy leads the sequential reader to the expectation that he has come to save the Jewish people. It is this expectation, this hope that now can be utilized to build suspense.

SALVATION IN MATTHEW: EMPHASIZING THE IMPERATIVE

Before comparison can be made between the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew and the salvific fate of various characters portrayed within the narrative, the major scholarly views of Matthean salvation should be summarized. Luomanen has produced the most complete work on this topic to date.[533] His conclusions indicate that Jesus' parables focus on God's mercy and calling as crucial components for getting into the kingdom (Matt 20:1-16, 22:1-14). Yet for remaining in the kingdom, Jesus emphasizes the necessity of repentance and obedience to his proclamation of the law.[534] Roger Mohrlang, in an earlier work, took a similar position:

> In Matthew's case, then, one cannot say that the imperative
> is simply built upon or derived from the indicative; nor,
> however, can one say that the indicative is simply dependent
> on the imperative. The writer's concern rather is to stress
> that the fulfilment of the imperative is a prerequisite for
> the ultimate, full and final expression of the indicative – a
> point that is made with regard to forgiveness, for example
> (6:12-15; 18:23-35; cf. 5:20; 7:13f, 21ff). Beyond this,
> Matthew gives us few hints of how the two concepts are
> related in his thinking. One thing is clear, however: his
> primary focus is on the imperative, not the indicative. Though
> he takes over Mark's concept of election (24:22, 24, 31)
> nowhere does he leave the impression that one can presume

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[533] Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom*.

[534] Ibid., 285.

196

upon it as a guarantee of eschatological security: 'For many
are called, but [in the end] few are chosen' (22:14). It is only
by a life of obedience and righteousness that the disciple will
in the end be found among the elect – this is the point Matthew
is concerned to stress . . . it is the sense of demand that
predominates and characterizes Matthean ethics.[535]

Przybylski concurs, stressing that ""the will of God" is a specifically Matthean

way of expressing God's demands and gifts."[536] As to the nature of this

righteousness or that upon which it is dependent (the Torah or the law of Christ),

debate is ongoing.[537] It is clear, however, that adherence to the teachings given

by Jesus is expected for the maintenance of salvation.[538] These teachings include

a demand for dedication to Jesus' person, an "unconditional commitment and

single-minded loyalty"[539] (Matt 8:19-22; 10:37-39; 16:24-26; 19:21-22).

Celui qui "perd sa vie" est celui qui l'abandonne, qui renonce
à lui conférer la moindre valeur ou la mettre en sécurité, au
risque même de la mort. Cet abandon et cette renonciation
n'ont pas de valeur en soi, ils sont assumés au nom de Jésus
(ἔνεκεν ἐμοῦ), càd par obéissance et fidélité au maître. Ils ne
consistent dans rien d'autre que dans la Nachfolge décrite au
v. précédent (cf. aussi 8, 19-22; 16,24). Celui que décide
résolument de suivre le Christ, quelles qu'en soient les

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[535] Roger Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives*
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 80-81.

[536] Benno Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought*
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 114.

[537] Élian Cuvillier, "Torah Observance and Radicalization in the First Gospel.
Matthew and First-Century Judaism: A Contribution to the Debate," *NTS* 55, no. 2
(2009): 144-59; Roland Deines, "Not the Law but the Messiah: Law and
Righteousness in the Gospel of Matthew - An Ongoing Debate," in *Built Upon the
Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew* (ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland;
Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008), 53-84.

[538] Hannan, *Sovereign Rule of God*, 21-52.

[539] Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 75.

conséquences immédiates, celui-là "trouvera la vie".[540]

> (He who "loses his life" is he who lets it go, who refuses to
> grant it the least value or seek its safety. This letting go and
> this renunciation do not have value in themselves, they are
> undertaken in the name of Jesus [ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ], that is to say
> by obedience and faithfulness to the master. They consist in
> nothing other than in the Nachfolge described in the preceding
> verse [cf. also 8, 19-22; 16, 24]. He who decides resolutely
> to follow Christ, regardless of immediate consequences, he
> "will find life".)

Thus, practice of law is not enough without following Jesus. One had to lose one's life for Jesus' sake to find it and follow Jesus to achieve perfection. In Matthew, then, there is more to salvation than simply following the law,[541] as illustrated clearly with the young man depicted in Matt 19:21-22.[542] For the achievement of perfection, he must follow Jesus.[543]

For the purposes of this examination, *salvation* encompasses many of the above ideas. It is connected to the kingdom of heaven, which is obtained through repentance (Matt 3:2; 4:17) and righteousness (Matt 5:20).[544] Without entrance into this kingdom, one does not have life and is destined for destruction (Matt

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[540] Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 231; see also 225-32.

[541] Hannan, *Sovereign Rule of God*, 146.

[542] Raymond F. Collins, "Matthew's *ENTOLAI*: Towards an Understanding of the Commandments in the First Gospel," in *Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (ed. Frans van Segbroeck et. al.; 3 vols.; BETL 100; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 1326-31.

[543] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:49-50; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 558; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 513-14.

[544] Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom*, 280-81.

7:13-14).[545] Salvation in Matthew also depends upon following Jesus. Those who do not follow Jesus lose their souls (Matt 10:37-39; 16:24-25; 19:21-22). It involves endurance to the end during times of persecution (ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος οὗτος σωθήσεται – Matt 10:22). To achieve salvation, one must not deny Jesus on earth or Jesus will deny him/her in heaven (Matt 10:33). Salvation does not depend merely upon calling Jesus *Lord* (Matt 7:21). Securing salvation in the kingdom is connected with understanding (Matt 13:19), endurance (Matt 13:21), and fruitfulness (Matt 13:22). These concepts will be applied and discussed in relation to specific Gospel characters below.

BUILDING SUSPENSE IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

Removing the Leaders of the People

Throughout the Gospel, the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, and elders of the people are placed in opposition to Jesus. They oppose his birth, challenge his actions and teachings, and are largely culpable in relation to his death. They are described continually with negative characteristics, and Jesus' teachings directly condemn them. A detailed "walkthrough" of the Gospel will illustrate with clarity the position of the leaders relative to the kingdom of heaven. Their removal from Matthew's salvific paradigm forms the first step in the Gospel's suspense-building sequence.

It has been noted in an earlier chapter, during discussion of Egypt and Israel's reversal, that the chief priests and the scribes (Matt 2:4) align themselves with Herod towards the destruction of Jesus before his ministry can begin. While

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[545] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 371-73.

their role is indirect in that they only provide Herod the location of Jesus' birth, their association with Herod is negative given that he is later responsible for the slaughter of all male children two years and under (Matt. 2:16).[546] The next time the Pharisees and Sadducees appear, they are coming for baptism (Matt 3:7), an episode in which John calls them "brood of vipers," tells them not to rely on their ancestry,[547] and warns them of the necessity of bringing forth fruit since judgment is imminent. John also reminds them that his baptism is one of repentance (Matt 3:7-12).[548]

The episode that follows is the temptation of Jesus by the devil. Terminology employed here to describe the devil, his actions, and his words occurs again at a later point in a way that associates the leaders of the people with the devil. The term πειράζω is used in the infinitive at Matt 4:1 and as a participle in Matt 4:3 (καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ πειράζων εἶπεν αὐτῷ) where the devil tempts Jesus to prove he is the Son of God (εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ) by giving a sign. The terms reappear in Matt 16:1 (καὶ Σαδδουκαῖοι πειράζοντες ἐπηρώτησαν αὐτὸν σημεῖον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐπιδεῖξαι αὐτοῖς). The parallels are not identical, but πειράζω occurs again in Matt 19:1 during the Pharisees' challenge to Jesus about divorce,

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[546] George M. Smiga, *Pain and Polemic: Anti-Judaism in the Gospels* (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), 58-60.

[547] Scot McKnight, "A Loyal Critic: Matthew's Polemic with Judaism in Theological Perspective," in *Anti-Semitism and Early Christianity: Issues of Polemic and Faith* (ed. Craig A. Evans and Donald Alfred Hagner; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993).

[548] Martin Pickup, "Matthew's and Mark's Pharisees," in *In Quest of the Historical Pharisees* (ed. Jacob Neusner and Bruce Chilton; Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2007), 97.

in Matt 22:18 relative to the rendering of taxes, and in Matt 22:35 on the lips of a lawyer questioning Jesus about the greatest command.[549] Finally, the chief priests, scribes, and elders are associated in mocking Jesus (Matt 27:41) with those who use the same phrase as in the temptations narrative (εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ). The Gospel, in these instances, aligns the various leaders of the people with the devil.

The first explicit exclusion of the scribes and Pharisees from salvation occurs in Matt 5:20 where, in addressing the disciples and crowds, Jesus clearly states that unless their righteousness is greater than that of the scribes and Pharisees, they will not enter the kingdom of heaven.[550] Matt 6:1 then indicates how this righteousness is not to be practiced. Luz comments,

> It looks ahead to 23:5 and thus secures the parenetic secondary dimension of the opening section of the great woes discourse against Pharisees and scribes. Above all, however it looks back to 5:20; it repeats 'your righteousness' from that verse. The readers still remember the Pharisees and scribes from 5:20. They would presumably think of the 'hypocrites'[551] as the Pharisees and scribes.[552]

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[549] Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Developing Conflict Between Jesus and the Jewish Leaders in Matthew's Gospel: A Literary-Critical Study," *CBQ* 49, no. 1 (1987): 66.

[550] Anderson, *Narrative Web*, 116-17; Mark Allan Powell, "Characterization on the Phraseological Plane in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Treasures New and Old: Recent Contributions to Matthean Studies* (ed. David R. Bauer and Mark Allan Powell; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 168.

[551] Sjef Van Tilborg, *The Jewish Leaders in Matthew* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 8-26.

[552] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 299; see also Kenneth G. C. Newport, *The Sources and Sitz im Leben of Matthew 23* (JSNTSup 117; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 162.

Thus, in Matt 6:2, these groups seek the honor of men and in Matt 6:5, 6:18 they seek to be seen by men and have their reward in full. It is not, however, from God, and their righteousness falls short. Later, some of the scribes accuse Jesus of blaspheming (Matt 9:3), and at this point, Jesus knows their thoughts. Matt 9:4 states, "ἱνατί ἐνθυμεῖσθε πονηρὰ ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν;" This is the very thing from which the disciples are to be delivered (ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ) in Matt 6:13. In Matt 9:13, there is a debate over Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners, and Jesus indicates that the Pharisees are without understanding stating that they must learn the meaning behind Hosea 6:6. In Matt 9:34, Jesus is accused by the Pharisees of casting out demons by the prince of demons; this is not taken up again until Matt 10:25 where those who will persecute the disciples are "they" who call the master of the house Beelzebub. Matthew returns to this theme in 12:24-27 where the Pharisees make the same accusation and are accused of blaspheming the Holy Spirit; it is this sin (that they are currently committing) that will not be forgiven in this age or the age to come. Just as they would not enter into the kingdom of heaven, now they are not to be forgiven for eternity. In Matt 12:7, in the context of the Sabbath, the Pharisees are again accused of not understanding Hos 6:6 in that they have condemned the guiltless (Matt 12:7); at this point, they begin their plot to kill Jesus (Matt 12:14).

In Matt 12:34, the Pharisees are labeled evil and described as incapable of speaking that which is good. The section ends with their judgment: "by their words they will be condemned" (Matt 12:37). Next, the scribes and Pharisees ask for a sign from Jesus and are called an "evil and adulterous generation" (Matt

12:39). Negative attributions continue from this point. They are unrepentant in comparison with Nineveh (Matt 12:41). They do not heed wisdom as the queen of Sheba (Matt 12:42) and are again called an "evil generation" (Matt 12:45).

When the sequential reader arrives at the parable of the seeds in Matthew 13, similarities can be seen between the seed on the rocky ground and its explanation in Matt 13:19. The Pharisees have already been accused twice of not having understood the teachings of Jesus regarding mercy. The idea of not understanding is present in statements such as "have you not read" (Matt 12:3, 5; 19:4; 22:31), "have you never read" (Matt 21:16; 42), and other similar notations (Matt 9:13; 12:7; 22:29, 43; 26:51). Jesus' importance is also not recognized (Matt 12:6, 41, 42).[553] The parable of the wheat and the tares is not specific to the Pharisees in its context, but in the next section, where the Pharisees appear in Matt 15:13, it is stated that every plant that the Father has not planted will be uprooted, reminiscent of Matt 13:40-42 (ὥσπερ οὖν συλλέγεται τὰ ζιζάνια καὶ πυρὶ [κατα]καίεται,)[554] or Matt 13:29.[555]

The conflict over food laws indicates that the Pharisees and scribes are hypocrites whose hearts are far from God (Matt 15:7). In Matt 15:14, they are called blind guides, a phrase highlighting their lack of discrimination between that

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[553] Mark Allan Powell, "The Religious Leaders in Matthew: A Literary-Critical Approach" (PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1988), 193-96; Van Tilborg, *Jewish Leaders*, 42-44.

[554] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 333.

[555] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 2:532.

which is important and that which is not in determining the will of God.[556] When

the Pharisees and Sadducees come to test Jesus (Matt 16:1), they are labelled an

evil and adulterous generation (Matt 16:4). The disciples are told to beware of

their teachings in Matt 16:12, and when the Pharisees come to test Jesus on

divorce (Matt 19:3), Jesus calls them hard of heart (Matt 19:8). In Matt 21:15, the

chief priests and scribes are angered at Jesus' acceptance of praise, and Matt

21:23 shows the chief priests and elders questioning Jesus' authority.

Interpretation of Jesus' parable regarding the two sons does not

completely exclude the leaders from the kingdom, but Jesus states that the tax

collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom before them (Matt 21:31).

More pointedly, however, in the warning to follow, it is indicated that they did not

repent (μεταμέλομαι) at the preaching of John, and in contrast to the first son in

Matt 21:29, they did not repent.[557] Matt 21:43 makes it clear that the kingdom

will be taken from the leaders; the audience includes the chief priests and elders

(Matt 21:23) as well as the chief priests and Pharisees in Matt 21:45. The parable

itself accuses them of being murderers by killing the son of the vineyard, a

reference to Jesus (Matt 21:39).[558] It goes on to say that the kingdom shall be

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[556] Seán Freyne, "Vilifying the Other and Defining the Self: Matthew's and John's Anti-Jewish Polemic in Focus," in *"To See Ourselves as Others See Us": Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity* (ed. Jacob Neusner, Ernest S. Frerichs, and Caroline McCracken-Flesher; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1985), 132-33; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 333.

[557] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 32.

[558] Ibid., 41.

taken from them (who are fruitless) and given to a new nation (who will produce

fruit) (Matt 21:41, 42).

In Matt 22:15, the Pharisees seek to entrap Jesus in his words regarding

taxation in order to test him (Matt 22:18) while in Matt 22:23, the Sadducees

question Jesus regarding the afterlife and are silenced by his response (Matt

22:34). Jesus then asks the Pharisees a question regarding David and silences

them (Matt 22:46).

Throughout Matthew 23, Jesus speaks against the scribes and Pharisees.

They do not practice what they proclaim (23:3). They do all things to be noticed

by others (23:5), and they love honour (23:6-7). They shut up the kingdom of

heaven to others and do not enter themselves (23:13). They are children of hell

(23:15). They teach incorrectly about oaths (23:16-22) and are blind guides

(23:16) as well as blind men and fools (23:17). They neglect justice, mercy, and

faithfulness (23:23). They are again called blind guides in 23:24, and the

Pharisees are called blind in 23:26. In 23:27, they appear righteous but are full of

hypocrisy and lawlessness while 23:31 labels them the sons who murdered the

prophets.[559] In 23:33, they are asked how they shall escape hell (showing their

condemnation to it).[560] They are held responsible for all the innocent blood of the

prophets from Abel to Zechariah who they murdered (23:35). There is also the

repeated use of "hypocrite," occurring in 23:13, 23, 25, 27, 29.

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[559] Graham N. Stanton, "The Gospel of Matthew and Judaism," *BJRL* 66, no. 2 (1984): 271.

[560] Amy-Jill Levine, "Anti-Judaism and the Gospel of Matthew," in *Anti-Judaism and the Gospels* (ed. William Reuben Farmer; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1999), 32.

Further, the chief priests and the elders plot to kill Jesus, and the idea of secrecy is emphasized (Matt 26:4). The crowd that comes to arrest Jesus is from the chief priests and elders of the people (Matt 26:47). In Matt 26:59, the council tries to obtain false testimony against Jesus while in Matt 26:67, the chief priests and the counsel spit upon, beat, and slap him.[561] The chief priest and elders of the people counsel the crowd to put Jesus to death (Matt 27:1), and in response to the testimony of Jesus' innocence by Judas they reply coldly, "what is that to us?" (Matt 27:4).[562] In Matt 27:20, the chief priests and the elders convince the multitude to put Jesus to death.[563] Later in the narrative, the chief priests, scribes and elders mock Jesus on the cross (Matt 27:41).[564] The chief priest and the Pharisees then call Jesus the deceiver and ask Pilate to shut up his tomb (Matt 27:62-66). For Matthew, the chief priests, elders of the people, and Pharisees are united in Jesus' death and the subsequent cover up of the resurrection; this collaboration is noted through Matthew's continued use of συνάγω (Matt 26:3, 26:57, 27:62, 28:12).[565]

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[561] Erwin Buck, "Anti-Judaic Sentiments in the Passion Narrative According to Matthew," in *Paul and the Gospels* (vol. 1 of *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity*; ed. Peter Richardson and David Granskou; Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986), 170.

[562] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 471.

[563] Buck, "Anti-Judaic Sentiments," 165-80.

[564] Ibid., 169.

[565] Anderson, *Narrative Web*, 97-132. For similar summaries, see Carter, *Matthew: Storyteller*, 205-14; see also Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 115-27; Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 61-66.

Since repentance is required to enter into the kingdom of heaven, the leaders of the people do not qualify; they are clearly impenitent (Matt 3:7-9 refers to the Pharisees and Sadducees; Matt 12:41 makes reference to the Pharisees; and Matt 21:32 addresses the chief priests and elders). Repschinski has further itemized their negative attributes, showing clearly the ways in which they fall short of the kingdom:

> The characterization of the opponents of Jesus is quite simple. They are generally described as evil (Matt 9:4, 12:34, 39, 16:4). This is their "root trait" which is spelled out through various attributes which are often repeated. They are called "brood of vipers" (Matt 3:7; 12:34, 23:33) or "hypocrites," (Matt 6:2, 5, 16; 15:7; 22:18; 23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29…) and are called "blind guides" (Matt 15:14; 23:16, 24). They are described as producing evil fruit, or no fruit at all (Matt 3:7-10…12:33-34; 21:43). They are ignorant of the scriptures (Matt 12:3, 5; 19:4; 21:16; 21:42; 22:29…). They take council against Jesus (Matt 12:14; 22:15; 26:3-4; 27:1) and tempt him repeatedly (Matt 16:1; 19:3; 22:18, 35). They accuse him of collusion with Beelzebub (Matt 9:34; 10:25; 12:24) and request a sign while ignoring the signs given already (Matt 12:38; 16:1).[566]

It is clear that the chief priests, elders of the people, and the Pharisees have lost the kingdom to those who will bear fruit (Matt 21:43). It is also important to remember that the Gospel clearly portrays the person of Jesus as most significant for redemption. Thus, in seeking to kill him and being successful in that endeavor, the leaders have rejected him completely. They are portrayed as a flat, unchanging character group that serves as a consistent and ongoing negative example.

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[566] Boris Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories in the Gospel of Matthew: Their Redaction, Form and Relevance for the Relationship Between the Matthean Community and Formative Judaism* (FRLANT 189; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000).

Since the leaders' opposition is introduced as early as the birth narrative and continues throughout the Gospel, it should be noted that suspense regarding the state of their salvation does not actually grow with the narrative progression. Yet, the leaders do represent a failure on the part of the salvific oracle granted at the beginning of the Gospel. Their lack of repentance, insufficient righteousness, lack of fruit, and complete rejection of Jesus has led to their removal from the kingdom of heaven; with their removal, the options for who can be saved become limited and the less desirable outcome of Jesus' failure more likely.[567]

Leaders and Crowds: Fluctuating Hope and Fear

With the removal of the leaders as plausible recipients of salvation, Matthean suspense builds in relation to the crowds. In the narrative, there is a zig-zag characterization between the responses to Jesus offered by the crowds and those of their leaders. If the leaders reject him and are subsequently rejected by him, the fear that Jesus' salvific vocation will be a failure increases. Additionally, however, the narrative alternately provokes fear that the leaders will draw the

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[567] There are three positive references to scribes (Matt 13:52; 23:2-3; 23:34) and one positive reference to the Pharisees (Matt 23:2-3). The first positive mention of scribes makes specific reference to those who are trained for the kingdom, distinguishing these scribes from those opposed to Jesus. A similar case is Matt 23:34 in which Jesus is sending scribes to testify against those scribes who are opposed to Jesus (addressed in Matt 23:29). Matt 23:2-3 has been subject to various interpretations. Powell suggests that these verses refer to the reading or oral proclamation of the Torah alone exclusive of interpretation. The positive attribution then is related to the scribes' and Pharisees' access to the text of Moses, but that is all. This is substantiated by the context where in the very next verses, the scribes and Pharisees are condemned for their deeds and inability to follow Moses' teachings correctly (Matt 23:4-39). See Mark Allan Powell, "Do and Keep What Moses Says (Matthew 23:2-7)," *JBL* 114, no. 3 (1995): 419-35; Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 923.

crowds to their side and summons hope that crowds will stand against the leaders in commitment to Jesus.

After the introduction of the leaders of the people and their quick exclusion from salvation, the sequential reader fears what will happen to the crowds despite their relatively positive portrayal in the Gospel. It is clear from Matt 2:4 that those leaders who are in collusion with Herod have some power over the people; otherwise, why would the author use τοῦ λαοῦ? It seems very possible it is a genitive of subordination.[568] In Matt 9:36-38, the crowds are connected explicitly with the people Jesus has come to save. These verses emphasize that Jesus feels compassion for the crowd; they are like sheep without a shepherd, and they are part of his future ministry for the "harvest is plentiful." By describing the crowd as sheep without a shepherd, "the validity of the current leadership of the nation is implicitly denounced."[569] It also emphasizes Jesus' fulfillment of his calling (Matt 2:6): "For out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people, Israel." Whenever the leaders appear in conflict with Jesus in the presence of the crowds, the reader senses fear, wondering with whom the crowds will side.

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[568] "The genitive substantive specifies that which is subordinated to or under the dominion of the head noun. . . This kind of genitive is a lexico-semantic category. That is, it is related only to certain kinds of head substantives – nouns (or participles) that lexically imply some kind of rule or authority." Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 103. It is commonly recognized that the chief priests and scribes hold authority over the people. See Cousland, *The Crowds*, 77; France, *Matthew*, 70; Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 112; Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:239-40.

[569] Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 210.

The crowds are first introduced in Matt 4:25 where they follow Jesus. This narration of following has a positive association since the disciples also followed Jesus when they were called in Matt 4:20, 22. Jesus' first discourse seems to be addressed to the crowd, as discussed in an earlier chapter, since their presence is explicitly stated in Matt 7:28-29. In Matt 8:1, the sequential reader once again finds the crowd following Jesus, and in Matt 8:18, Jesus wishes to separate himself from them.[570] Matt 9:3 provides the first direct reference to crowd activity and the first contrast with the leaders of the people. When Jesus forgives the sins of a paralytic, the scribes accuse him of blaspheming, while the crowd, alternatively, in response to the miracle that follows, are filled with fear and glorify God (Matt 9:8).[571]

The next occurrence of ὄχλος is found in Matt 9:18-26, but this particular group seems to be distinguished from the general crowd. Here, they did not follow Jesus as before but only his disciples followed (Matt 9:19); they are linked to flute players as part of a funeral procession.[572]

In Matt 9:33, another contrast appears. Jesus casts out a demon and while the crowds are amazed, the Pharisees state that he casts out demons by the ruler of demons (Matt 9:34). In Matt 12:14-15, contrast shows in that the Pharisees plot to destroy (ἀπόλλυμι) Jesus but when he withdraws, the crowds follow (Matt

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[570] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 2:40; Jack Dean Kingsbury, "On Following Jesus: The 'Eager' Scribe and the 'Reluctant' Disciple (Matthew 8:18-22)," *NTS* 34, no. 1 (1988): 46; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 17.

[571] Carter, "The Crowds," 60.

[572] Cousland, *The Crowds*, 40.

12:15).[573] Additionally, in Matt 12:23-24, the accusation by the Pharisees that

Jesus is casting out demons by Beelzebub the ruler of demons is countered by the

crowds questioning if Jesus is the Son of David. Given the lineage of Jesus found

in the Matthean geneaology, the crowds are portrayed here as making reference to

Jesus' true identity. There seems to be a progression in the crowd's

understanding of who Jesus is in comparison to Matt 9:8 where they questioned

the derivation of his authority.[574]

Jesus continues his healing ministry to the crowds (Matt 19:2), but when,

in the very next verse, he is challenged by the Pharisees regarding divorce, the

crowds do not respond to Jesus' answer. Rather, they seem to vanish from the

narrative, not reappearing until Matt 20:29, 31 where they are following Jesus but

also rebuking two blind men who call out for mercy to the Son of David. It

appears that the crowds are suppressing the healing ministry of Jesus, but no

explanation of the reason is offered.

Nonetheless, the crowds will echo the claims of the blind in Matt 21:8-9

where they too profess Jesus as the Son of David, and in Matt 21:11, they call him

a prophet. This acclamation, "Hosanna to the Son of David," is carried over to

the children at the temple (Matt 21:15), where the chief priests and scribes

reappear; they are indignant and rebuked by Jesus. This mention of the chief

priests and scribes provokes fear in the sequential reader. Twice Jesus has already

referred to these characters in his passion predictions (Matt 16:21 - ἀρχιερέων καὶ

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[573] For the textual tradition, see Ibid., 31.

[574] Ibid., 142; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 202.

γραμματέων) and Matt 20:18 (τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ γραμματεῦσιν), and the narrator places these same characters with Herod in the plot to kill Jesus at the opening of the Gospel (Matt 2:4 - ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς τοῦ λαοῦ). Thus, the greatest confession of the crowd in their recognition of who Jesus is gives the sequential reader hope, but the opposition now mentioned is a reminder of Jesus' impending death and those involved in bringing it to fruition.

The chief priests appear in Matt 21:26 fearing the multitude who believe John to be a prophet; as a result, they cannot respond adequately to the question of Jesus, for one response alienates the people, and the other will end in a rebuke by Jesus. After Jesus' parables spoken against the leaders of the people, the chief priests and the Pharisees wish to seize Jesus, but they cannot because he is held to be a prophet by the people (Matt 22:45). In Matt 22:33, the crowds are again present for a conflict between the Sadducees and Jesus regarding the resurrection, and they are amazed at his teaching.

FEAR

Mt 9:3
Leaders blaspheme

HOPE

Mt 9:8
Crowds glorify God
Mt 9:33
Crowds are amazed

Mt 9:34
Leaders accuse Jesus
of casting out demons
by the ruler of demons
Mt 12:14
Leaders plot to kill Jesus

Mt 12:15
Crowds follow Jesus
Mt 12:23
Crowds are amazed &
wonder if Jesus is Son of David

Mt 12:24
Leaders accuse Jesus
of casting out demons
by Beelzebub

Mt 21:11
Crowds call Jesus
Son of David

Mt 21:15
Leaders are indignant
at use of Son of David
Mt 21:45a
Leaders wish to sieze
Jesus

Mt 21:45b
Crowds view Jesus
as a prophet

Mt 22:23
Leaders question Jesus

Mt 22:33
Crowds are amazed

Figure 1 – Zigzag Narrative: Leaders and Crowds

213

Removal of the Crowds

If one stops there, the fall of the crowds to the leaders of the people later in the Gospel seems to come as a surprise. Apart from the general differentiation from the leaders as noted above, Matthew includes, in relation to the crowds, other positive statements along with strikingly negative ones. Within this additional zigzag narrative, a number of indicators are included that prepare the sequential reader for what seems a likely fall.

In Matt 12:46-50, Jesus points to the disciples and identifies his family as those who do the will of the father. While indicating the disciples, however, Jesus is also addressing the crowds: "The crowds as listeners are the ones in the process of making decisions. As they have listened to the 'definition of family,' they too have the possibility of becoming members of the family of Jesus, if they chose 'to do the will of the father'."[575] Yet, nothing is stated about them making this choice. In the following section, they are gathering around Jesus (Matt 13:2 - καὶ συνήχθησαν πρὸς αὐτὸν ὄχλοι πολλοί). This comes after Jesus' proclamation in Matt 12:30 (ὁ μὴ ὢν μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ κατ᾽ ἐμοῦ ἐστιν, καὶ ὁ μὴ <u>συνάγων</u> μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ σκορπίζει). It seems, therefore, that the crowds are with Jesus and, thus, not against him. The above verses seem to show the crowds as generally neutral by themselves. They are neither against Jesus nor are they disciples following the will of God.

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[575] Mathew Palachuvattil, *"The One Who Does the Will of the Father": Distinguishing Character of Disciples According to Matthew: An Exegetical Theological Study* (TGTeo 154; Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2007), 154.

As the sequential reader approaches Matt 13:10-17 and 13:34-36, in which the crowds are mentioned twice by name, fear begins to build. Here, Jesus states that he will speak to the crowds only in parables, setting up a tension between them and the disciples who receive explanation.[576] It seems clear enough that αὐτοῖς in Matt 13:10 refers to the crowds as well as ἐκείνοις in Matt 13:11, whereas, in contrast to this usage, Jesus regards the disciples as ὑμῖν.[577] It is only the disciples who are granted the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. In Matt 13:13-16, Matthew carefully employs "see," "hear," and "understand" to set up an antithetical parallel between the crowds who do not comprehend Jesus' teachings and the disciples who do.

> The Matthean Jesus then plainly declares that he *therefore*
> speaks in parables to the people, namely, *because* seeing
> they do not perceive and hearing they do not understand (v.13).
> . . . Again the people's guilt is stressed "*For* this people's heart
> is hardened" and "they have closed their eyes, *lest* they should
> perceive . . ." (v.15). The negative particle "lest" points to the
> intention of the crowds themselves![578]

These characteristics provoke fear since the phrase ἐπαχύνθη γὰρ ἡ καρδία τοῦ λαοῦ τούτού is similar to other statements regarding the leaders. The Pharisees are described as thinking evil in their hearts (Matt 9:4), and their hearts are far

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[576] Jacques Dupont, "Le point de vue de Matthieu dans le chapitre des paraboles," in *L'évangile selon Matthieu: rédaction et théologie* (ed. M. Didier; BETL; Belgium: Gembloux, 1972), 221-59.

[577] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 245.

[578] Jan Lambrecht, *Out of the Treasure: The Parables in the Gospel of Matthew* (LTPM 10; Leuven: Peeters, 1991), 161; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 247; see also Frans van Segbroeck, "Le scandale de l'incroyance: la signification de Mt 13:35," *ETL* 41, no. 3 (1965): 347.

from him (Matt 15:8). Will the crowds heed the message of Jesus? Based on this section, it seems likely they will not.

It is clear that the crowds misunderstand who John the Baptist is; they regard John as a prophet (Matt 14:5), yet Jesus proclaimed within the cities that John was more than a prophet (Matt 11:7-9). In Matt 14:13-15, the crowds are mentioned three times. They are once again following Jesus, restoring the positive narrative associations that existed prior to Matthew 13. Jesus also heals them as he did in previous narratives. Surprisingly, however, the disciples wish to send them away. Jesus multiplies the food, and the disciples minister to the crowds (Matt 14:19). Following this narrative, Jesus sends the crowd away in order that he can pray (Matt 14:22-23), and in Matt 15:1, a new conflict begins with the Pharisees over the washing of hands. Jesus brings the crowds into the debate (Matt 15:10) by calling them to "hear" and "understand." After chapter 13, however, in which the same words are used to show they will not understand, the sequential reader is left wondering if the crowds perceived his teaching. In Matt 15:31-39, the crowds are coming to be healed, and they are amazed at the miracles of Jesus, once again glorifying God. Jesus feels compassion for them and wishes to feed them. The crowds sit down, Jesus performs his miracle, and they are fed. Once again, Jesus sends them away to travel by boat, and one is left with a positive outlook towards them. That said, in Matt 20:31, the crowds seem to be hindering Jesus' healing ministry by suppressing two blind men who wish for help, calling out to the Son of David. In Matt 22:46, after the debate over the Son of David, once again the crowds' response is not recorded. In Matt 23, the

crowds are part of Jesus' teachings; Jesus is speaking to them and makes it clear that the fate of a prophet is death (Matt 23:37).[579] The next time the crowds are mentioned, they are accompanied by Judas in order to arrest Jesus (Matt 26:47). The foreshadowing of this arrest has already been given numerous times, but here the fear mounts. How shall Jesus save the crowds when they have now forsaken him? Jesus questions their need for weapons since he was always amongst them at the temple (Matt 26:55). In Matt 27:15, when given their choice to release Barabbas or Jesus, the crowds select Barabbas under the "persuasion" of the chief priests and elders (Matt 27:20-21). Both the narrator and Pilate emphasize that the crowds have received their desired outcome through their threefold use of θέλω (Matt 27:15, 17, 21). Finally, Pilate washes his hands, claiming his innocence in the case (Matt 27:24). In Matt 27:25, the ὄχλος becomes λαός, and their condemnation is complete as they utter the words, "his blood be upon us and our children." [580] "Ignoring Pilate's portentous act, the crowds align themselves with their leadership and its tradition of killing prophets and righteous men."[581] The crowds never appear again after this point. The fear of Jesus' vocational

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[579] J. R. C. Cousland, "The Choral Crowds in the Tragedy According to St. Matthew," in *Ancient Fiction: The Matrix of Early Christian and Jewish Narrative* (ed. Jo-Ann A. Brant, Charles W. Hedrick, and Chris Shea; SBLSymS 35; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2005), 271-72.

[580] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:591; Catherine Sider Hamilton, "'His Blood Be Upon Us': Innocent Blood and the Death of Jesus in Matthew," *CBQ* 70, no. 1 (2008): 82-199; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 499-504; David M. Moffitt, "Righteous Bloodshed, Matthew's Passion Narrative, and the Temple's Destruction: Lamentations as a Matthean Intertext," *JBL* 125, no. 2 (2006): 299-320; Van Tilborg, *Jewish Leaders*, 158.

[581] Cousland, *The Crowds*, 236.

failure is now tantamount for the sequential reader.[582] Cousland concludes, "the

crowds' role and destiny is ultimately tragic . . . Once they have rejected Jesus,

the crowds are no longer referred to – after that they are symbolically united with

their leadership . . . Both Jesus' and the crowds' trajectories follow a parallel

tragic downward slant."[583]

The removal of the crowds after Matt 13 becomes the more likely but less

desired outcome. They will not turn toward Jesus but turn away. The zigzag

pattern comes to an end, and there is only a line of fear moving the sequential

reader towards Jesus' death and crucifixion within which the crowds play a

crucial role. Once again the options are diminished and the likelihood of Jesus'

failure increases.

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[582] There is a minority opinion that sees the people as redeemed by this cry. This position, however, avoids all teachings of Jesus regarding obedience/following and focuses exclusively on the term "blood." Timothy B. Cargal, "'His Blood Be Upon Us and Upon Our Children': A Matthean Double Entendre?" *NTS* 37, no. 1 (1991): 101-12; John Paul Heil, "The Blood of Jesus in Matthew: A Narrative-Critical Perspective," *PRSt* 18, no. 2 (1991): 117-24.

[583] Cousland, "Choral Crowds," 273.

FEAR   HOPE

Mt 12:46-50
Not family

                                    Mt 13:2
                                    Gathered around Jesus

Mt 13:10-17
Speaking in parables
Mt 14:5
Misunderstanding who
John the Baptist is

                                    Mt 14:13-15
                                    Following Jesus

Mt 15:10
Jesus calls them to
hear and understand

                                    Mt 15:31-39
                                    Glorify God

Mt 20:31
Restrict Jesus`ministry

Mt 26:47
Arrest Jesus

Mt 27:15-21
Ask for Barabbas'
release under leaders'
influence

Mt 27:25
Call Jesus' blood upon
themselves

Figure 2 – Zigzag Narrative: Crowds Alone

<u>Removal of the Disciples</u>

The disciples, a group on which the sequential reader desires to hang his/her hopes for the success of Jesus' mission, fluctuate in their relationship to Jesus, and the progressive sense of the Gospel narrative leads the sequential reader to believe that the less desired outcome (removal of the disciples from salvation) is increasingly probable. This is seen in three domains: their call/purpose, obedience to Jesus' teachings, and understanding of Jesus' teachings and mission. The third domain, relative to the disciples' understanding, heightens the narrative suspense further since it is presented as a zigzag pattern running through the Gospel. Discussion for the purposes of the present study will be limited to the twelve disciples and not include references to those outside of the twelve (disciple-type characters such as the women followers or Gentiles who display characteristics of discipleship).[584]

Serving Jesus: Fishers of Men

The initial call of the disciples (Matt 4:18:22) lets the sequential reader know of Jesus' intentions. The fishermen leave their everyday activity in a response to Jesus. They respond to Jesus with the belief that he will make them fishers of people.[585] They are the followers of Jesus.[586] It is also clear that they are the "salt of the earth" (Matt 5:13), and in Matt 5:16, they are to let their light

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[584] Jeannine K. Brown, *The Disciples in Narrative Perspective: The Portrayal and Function of the Matthean Disciples* (AcBib 9; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 40-41.

[585] Edwards, *Matthew's Narrative Portrait*, 22.

[586] Carter, *Matthew: Storyteller*, 217.

shine so others can glorify God. If interpreted in light of each other, the disciples

are the light of the world as they let their works shine just as salt is only salt when

it salts. Since it seems these metaphors are related to deeds,[587] if the disciples are

not salty, they will be trampled under (Matt 5:13). The narrative quickly

heightens fear in relation to this conditional statement since very few of the

disciples' reported works can be characterized as good.

Within the ministry of Jesus, the disciples do not become fishers of men;

rather, they are somewhat bland and walk in the shadow of Jesus. There are a few

instances where it is possible that they are about to begin their mandate, but one

questions the efficaciousness of their endeavors. Their ministry has the greatest

potential in the missionary discourse of Matthew 10. Matt 10:5 seems to indicate

that the disciples are sent, but it ends not with their departure but with that of

Jesus instead (Matt 11:1). If the sequential reader is to assume a coherent

narrator, the fulfillment of this command must be seen as taking place at some

future point; thus, the sequential reader anticipates the future moment when it will

come to pass.[588] Although it is possible to assume they have performed their

mission,[589] the text seems to indicate that Matthew's disciples are not sent out

during the lifetime of Jesus.[590] If this is the case, then the disciples could be seen

as equally serving in the feeding of the 5000 and the 4000, but in the context of

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[587] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1:207.

[588] Weaver, *Missionary Discourse*, 126.

[589] Park, *Mission Discourse*, 165.

[590] Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 118.

Matt 14:13-21 and 15:32-39, the disciples are not characterized as the best of

helpers. In the feeding of the 5000, they respond to Jesus' request to feed the

crowds by enumerating the few loaves and fishes they have. In Matt 15:33, when

they realize that Jesus wishes to feed the crowds again, they do not know where to

acquire the necessary provisions. As Verseput observes, "The deliberate parallels

between this episode and the first feeding account render the disciples' continued

lack of insight into the mighty power of Jesus all the more incomprehensible to

the reader."[591]

This lack of insight and inefficacy as fishers of men is further reinforced

as the narrative continues, instilling uneasiness that the undesired outcome of

disciple exclusion from salvation appears increasingly likely. The disciples ask

Jesus to send away the Canaanite woman in Matt 15:23. Later, in Matt 17:17, the

disciples are called unbelieving for being unable to cast out a demon (Matt 17:6).

The disciples also try to prevent the children (to whom the kingdom belongs,

according to Jesus) from coming to Jesus (Matt 19:13). The disciples do not

perform their task well, and the only hope of fulfilling their calling takes place

after the resurrection. After summarizing their role as helpers, Donaldson

comments, "Only in 21:1-7 and 26:17-19, where they successfully carry out

Jesus' instructions to fetch a donkey and arrange for the Passover meal, do they

provide Jesus with any concrete assistance, and this of only the most mundane

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[591] Donald Verseput, "The Faith of the Reader and the Narrative of Matthew 13:53-16:20," *JSNT* 46 (1992): 19.

222

kind. Otherwise as helpers they are failures . . ."[592] They cannot even stay awake to pray (Matt 26:36-46). In the ministry of Jesus, they seem rather useless. Jesus' positive sayings in relation to the disciples are future-oriented, discussing events that will take place eschatologically. They will report the transfiguration after the resurrection (Matt 17:9); they will have authority to bind and loose (Matt 18:18-20); they will sit judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt 19:28); they will proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to the world (Matt 24:14).[593] Specific to their salvation, Matt 19:29 seems very hopeful, yet even here, the text undermines this promise as will be indicated later.

Following Jesus and the Will of God

The parable of the sower emphasizes dedication to the words of Jesus during persecution (Matt 13:21).[594] This is expanded in Jesus' sayings to encompass dedication to Jesus himself. Twice the disciples are told to take up their cross and follow, and they are explicitly warned that finding life will be to lose it and losing life for him will be to find (save) it (Matt 10:37-39; 16:24-26). To this should be added Matt 7:21-24, which emphasizes obedience to Jesus' teaching as necessary for kingdom entrance, Matt 10:33, which addresses fidelity, and Matt 12:30, which highlights the need to be with Jesus. In discussing the

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[592] Terence L. Donaldson, "Guiding Readers - Making Disciples: Discipleship in Matthew's Narrative Strategy," in *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 38.

[593] Ibid., 39.

[594] Birger Gerhardsson, "Parable of the Sower and its Interpretation," *NTS* 14, no. 2 (1968): 176-77.

salvation of the disciples, it is the commitment demanded of Jesus that holds significance.

Matthew 7:21 is concerned with the relationship between doing of the will of God and Jesus' identity; those who confess Jesus to be Lord may not necessarily enter the kingdom of heaven. In light of Matt 7:21, the title Lord should be viewed with suspicion by the sequential reader; it is only after this verse that Jesus is addressed as such, and it is far from clear that it is used only by those who are saved. In fact, within Jesus' parables, it is often the condemned who address their masters as Lord (Matt 24:48; 25:11; 25:24; 25:44). These masters could likewise been seen as allegory for Jesus as judge, similar to Matt 25:31. The disciples as a group only use it twice, once when they are rebuked for not having enough faith (Matt 8:25) and again when one of them is about to betray Jesus, and they do not know which one (Matt 26:22). As a result, the title, when used by the disciples, emphasizes negative connotations and strikes fear into the sequential reader regarding the disciples' salvation status.

Other references concerning dedication to Jesus are explicit in demanding commitment to the point of death (Matt 10:28-29; 16:25). Matt 10:33 emphasizes that Jesus should not be denied or salvation will be lost, and finally, Matt 12:20 states that the disciples must gather to Jesus in order to be considered with him or they will be scattered and considered against him. These verses serve to heighten fear as the passion of Jesus approaches in the narrative since the disciples all promise their fidelity (Matt 26:31-35) but flee upon the arrest of Jesus (Matt 26:56), and Judas even betrays him (Matt 26:48-49). In these instances, the

disciples are concerned most with their own lives and act against Jesus. Once

again, their salvation is in doubt; they do not measure up to the teachings of Jesus.

Zigzag Narrative of Understanding and Misunderstanding

There is considerable debate regarding the understanding of the disciples

within the Gospel. The trend in recent studies has moved away from redaction

criticism, which emphasized the disciples' understanding, and has moved toward

literary criticism, which examines the work as a whole. A literary approach

stresses that the disciples do not understand the ministry and mission of Jesus,

except in the cases where Matthew reverses Mark's account and portrays the

disciples as comprehending Jesus' teaching.[595]

The understanding of the disciples is a significant issue since it is related

to the parable of the sower (introduced above).[596] Matt 13:19 states, "When

anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil one

comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on

whom seed was sown beside the road." For Matthew then, understanding has

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[595] Brown, *Disciples in Narrative Perspective*; Edwards, "Characterization,"
1305-23; Edwards, *Narrative Portrait*; Andrew Hugh Trotter, "Understanding and
Stumbling: A Study of the Disciples' Understanding of Jesus and His Teaching in
the Gospel of Matthew" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1990).

[596] This is usually viewed in context as transparent exhortation for the church or
as a reason for Jesus' rejection by Israel and, therefore, not applied to characters
in the text. For an example of this type of interpretation, see Dupont, "Le point de
vue de Matthieu," 542; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 381; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 250-51;
Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 542.

salvific overtones.[597] Again in Matt 13:23, the emphasis is on understanding and

bearing fruit[598] (which, as indicated above, does not happen within the Gospel).

Applicability to the disciples seems obvious since, just prior to this chapter, the

disciples are introduced as those who do the will of the Father (Matt 12:46-50).

Matthew once again employs a zigzag narrative that continues throughout

the Gospel that highlights the fluctuations of disciple understanding and

misunderstanding. The sequential reader is left continually wondering on what

side the disciples will ultimately fall. Immediately following the parables in Matt

13:51, the disciples clearly understand Jesus' teachings, and their salvation seems

assured.[599] Prior to this narrative, however, the questions that fall from the

disciples' lips indicate their misapprehension of Jesus' identity: "What kind of

man this?" (Matt 8:27). Moving forward in the Gospel, the sequential reader is

assured of the disciples' understanding when they see Jesus as the Son of God

(Matt 14:33). Nonetheless, on four distinct occasions, Jesus explicitly states that

the disciples do not comprehend: Matt 15:16 (ἀκμὴν καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀσύνετοί ἐστε);

15:17 (οὐ νοεῖτε); 16:9 (οὔπω νοεῖτε); and 16:11 (πῶς οὐ νοεῖτε). Each of these

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[597] Wallace W. Bubar, "Killing Two Birds with One Stone: The Utter De(con)struction of Matthew and His Church," *BibInt* 3, no. 2 (1995): 147-48. On its relationship to the plot of Mark's Gospel, see Terence J. Keegan, "The Parable of the Sower and Mark's Jewish Leaders," *CBQ* 56, no. 3 (1994): 501-18.

[598] Gerhardsson, "Parable of the Sower," 176-79.

[599] The disciples are attributed more understanding in Matthew than in Mark, and generally, more understanding is considered positive. See Michael J. Wilkins, *The Concept of Disciple in Matthew's Gospel as Reflected in the Use of the Term Mathētēs* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids; Mich.: Baker, 1995), 230-31. Understanding, however, also indicates the responsibility of obedience. The more the disciples understand, the more culpable they become for their previously discussed failures.

occurs subsequent to the parable of the sower, and in each instance, Jesus has to give them specific instruction to remove their ignorance.[600] More striking is the disciples' inability to understand a simple parable in Matt 16:9 and their need for interpretation. While this is alleviated in the confession of Peter (Matt 16:16), here Peter understands only because he has been given a revelation from God; he does not even know how his revelation is related to Jesus' ministry and is, thus, rebuked by Jesus.

In Matt 17:13, the sequential reader is once again encouraged since the disciples do understand the teachings about John the Baptist. There are other instances, however, in which it seems that the disciples' understanding, while not explicitly addressed, is lacking. For instance, in Matt 18:21, Peter asks how many times he should forgive and seems to assume seven is sufficient, though the narrative makes clear this is incorrect. Given Jesus' strict standards on divorce, the disciples assume incorrectly that it is better not to marry (Matt 19:10). In Matt 19:25, they do not understand who can be saved if the rich are not. Continued misunderstanding is seen in Matt 21:18-22 when the disciples are amazed by the withering of the fig tree. In relation to Jesus' death, they have been privy to four passion predictions (Matt 12:40; 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19), but these have done nothing to help them contextualize the woman's actions at his anointing; rather, the disciples react with indignation (Matt 26:8).[601]

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[600] Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 122.

[601] Talvikki Mattila, "Naming the Nameless: Gender and Discipleship in Matthew's Passion Narrative," in *Characterization in the Gospels: Reconceiving Narrative Criticism* (ed. David M. Rhoads and Kari Syreeni; Sheffield: Sheffield

An additional point of importance for this discussion is that, within the

Gospel of Matthew, faith is defined as an understanding of the authority and

power of Jesus.[602] This is made explicit in Matt 16:8-9 where the two concepts

are paralleled. Jesus rebukes the disciples since, even though they have no bread,

they should know that this is not a problem given Jesus' presence. The disciples

do not understand the nature of his power. They have little faith in Jesus' power

to provide (Matt 6:30), to calm the storm (Matt 8:23-27), and to make bread (Matt

16:8). Further, they do not trust his power granted to them (Matt 10:1) when they

are unable to cast out a demon (Matt 17:17). They are said to be without faith (ὦ

γενεὰ ἄπιστος).[603] Later, the accusation is alleviated when the disciples are

described as being only of little faith (Matt 17:20).

As illustrated, the disciples continually zigzag back and forth when it

comes to their understanding of who Jesus is and how his actions fit in with the

kingdom of God. They often understand Jesus' teachings when they are given

explicit explanation. Yet, it seems there is also a surplus of Jesus teachings that

the disciples do not understand, and a significant portion of Jesus' mission is

completely incomprehensible to them, his death in partiuclar. As Ladd has stated,

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Academic Press, 1999), 160-64; Baby Parambi, *The Discipleship of the Women in the Gospel According to Matthew: An Exegetical Theological Study of Matt. 27: 51b-56, 57-61 and 28: 1-10* (Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2003), 95-100; In-Cheol Shin, "Matthew's Designation of the Role of Women as Indirectly Adherent Disciples," *Neotest* 41, no. 2 (2007): 409-10.

[602] Akira Ogawa, "Action-Motivating Faith: The Understanding of 'Faith' in Matthew's Gospel," *AJBI* 19 (1993): 83; Verseput, "Faith of the Reader," 23.

[603] Bornkamm, Barth, and Held, *Tradition and Interpretation*, 192; Brown, *Disciples in Narrative Perspective*, 102; Edwards, *Narrative Portrait*, 94; Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 439-40.

The central point of the parable is not obscured by the details.
The present working of God's kingly rule among men is
conditioned by human response. The word of the Kingdom
is being proclaimed among men, and the power of the Kingdom
is present in Jesus' word; but the message and the power of
God's rule can be resisted and frustrated . . . the time of human
choice remains.[604]

If the sequential reader attempts to judge the disciples' salvation status based on

the criteria provided by the parable of the sower, given their consistent wavering

between understanding and not understanding, the reader has real reason to

question. Ultimately, however, with the cumulative weight of the disciples'

failure to live up to their call as fishers of men, lack of success in living up to his

teachings, and inconsistent (at best) understanding of Jesus' teachings and

mission, the sequential reader is left with uncomfortable, lingering questions as to

the role of the disciples in "his people" of Matt 1:21.

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[604] G. E. Ladd, "The *Sitz im Leben* of the Parables of Matthew 13: The Soils," in
Studia Evangelica, (ed. F. L. Cross; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), 209.

FEAR   HOPE

Mt 6:30; 8:26
Little faith

                                              Mt 13:51
                                              Understanding parables

Mt 15:16
Do not understand
teaching on food

                                              Mt 15:17-20
                                              Jesus gives explanation
                                              regarding food

Mt 16:8-9
Little faith &
do not understand
Jesus' power

                                              Mt 16:9-10
                                              Jesus' gives explanation
                                              regarding his power

Mt 16:11a
Do not understand
saying about the
leaders
                                              Mt 16:11b-12
                                              Jesus gives explanation
                                              regarding the leaders &
                                              disciples understand
                                              Mt 17:13
Mt 17:17-20   Understand teaching on John
Unbelieving & have
little faith
Mt 19:25
Do not understand
who can be saved
Mt 21:25
Do not understand
Jesus' power
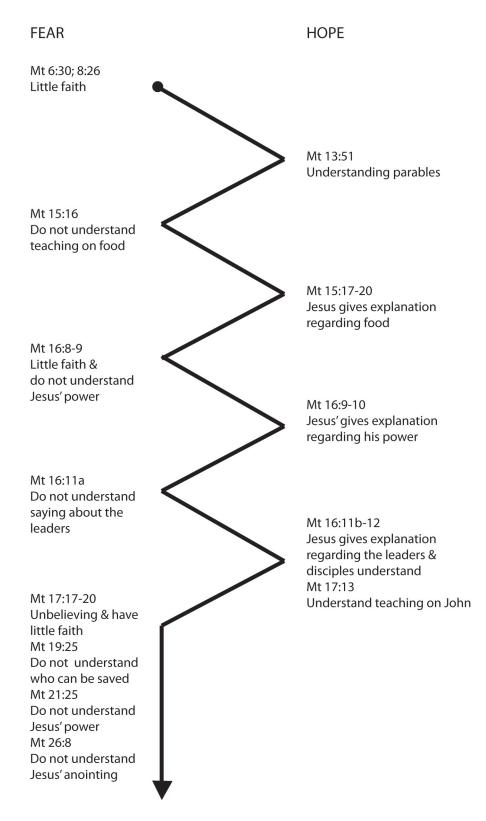Mt 26:8
Do not understand
Jesus' anointing

Figure 3 – Zigzag Narrative: Disciples' Understanding and Lack of

Understanding

230

Removing the Primary Disciple

Subsequent to the discqualification of the leaders of the people, the crowds, and finally, the disciples in terms of adherence to Jesus' teaching, the pattern is confirmed once again in the primary disciple, Peter. Peter seems to misunderstand Jesus' mission and teachings, fail in his faith, and finally, deny his relation to Jesus, including twice by use of an oath. As Peter's failures mount, the sequential reader begins to sense that continued failure is likely, albeit undesired.

The successes and failures of Peter have been noted by others,[605] though their relationship with the narrative suspense in Matthew of Jesus' salvific calling has not been examined. Peter is the first disciple called, and he is presented as the foremost disciple in Matthew 10. He is the spokesperson for the disciples in general and the rock upon which the church shall be built. It becomes, however, progressively clearer as the narrative progresses that he is a complete failure.

The sequential reader finds the introductory narrative of Peter very promising. Peter is given a direct call from Jesus and obeys the command to follow. He is told he will become a fisher of men. The second time Peter is mentioned, it is with the listing of the twelve; here, Peter is described as the "first" (Matt 10:2), which may indicate some type of pre-eminence.[606] With this hope,

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[605] Arlo J. Nau, *Peter in Matthew: Discipleship, Diplomacy, and Dispraise: With an Assessment of Power and Privilege in the Petrine Office* (GNS 36; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992); Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 264.

[606] Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Figure of Peter in Matthew's Gospel as a Theological Problem," *JBL* 98, no. 1 (1979): 71; Kari Syreeni, "Peter as Character and Symbol in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Characterization in the Gospels* (ed. David M. Rhoads and Kari Syreeni; JSNTSS; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 124.

the sequential reader enters into the text only to encounter the familiar zigzag pattern starting with Peter's very next appearance.

In Matt 14:28-29, Peter states, "If it is you, command me to come out onto the water." Jesus' response of "come" seems a positive invitation.[607] When Peter steps out onto the water, however, he becomes afraid and needs Jesus to save him. Jesus subsequently rebukes him as having little faith and doubting (καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ὀλιγόπιστε, εἰς τί ἐδίστασας;).[608] Peter's failing is already indicated in his question (εἰ σὺ εἶ;), expressing his doubt from the start.[609] Peter's works echo Jesus' in Matt 14:27 (ἐγώ εἰμι), but they are also reminiscent of the temptation narrative (Matt 4:3 - εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ). Peter's initial request is granted, and as he comes out onto the water, the doubt in the request becomes explicit; Peter ultimately fails based on a test he has set up himself. The text does not, however, end negatively since the disciples worship Jesus and call him the "Son of God" (Matt 14:33).

The sequential reader next encounters Peter in Matt 15:15-16. Here, Peter is requesting understanding regarding Jesus' teaching on food. In the next verse, Jesus addresses the disciples as a corporate group. In some sense, the disciples here have less understanding than the Pharisees who grasped enough to be

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[607] Timothy Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels: Pattern, Personality and Relationship* (WUNT 2/127; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 92.

[608] A similar rebuke is given to the disciples in Matt 8:17. See Anderson, *Narrative Web*, 93.

[609] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 320.

offended (Matt 15:12).[610] Peter here displays his lack of understanding and begins acting as a spokesperson for the disciples.

The next section is Peter's confession. In the narrative context, Peter distances himself from all others who do not understand who Jesus is (Matt 16:13-14). Quickly, however, the text that is so positive towards Peter, calling him "blessed," a recipient of divine revelation, and a rock upon which the church will be built[611] while remarking upon his resistance against the gates of Hades and also upon the granting of the keys to the kingdom of heaven to him, turns. Peter, as in Matthew 14 outlined above, starts off well but then fails; he goes on to rebuke Jesus since he does not understand the will of God. Here, much of what was positive turns negative. The revelation of the father (Matt 16:17) becomes the thoughts of men (Matt 16:23) paralleling those who do not understand (Matt 16:13-14).[612] The rock (Matt 16:18) becomes the stumbling block (Matt 16:23).[613] Here again, the sequential reader's great hope turns to fear as divine revelation turns to being influenced by Satan. Further, the narrative undermines the confession of Peter and his status since the disciples have already made a confession similar to that of Peter in Matt 14:33; it is made explicit that they too will be granted the power of the keys in Matt 18:18.

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[610] Nau, *Peter in Matthew*, 106.

[611] For discussion of Peter as the rock, see Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 178-98.

[612] Nau, *Peter in Matthew*, 113.

[613] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 382.

Peter next speaks on the mount of transfiguration. The negative aspects of this text only come out when compared with Peter's rebuke of Jesus in the previous section. Jesus has just explained (Matt 16:21 - ὁ Ἰησοῦς δεικνύειν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ὅτι δεῖ . . .) what must happen, and Peter thinks it is counter to the will of God. The transfiguration comes with the words from heaven, "listen to him" (Matt 17:5 - ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ). These words seem pointed against Peter who, in the previous narrative, did not listen and opposed the words of Jesus.[614] It is a call to the disciples in general but to Peter specifically given the larger context. Second, the disciples, including Peter, are filled with fear (καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα). Jesus had just told them to not fear when he appeared on the water (Matt 14:27); yet here again, he must reaffirm them (Matt 17:7).[615] Finally, in Matt 17:7, Jesus touches the disciples in the same way as in his many healing narratives (Matt 8:3, 15; 9:29), which may emphasize a type of deficiency.[616] The odd comment Peter makes about the tabernacles is simply ignored.[617] Although some have seen the fear of the disciples as negative given that Jesus has continually reassured them in the past,[618] the Gospel does not seem to speak against fear itself or imply it is a negative response.[619] The negative thrust of this

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[614] Brown, *Disciples in Narrative Perspective*, 61.

[615] Edwards, *Matthew's Narrative Portrait*, 82.

[616] Nau, *Peter in Matthew*, 81.

[617] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 399.

[618] Nau, *Peter in Matthew*, 139.

[619] Brown, *Disciples in Narrative Perspective*, 142-45.

passage comes in the form of the statement from the cloud that reminds Peter to listen.

The temple tax section (Matt 17:24-27) is connected to Peter's confession in Matthew 16. In this section, Peter responds to tax collectors by affirming that Jesus pays the tax. In his discussion with Jesus, however, Jesus reminds Peter that he is God's son (which Peter himself confessed) and is, thus, exempt from the tax (Matt 17:25-26). Peter then may understand who Jesus is, but once again, not the implications of this identity. Ultimately, Jesus concedes to paying lest others be offended, but Peter once again speaks without seeming to think of the implications, questioning the reason for Jesus' decision to pay. Here he "appears as a learner in need of correction."[620]

In Matt 18:21, Peter is in need of correction once again for not understanding forgiveness. Peter sets a number on the amount of times one must forgive, limiting the concept and act[621] whereas Jesus requires forgiveness that "n'auront pas de fin;"[622] Peter's lack of understanding is highlighted here.[623]

In Matt 19:27-30, Peter reappears indicating that the disciples have left everything to follow Jesus; he seems to act as their spokesperson and wishes to know their reward. Clearly, this passage does not reflect the humility that Jesus requests in Matt 16:24 when he rebukes Peter. Although Jesus grants the reality

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[620] Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 164-65.

[621] Brown, *Disciples in Narrative Perspective*, 74.

[622] Bonnard, *Saint Matthieu*, 276.

[623] Brown, *Disciples in Narrative Perspective*, 75; Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 166.

of a future reward, he also ends by warning, "The first shall be last" (Matt 19:30).

This statement is particularly ominous for Peter who, in Matt 10:2, is described as

the first. After Jesus speaks on the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matt

20:1-15), he restates "the first shall be last and the last first" (Matt 20:16). Davies

and Barth support the view that the parable is a warning to the disciples.[624]

Peter makes his next appearance in Matt 26:33-35 where he vows that he

will not fall away (ἐγὼ οὐδέποτε σκανδαλισθήσομαι). Even after Jesus predicts

Peter's denial (ἀπαρνήσῃ με), Peter claims the opposite (οὐ μή σε ἀπαρνήσομαι)

Nonetheless, Jesus' statement increases fear for, as discussed above, Matt 10:33

(ὅστις δ᾽ ἂν ἀρνήσηταί με ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων) and 16:24 (ἀπαρνησάσθω

ἑαυτὸν) have already spoken of denying Jesus and denying themselves. Jesus, at

this point, predicts that Peter will deny him and not deny himself.[625] Following

Peter's bold assertion of allegiance, he is tasked to keep watch and pray (Matt

26:36-46). In this instance, he falls asleep twice; Jesus asks him, with two others,

if they are still sleeping. Peter's inability to keep watch, although not directly

related to the parables in Matt 24:42-42 and 25:13, seems rather ominous since

alertness is a requirement of disciples awaiting Jesus' eschatological return.

Peter, however, cannot "keep watch" even for a few hours to await his Lord's

return.

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[624] Davies and Allison, *Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:53, 61; Bornkamm, Barth, and Held, *Tradition and Interpretation*, 120. See also Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 375.

[625] Trotter, "Understanding and Stumbling," 222-26.

Finally, the inevitable must now take place and the sequential reader experiences acute fear for Peter, the foremost disciple. Matthew 26:57-75 records Peter's threefold denial. After Jesus' arrest, Peter continues to follow but only at a distance (ὁ δὲ Πέτρος ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν). While he first denies Jesus before two servant girls, the narrative culminates with him denying Jesus before numerous bystanders. In his first denial, he is accused of being "with" Jesus (καὶ σὺ ἦσθα μετὰ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Γαλιλαίου), and Peter denies by stating that he does not understand. This is the same in the second denial (οὗτος ἦν μετὰ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Ναζωραίου), which brings back to mind Matt 12:30 (ὁ μὴ ὢν μετ' ἐμοῦ κατ' ἐμοῦ ἐστιν). In Matt 26:70, Peter's culpability is further emphasized since he denied Jesus before them all (ἠρνήσατο ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν πάντων). His self-condemnation worsens given that, in the second last denial (Matt 26:71), he swears an oath (καὶ πάλιν ἠρνήσατο μετὰ ὅρκου). In the final denial, Peter swears and curses (Matt 26:74). In this instance, we have at least a double condemnation. Peter was never to have sworn an oath; Jesus teaching on this was already made clear in Matt 5:34. The oath he took, since it reinforced a lie, most likely included some type of curse (the object being himself or Jesus),[626] and given Matt 10:33, it seems that he forfeits his salvation; Peter has forgotten to deny himself (Matt 16:24). Also striking is the phrase "I do not know" (οὐκ οἶδα) in Matt 26:70, 72 and 74, which also occurs in Matt 25:12 where the virgins with insufficient oil are

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[626] Jo Ann A. Brant, "Infelicitous Oaths in the Gospel of Matthew," *JSNT* 63 (1996): 18; Birger Gerhardsson, "Confession and Denial Before Men: Observations on Matt 26:57-27:2," *JSNT* 13 (1981): 54-55; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 456; Samuel A. Olarewaju, "Oath-Taking in the New Testament" (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1995), 26-30, 56-58.

being condemned. Peter, after hearing the cock crow, realizes his error and weeps (Matt 26:75 - ἔκλαυσεν πικρῶς).

Several other narrative threads are also related to Peter's salvation. The warning granted in Matt 7:21 addresses those who call Jesus Lord. These are told they will not enter the kingdom because they did not obey the will of God. The will of God is clarified as Jesus' teachings in the parable that follows (Matt 7:24-28). This warning regarding the appellation Lord is strengthened by the various parables in which the title Lord is spoken by those who are condemned (Matt 21:30, 25:11, 24, 44). Significantly, no character in the Gospel calls Jesus Lord until after this warning. Jesus' warning diminishes any potential for the term's salvific force as a confession. In many instances, it is used in relation to healing narratives, and its first use comes in a miracle narrative in Matt 8:2 followed by many other references (Matt 8:2; 8:6, 8, 21, 25, 9:38, 15:22, 25, 27, 17:15; 20:30-31, 33). Peter calls Jesus Lord more than any other character in the Gospel (Matt 14:28, 30; 16:22; 17:4; 17:15; 18:21 and with the disciples in 8:25 and 26:22). It is used by Peter in every narrative that illustrates his failure: Matt 14:28, 20 regarding his lack of faith on the water; Matt 16:22 when he completely misunderstands the will of God; Matt 17:4 followed by the voice from heaven commanding him to listen to Jesus; and Matt 18:25 where he misunderstands forgiveness. The title Lord seems to remind the sequential reader of Peter's failures regarding the kingdom.[627]

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[627] Studies of this term tend to focus on the term's meaning for Jesus rather than for the characters who use the term. See the summary and conclusions in Jack

Finally, after Peter's final repentance, he is never again mentioned by name in the Gospel text. He only reappears in Matt 28:17-20 where the eleven are mentioned. Here, however, the worship of Jesus is mixed with doubt, and the sequential reader does not know which of the disciples doubt. There is good reason for the sequential reader to identify Peter as one of them given that the only other occurrence of διστάζω occurs in relation to Peter at Matt 14:31, and in a similar way, the narrative has him worship Jesus (Matt 14:33). Thus, the some who doubt most likely includes Peter.[628] In this narrative, the failure of the disciples is contrasted with the women who received and worshiped Jesus but did not doubt in Matt 28:9.[629]

Matt 28:9   <u>αἱ δὲ</u> προσελθοῦσαι ἐκράτησαν αὐτοῦ τοὺς πόδας καὶ

<u>προσεκύνησαν</u> αὐτῷ.

Matt 28:17   καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν <u>προσεκύνησαν</u>, <u>οἱ δὲ</u> ἐδίστασαν

In this final section, Peter is reaffirmed, but alongside affirmation comes warning.[630] Peter failed to watch "with" Jesus during his prayer (Matt 26:38, 40), and he denies that he was "with" Jesus on two occasions (Matt 26:69, 71). Jesus'

Dean Kingsbury, "Title Kyrios in Matthew's Gospel," *JBL* 94, no. 2 (1975): 246-55.

[628] For a summary on whether all or some doubted, see Stephanie L. Black, *Sentence Conjunction in the Gospel of Matthew: kai, de, tote, gar, oun and Asyndeton in Narrative Discourse* (JSNTSup 216; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 160-62; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 622-23.

[629] Gérard Claudel, "À la recherche du disciple modèle de Matthieu," *RevScRel* 79, no. 1 (2005): 90.

[630] Andrew Angel, "Inquiring into an Inclusio-On Judgement and Love in Matthew," *JTS* 60, no. 2 (2009): 527-30.

promise, however, is that his presence will be with the disciples, a promise that seems very specific in affirming Peter among the twelve. Jesus also provides a specific, temporal reference with the promise: "until the end of the age" (ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος). This promise of Jesus' presence has its parallel in Matt 13:40 (οὕτως ἔσται ἐν τῇ συντελείᾳ τοῦ αἰῶνος) and in Matt 13:49 (ὕτως ἔσται ἐν τῇ συντελείᾳ τοῦ αἰῶνος). Both of these conclude parables regarding sorting. Whether the weeds are among the wheat or the bad fish are among the good, the result is still the same: judgment.

There are striking similarities between the story of Peter and these parables. The weeds are planted by the devil (ὁ δὲ ἐχθρὸς ὁ σπείρας αὐτά ἐστιν ὁ διάβολος); in the narrative, Peter becomes Satan personified in Jesus' rebuke (ὕπαγε ὀπίσω μου, σατανᾶ). Second, in the parable, it is the stumbling blocks that are to be removed from the kingdom (καὶ συλλέξουσιν ἐκ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ πάντα τὰ σκάνδαλα καὶ τοὺς ποιοῦντας τὴν ἀνομίαν) while in Matt 16:19, Peter is called a stumbling block for Jesus (σκάνδαλον εἶ ἐμοῦ). The connection to the good and bad fish is related to Jesus' statement on oaths. Jesus says anything more than "yes, yes" is evil or from the evil one (τὸ δὲ περισσὸν τούτων ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ ἐστιν). The sequential reader connects this teaching to the previous statement about Satan and Peter mentioned above and also to the fish parable in which the evil ones will be separated from the righteous (οἱ ἄγγελοι καὶ ἀφοριοῦσιν τοὺς πονηροὺς ἐκ μέσου τῶν δικαίων). In the narrative, both of these parables are connected to Peter's story. The end of Matthew's Gospel thus functions specifically as a reassurance and as a warning to Peter.

Throughout the narrative, the sequential reader hopes for Peter's salvation, but at the end, is still left with continually fluctuating hope and fear. As far as Jesus' salvific purpose in Matt 1:21 is concerned, Peter's status at the end of the age remains unknown, and suspense is actually created on two levels, first for Peter and second for the efficacy of the prophecy.

FEAR

HOPE

Mt 4:19-20
Peter's call
Mt 10:2
Peter as first disciple
Mt 14:28-29
Jesus tells Peter to come

Mt 14:30-31
Has fear, little faith,
and doubt

Mt 14:33
Worships Jesus

Mt 15:15-16
Does not understand

Mt 15:17-20
Jesus gives explanation
Mt 16:16-19
Peter's confession; he is the rock;
he is granted kingdom keys

Mt 16:22
Rebukes Jesus, is called
Satan and a stumbling
block
Mt 17:5
Told to listen by the
voice of God

Mt 17:25a
Understands that Jesus will
pay the tax

Mt 17:25b-26
Does not understand
why Jesus will pay the tax
Mt 18:21
Does not understand
forgiveness

Mt 19:27-30
Granted a throne

Mt 19:30; 20:16
First will be last
Mt 26:31
All will fall away
Mt 26:33
Peter says he will not
fall away
Mt 26:34
Peter will deny Jesus
Mt 26:35
Peter says he will not
deny
Mt 26:36-46
Cannot keep watch
Mt 26:57-76
Peter's three denials

Mt 28:20
Jesus: "I will be with you always..."

Mt 28:20
Jesus: "...even to the
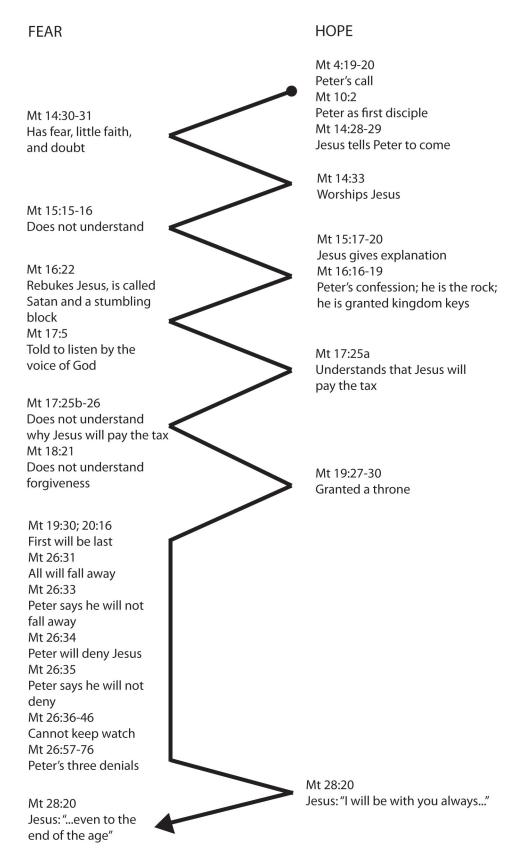end of the age"

Figure 4 – Zigzag Narrative: Peter

242

CONCLUSION

Suspense in Matthew's Gospel is a textual phenomenon with multiple layers. As the Gospel progresses, there is a continual diminishing of salvific options: first the leaders of the people are disqualified, then the crowds who join them in Jesus' arrest (solidified in Matt 27:25), and finally, the disciples and Peter who forsake him are called into question. This narrowing of the path creates suspense in that the sequential reader begins to question not just how salvation of Jesus' people will come to be but whether or not it will be realized at all. Suspense is heightened through a narrative construction that draws the sequential reader through an affective manipulation of sorts, several zigzag experiences of hope and fear. The sequential reader fears the failure of Jesus with regard to the leaders of the people but hopes that the crowds will side with Jesus; ultimately, however, the crowds fail. The sequential reader is then led through the same fluctuating hope-fear scenario with the disciples who alternately understand Jesus' teachings and fail to measure up to them. Peter, as a prominent and specific case, presents hope but zigzags on a generally downward slant to the point that it is likely he too will fail, however undesirable this may be. Finally, as each salvific option is eliminated or called into question, the complete failure of Jesus in light of Matt 1:21 seems increasingly inevitable as the Gospel comes to a close, despite the sequential reader's desire to see success. In light of the surprise provided in Matt 28:19, an end reading takes hold and the sequential reader, driven by curiosity, moves retrospectively to open the narrative and re-read the Gospel. The

author's deception of the sequential reader will be revealed as subsequent

readings demonstrate the Gospel's inclusion of Gentiles from the beginning.

Suspense, surprise, and curiosity, as developed and played out within Matthew's Gospel, form an emotive triad that lead to a postdictable, retrospective rereading of the Gospel. This study challenges interpreters to be more explicit regarding their hermeneutical position on beginnings, endings, and their respective influence on the ways in which a text is read, understood, and most important for this study, felt. Some time ago, David Rhoads wrote, "The ideal reader is a reconstruction of all the appropriate responses suggested or implied by the text, whether it be surprise or suspense or puzzlement or understanding or whatever."[631] Unfortunately, the universal understanding of the implied reader has removed Rhoads' initial emphasis on emotive affect; it is the hope of this study to return such an emphasis to the forefront of research in the Gospels. In this way, scholars can better understand hermeneutical presuppositions that exist within textual interpretation. Regarding Matthew specifically, such study will remind scholars of the ways in which the author has manipulated them to make certain hermeneutical decisions.

The ending of Matthew, with its command to go to the nations, has long been viewed as an open ending but not a surprise ending. Acknowledging a surprise ending in Matthew brings it functionally in line with Mark though with different emphases. Matthew's surprise is encompassed in the proclamation of the gospel to new people whereas surprise in Mark is founded on the silence of a people who already had the message. Rhoads once described Mark as full of

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[631] Rhoads, "Narrative Criticism," 422.

"twists and turns, suspense and surprise – culminating, of course, in the shocking ending . . .,"[632] and Matthew can now fit also within this interpretive paradigm. With the recognition of surprise in Matthew, a challenge to the idea of a reliable narrator in the Gospel arises since there is an intention on the part of the implied author to deceive the sequential from the outset. Concerning Mark's Gospel, Hester has commented that the end "comes completely at the expense of every narrative expectation . . ."[633] Matthew is distinctive here since it is not "completely" at the expense of "every" expectation; rather, it is retrospectively postdictable. Paradoxically, the deception in Matthew's Gospel is used ultimately to reveal that which the author viewed as its final true disclosure: a universal gospel.

By recognizing suspense and surprise in Matthew, it becomes evident that there is a trend in early Christian Gospel literature (and Acts of the Apostles) involving rhetorical manipulation of the reader in order to spread the gospel message. With regard to the silence of the women at the end of Mark, Hester emphasizes, "It is the actual reader who either fails or completes the story."[634] Acts of the Apostles seems to end in this way as well since the message does not reach the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), and Paul ends up in prison. Daniel Marguerat indicates that it is the readers who must continue the message and

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[632] David Rhoads, "Jesus and the Syrophoenician Woman in Mark: A Narrative-Critical Study," *JAAR* 62, no. 2 (1994): 343-75.

[633] J. David Hester, "Dramatic Inconclusion: Irony and the Narrative Rhetoric of the Ending of Mark," *JSNT* 57 (1995): 62.

[634] Ibid., 85.

fulfill the initial prophecy. "The summary [Acts 28:30-31] offers expectation and remains to be rewritten in the life of the reader at the moment he or she finishes the reading of the book."[635] In Matthew, the surprise ending of a mission to the Gentiles must be fulfilled by the disciples with Jesus' presence. Yet, the reader connects with the narrative here as well because of the eternal promise of Jesus' presence. Real readers must now become part of the story in order to move the prophecy of Matt 1:21 forward. Mark ends with the surprise of silence, Acts of the Apostles with the surprise of captivity, and Matthew with the surprise of a new people; each in its own way hopes to perpetuate the message by calling the reader to join in spreading the good news. Thus, Matthew is viewed not as unique in possessing a surprise ending but rather as one member of a group of texts that use this emotive effect to move the message forward.

This idea leaves room for further exploration. For example, if Acts ends with surprise, perhaps there exist other affective aspects that remain unstudied. How much fear is raised every time the Apostles are captured and how much hope upon their release? Will the Jewish people accept the message in Acts or will they not, and what is at stake? Much of suspense theory can be developed here, and even within Matthew, the current inquiry has provided but a foundation upon which to build using current emotive narrative theory. As one possibility, pity,[636]

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[635] Daniel Marguerat, "The Enigma of the Silent Closing of Acts (28:16-31)," in *Jesus and the Heritage of Israel* (ed. D. P. Moessner, Harrisburg, Trinity Press, 1999), 304.

[636] Here, comparison with *De inventione rhetorica* 1.55.107-109; *Institutio oratoria* 11.3.170-173; *Rhet.* 2.7.8-9 informs much of the content of the passion narrative.

in relation to the moral integrity and suffering of a protagonist, is stated often to increase suspense on the part of readers.[637]

Emotion influences the way readers understand texts, particularly retrospectively. If readers are not aware of the way in which their curiosity has turned them back to the beginning of a narrative, they may grow callous to the repetitive enjoyment of a text. At its heart, this study hopes to bring readers back to the text over and over again. . . but fears that once a text concludes, readers will view it as "the end."

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[637] Carroll, "Paradox of Suspense," 71-91.

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