

TANGAZA COLLEGE

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**CONCATENATION OF THEODYNAMICS: GOD'S
SAVING PLAN THROUGHOUT HISTORY
An Exegesis of Matthew 4:23**

Moderator

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this long Essay to Mama Mariana Albin who taught me how to pray and instilled the love of God and of neighbor in me. This love blossomed and gave rise to my religious vocation. To my Father Mr Albin Towo Swai I learned how to work hard and I will not forget this good virtue that I have learned from Him. To young people who have given me the sense of continuing with my life as a Salesian and to all people who have said *Yes* to the Mission of God in his plan of Salvation.

EPIGRAPH

It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household

(Matthew 10:25) [GNT]

ἀρκετὸν τῷ μαθητῇ ἵνα γένηται ὡς ὁ διδάσκαλος αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ δοῦλος ὡς ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ. εἰ τὸν οἰκοδεσπότην Βεελζεβοῦλ ἐπεκάλεσαν, πόσῳ μᾶλλον τοὺς οἰκιακοὺς αὐτοῦ.

(Matthew 10:25) [RSV]

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this long essay is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in the partial fulfillment of the requirements of Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

Signed: *F. Swai*

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Date: 10. feb. 2006

This long essay has been submitted for examination with my approval as the college supervisor.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

One thing in the study of theology that still remains in my mind unforgotten from the first year of theology onwards is what is known as theological methodology. There are six steps in this methodology that is concerned with how to think theologically. Roughly the steps are: (i) question (ii) research (iii) history (iv) reflection (v) answer and (vi) your own statement¹. Coming to the end of the four-year study of theology, I was wondering what can be considered as my own statement in summing up the theological questions I met and continue to meet. The professor who taught me Fundamental theology insisted that the last step can be frightening but as Peter made the statement: Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός (You are the Christ) (Mk 8:27–30) one has to make a statement. Doing theology is not teaching theology and one has to go beyond the classroom work.

Working on theological methodology, I came up with my own concept, *theodynamics*. I have been influenced by the laws of thermodynamics in Chemistry. In a simplified way we can generally say the laws deal with heat and energy transfer in a system. From a closed system they can be extended to the transfer of energy (entropy) that occurs throughout the universe. Comparatively in my study of theology, I have

¹ D. BLOWEY, *Fundamental Theology: Class Lectures*, 2002.

reflected on the history of salvation as the history of God's glory and power being at work in history and in the universe.

Dynamics which is from a Greek word δύναμις (power) is defined as “the branch of mechanics concerned with the motion of bodies under the action of forces”². Thus combining the Greek word for God, θεός and δύναμις we get δύναμις θεοῦ, meaning theodynamcis, and we can easily get the concept that God is the power that continuously moves the universe; in other words *theodynamics* can sum up our reflection about God's action in the universe and in history.

God remains a mystery in a sense that he cannot be understood fully or fit in the frame of our minds. However, God cannot be pushed to the recede of our minds. Thus, the question, “who is God to me?” always pops up in the mind of a human being. Following the steps of theological methodology the question “who is God to me?” is the question that will be pursued in this paper. In researching for the answer to this question I have gone to the Old Testament to review the history of salvation.

I have picked up Matthew's Gospel as the window through which we can see the concept of theodynamics. In his use of ‘fulfillment citations’ Matthew takes us in ‘flashbacks’ to the action of God in the Old Testament. He does this to give his community a sense of living and a sense of direction. That is why we have to learn from Matthew about how to handle our faith and our lives. The “Great Commission” (Matt 28:16–20), assures us that theodynamics is an unending process, and God is constantly busy in history and in the universe.

² J.PEARSALL, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 447.

Mark Smith's book, *The Early History of God*, deals with the history of Israel, how they started as polytheists and moved on to monotheism. The last chapter of his book gives a kind of summing up the whole of his research³. I remember in the Eschatology class approaching Fr. Fogliacco about this book in relation to what he was teaching. The answer he gave me was that we have to differentiate history from theology. Indeed I want to hint it here too that theology is people's reflection on what God has done in their lives and in history. We can't go through theology as if we are searching for facts; theology is faith seeking understanding.

The concept of the concatenation of theodynamics as it hit my mind tries to explain how God has been passionately busy in the world from the beginning, right from creation onwards. Unlike the human beings who may change the decisions they make, God has been faithful to his word. The history of salvation can be seen as the history of God's faithfulness. This, I hope, will become clearer at the end of this essay.

I have divided the essay into three chapters. The first chapter will give a quick view on the Gospel of Matthew to show how the gospel is one piece of work that is very much interconnected so that to understand one part necessarily needs to link it with the other parts. The chapter will also deal with introductory questions necessary for the exegetical work done in chapter two. The third chapter will show how God's plan of salvation is a single plan throughout history. Appendix V will give a portrayal of the concept of theodynamics.

³ M.SMITH, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the other Deities in Ancient Israel*, 145-166.

Chapter I

SITUATING THE TEXT OF MATT 4:23 INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

1.1. Introduction

We have hinted in the general introduction that Matthew's gospel is one piece of work that fits together like a jigsaw puzzle. Matthew is a good redactor and has made everything fit together to the extent that one part necessarily depends on the others for its understanding. I will not go into the argument whether Matthew is a Jew or a gentile scribe trained in Jewish customs and cultures. Stendahl, however, tells us: "that he was once a Jew cannot be doubted. That he had a Jewish training in Palestine prior to the war is probable"⁴. What I want to focus on is his ingenuity in the use of the rabbinic style in constructing his gospel. He knows how to formulate questions in rabbinic manner.⁵ Unfortunately, most of the rabbinic styles of writing are not familiar to our

⁴ K. STENDAHL, *The School of Mathew*, Xiii.

⁵ P. F. ELLIS, *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 3.

present generation. "For a Jewish gospel, we should certainly use a typical Semitic structure such as parallelism, inclusion-conclusion, concentric circles, and chiasmus"⁶.

This typical Semitic style, which Matthew uses, will require us to move in a form of concentric circles⁷. Doing the exegesis of Matt 4:23 necessarily implies showing how it is connected to the rest of the Gospel. C. H. Lohr speaking about Matthew's Gospel says: "It reveals not only a meticulous concern, numerically and otherwise, in the arrangement of its details, but also an architectonic grandeur in its totality. Its parts are inseparable like those of a well planned and well built house"⁸. Having this in mind therefore I shall strive to delimit the text but at the same time show how it is part and parcel of Ch 1-4 and how it is linked to the whole gospel. The Semitic style of concentric circle and inclusion-conclusion will also help us to answer the question of the context of the text, both remote and immediate.

The simplest way to view Matthew's Gospel formally is to see it as composed of alternating narratives and discourses. Thus dealing with the form and structure of our selected text, we shall also see the place of this text as an end pericope in the narrative before the discourse of the Sermon on the Mount. Now I would like to move straight to the delimitation of the text.

⁶ W. DICHARRY, *Human Authors of the New Testament Vol. I, Mark, Matthew and Luke*, 94.

⁷ The technique which is typically Semitic, consists in an author's returning at regular intervals to the same fundamental themes under different forms, from different aspects and with additional light on matters of detail (See P. F. Ellis *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 19.)

⁸ Cf. C. H. LOHR, "Oral Techniques in the Gospel of Matthew", CBQ23, (Oct 1961) 427.

1. 2. Delimitation of the text

1. 2.1. *Terminus a Quo*

According to the Oxford dictionary, *Terminus a quo*, in our context, is defined as “a starting point”; the same dictionary defines *terminus ad quem* as “an end or finishing point”⁹. Thus the *terminus a quo* for our text for exegesis which will give us where Matt 4:23 stands in relation to the panoramic view of the gospel and in view of the exposition of our theme will be 4:12. This is because with Jesus’ coming to settle in Capernaum and the initial proclamation we recapitulate the identity of Jesus which is expounded right from chapter one. With the quotation from prophet Isaiah in 4:14 we are introduced to Matthew’s vision that runs throughout the gospel. “What is most revealing about Matthew’s background is his concern throughout the gospel to demonstrate his conviction that Christianity represents the true Israel, that Jesus brings the true, and final interpretation of the law, and that Christians are those chosen by God to manifest in their lives the true righteousness of the kingdom of heaven”¹⁰. Later we shall see the people in darkness in 4:16 may mean Jews as well as the Gentiles. The quotation from Prophet Isaiah that Matthew places here is the link between the identity of Jesus and his field of work.

1. 2.2 *Terminus ad Quem*

As it has already been mentioned in the above section, *terminus ad quem* is the end or the finishing point. Thus the *terminus ad quem* for our exegetic text will be 4:25. This is the last verse of chapter four and it stands at the entrance to the Sermon on the

⁹ J. PEARSALL, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 1479.

¹⁰ P. F. ELLIS, *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 93.

Mount which Matthew has constructed in the fifth chapter and goes on up to chapter seven. This line forms the *terminus* of the ending pericope as it will be shown in the form of the text. “At the conclusion of this first narrative (Ch 1–4), Matthew sets the stage for Jesus’ proclamation of the messianic Torah in the Sermon on the Mount (Ch 5–7) by describing the large crowds that come to Jesus from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and Transjordan (4:23–25)”¹¹. This line is the end of the narrative section but forms a stepping-stone to the discourse that starts in chapter five. Passing over the ambiguity created by Matthew whether the Sermon on the Mount is addressed to the crowds or to the four disciples that have already been called by Jesus, we can say in passing that as 4:25 forms the closing for the narrative section it also establishes the hearers for the sermon on the mount. In Chapter 11: 2–19 when Matthew accuses the Jews that they have rejected Jesus and John the Baptist “part of the bill of the particulars is the charge that the Pharisees and Jews in general have heard the messianic Torah of Jesus, the Sermon on the Mount, and have rejected it”¹². Thus though the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount shows that he was joined by the disciples on the hill (5:1) it presupposes that the crowds also heard his sermon. In any case 4:25 does form a closing for the narrative section and the opening for the discourse that starts its course in chapter five.

¹¹ P. F. ELLIS, *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 18.

¹² J. D. KINGSBURY, *Matthew as Story*, 67.

1. 3. Words and Phrases

In this section I would like to highlight the key words used by Matthew in 4:23 and their significance in the construction of the gospel. In describing the messianic activities of Jesus in Israel, Matthew states that he teaches, preaches and heals. These words are very crucial in trying to understand Matthew's Jesus, his mission and the mission of his disciples.

1. 3.1. Teaching (*διδάσκων*)

Right from the beginning of Jesus' public ministry Matthew presents Jesus as a teacher. He is a teacher who teaches ethical behavior (morality) and the way to salvation. "As Jesus sees it, the law and the prophets serve two purposes: they function ethically as norms of human behavior and they function salvation-historically in that they prophesy the time of fulfillment"¹⁰. Meier tells us that for Matthew in the person of Jesus "teacher and teaching become inextricably bound together. You do not fully understand what the teaching is unless you understand who the teacher is. You cannot fully accept the teaching as true unless you accept the teacher as your Lord, as Son of God and Son of Man"¹³. It is not by chance that Matthew mentions teaching before preaching and healing, and it carries no object. What he teaches is the content of the Sermon on the Mount and people have to hear the word of the authoritative Jesus before anything else. It is very clear because Jesus is Son of God and Son of Man and right from the first verse of the book of Genesis we have come to know how God's word is powerful.

¹³ J. P. MEIER, *The Vision of Matthew*, 43.

In the first narrative, (Ch 1–4), Matthew has already established the identity of Jesus. “From genealogy and birth narrative, in which Jesus is identified as a descendant of David, as son of God and as ‘God with us’ to his final appearance as a risen apocalyptic figure, in which he instructs the disciples to teach others to obey him and promise to be with them until the end, Jesus is presented as divinely warranted teacher who is messianic ruler and eschatological judge”¹⁴.

Indeed teaching is so central to Jesus and he teaches with authority (7:29). The power to teach is not delegated during his public ministry as Meier says: “He *teaches*, and only Jesus teaches authoritatively during the public ministry. The apostles are commissioned to preach and heal in chap 10, but they are commissioned to teach only in 28:20”¹⁵.

The content of what he teaches, as it has been hinted above, is what is presented in the Sermon on the Mount, the Messianic Torah, and the cradle of Matthew’s gospel. He teaches the Torah that is higher than that of Moses and indeed the one that fulfills it. Matthew strives in his Gospel to establish that what Jesus teaches is not against the Torah of Moses but that this Messianic Torah of Jesus fulfills it (Matt 5:17).

We have to mention here what has been the matter of dispute among the theologians that though teaching was so central in the public ministry of Jesus and even at times Jesus himself ascribes the title of teacher to himself, only the non believers and his opponents address him as a teacher. “Only when we understand fully how intent

¹⁴ A. J.SALDARINI, *Matthew’s Christian Jewish Community*, 178.

¹⁵ J. P. MEIER, *Matthew*. 35.

Matthew is on Christ's teaching can we appreciate the strange fact that Matthew never allows full disciples to address Jesus as "teacher" (*didaskalos*)."¹⁶

We can conclude this section by highlighting this fact that, "in Matthew we are faced with a paradox. Matthew never tires of presenting Jesus as teacher; Jesus even designates himself as such (23:8, 10). Yet the title 'teacher or 'Rabbi' is addressed to Jesus only by those who are hostile to him or who, at the very least, seem to lack the stamina to become full disciples by following Jesus at all costs."¹⁷

1. 3.2. Preaching (κηρύσσω)

For B. T Viviano among the three activities in the ministry of Jesus preaching forms the central point; as such he sees a triplet in Matthew's construction. He says that "the triplet itself has a ring structure ABA' in which the B element, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, is the kernel, the center of importance. It is framed by 'teaching in their synagogues' and 'healing'. He goes on to say that the "relationship of the three elements is this: the gospel of the kingdom is preached and incipiently realized by the ministry of word and deed"¹⁸.

Matthew presents Jesus as the Son of God who teaches, preaches and heals. The significance of the activity of preaching is so central in the proclamation of the kingdom that has drawn near. "The function of the verb 'to preach' in the first gospel is to establish continuity of ministry and message among John, Jesus, the disciples, and the

¹⁶ J. P. MEIER. *The Vision of Matthew*, 49.

¹⁷ J. P. MEIER. *The Vision of Matthew*, 49.

¹⁸ B. T VIVIANO, *The Gospel According to Matthew* , NJBC, 639.

post-Easter Church”¹⁹. Consequently this is what I will consider as Theo-dynamics in the third chapter, meaning God revealing his presence in history and in the world, bit by bit, through his human agents. There is no discontinuity in this revelation.

What is the content of their preaching? Definitely it is the gospel. And “the entire expression ‘the gospel of the kingdom’ may be defined as the news (that saves and condemns) which is revealed in and through Jesus Messiah, the Son of God, and is proclaimed first to Israel and then to the Gentiles to the effect that in him the eschatological rule of God has drawn near to mankind”²⁰.

The proclamation however just shows the urgency of the situation. For Mark the kingdom is at hand but for Matthew the Kingdom has drawn near (ἤγγικεν βασιλεία οὐρανόσ) (4:17). “The decisive manifestation of the divine sovereignty has drawn so near to men in the words and deeds of Jesus that they are now confronted with the possible and ineluctable necessity of repentance. Yet the consummation of divine sovereignty in an age of bliss is yet to come: the eschatology of the kingdom is inaugurated, not wholly realized”²¹.

1. 3.3. Healing (θεραπείων)

Ellis has cited Matt 28:18–20 as “the key to the Gospel”. Ellis tells us: “By recapitulating his major themes in Jesus’ final discourse, Matthew has anticipated the French penchant for putting a book’s table of contents at the end instead of at the

¹⁹ J. D KINGSBURY, (ed) GERHARD KRODEL, *Matthew: Proclamation and Commentaries*, 44.

²⁰ J. D KINGSBURY, *Matthew as Story*, 59.

²¹ D. HILL, *The New Century Bible Commentary: The Gospel of Matthew*, 105.

beginning”²². In this he, as many other theologians, sees that what Matthew had in mind right from the beginning of the gospel was already the exalted Jesus, the Son of man, of Daniel 7: 13–14. Gerard Barth has the same opinion when he says: “A marked editorial encroachment by the evangelist must be reckoned with by virtue of its position as the conclusion of the gospel”²³. The exalted Jesus is already in Matthew’s mind as he starts to construct the first chapter; the “God-Immanuel” of 1:23 is the same one of 28:20; “I am with you always; yes, to the end of time”. What I want to emphasize here is that in Matt 28:18–20 Jesus is presented as Son of Man.

In any case and at any rate when Matthew talks of Jesus as a healer he has in mind the figure of the Son of Man. In the first century Jewish Messianic eschatological expectation was that what the earthly kings failed to do, the messiah who will spring from the stump of Jesse will accomplish and he will be able to do so because he will be filled by the Holy Spirit²⁴. The Messiah was expected to heal the land and the people and this included healing all the sicknesses and infirmities which were the result of sin. In the words of J. D. Kingsbury: “through the activity of healing no less than through the activity of teaching and preaching, Matthew portrays Jesus as calling Israel to repentance and as liberating people from the sphere of Satan’s rule and bring them into the gracious sphere of the rule of God (11:20, 12:28)”²⁵.

It should be noted however that though Matthew presents Jesus as a healer the miracles are not a proof of his divinity, because even after seeing the miracles, the

²² P. F. ELLIS, *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 22.

²³ G. BORNKAM, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, 131.

²⁴ N. FOGLIACCO, *Eschatology Class Lectures*, 2005.

²⁵ J. D. KINGSBURY, *Matthew: Proclamation and Commentaries*, 48.

Pharisees accuse him of casting demons through the power of Beelzebub, the prince of devils (9:34). Towards the end of the first part of the gospel (Ch 11-12) Jesus is rejected by “Pseudo Israel” but he continues to perform miracles. “Through his ministry of healing to Israel, Jesus Son of God shows that he is indeed Israel’s Messiah despite the fact that his preaching and teaching have fallen on obdurate hearts”²⁶.

1. 3.4. *In their Synagogues* (ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν)

Another phrase that I consider useful as a window through which we can view our exegetical text and Matthew’s gospel in general is the phrase “*in their synagogues*”. Many theologians believe that one of the reasons that triggered the writing of Matthew’s gospel is the effort at Jamnia to revive Judaism. Warren Dicharry writes about it that “with great tenacity they have somehow managed in the twelve years since then to regroup at Jabneh and concentrate all their efforts on reviving Judaism”²⁷. But this revival in Judaism was not without effect to the emerging Christianity. “An important part of the Pharisees’ rebuilding project is to win back to Judaism as many of our Jewish Christians as they can. They despise all of us as *minim*, or heretics, and feel that it’s their sacred duty to correct our thinking and win us back to their teaching, or else bar us from their synagogues and pray for our destruction”²⁸.

In actual fact the tone of opposition between Jesus and the ‘Scribes and Pharisees’ that resounds throughout Matthew’s gospel echoes the actual situation of the Church of Matthew’s time. “It is clear that the most obvious polemic in this gospel is

²⁶ J. D. KINGSBURY, *Matthew: Proclamation and Commentaries*, 49.

²⁷ W. DICHARRY, *Human Authors of the New Testament Voll. Mark, Matthew and Luke*, 83.

²⁸ W. DICHARRY, *Human Authors of the New Testament Voll. Mark, Matthew and Luke*, 83.

directed against the 'scribes and the Pharisees'. In Matthew these are neither the actual opponents of Jesus, nor are they general examples of haughty behavior, as in Luke. They are representatives of the synagogue 'across the street' in Matthew's community. The line between the church and synagogue is drawn definitely"²⁹.

With the *Birkath ha minim* that used to be read in the synagogues to curse the Christians, the Christians had to part with the Jewish synagogues. Matthew's church once strongly Jewish had to preserve the Jewish laws and customs (and hence Matthew's Gospel in Semitic style) but had to open up for the Gentiles. As we have noted the messianic Torah proclaimed by Jesus is not against the Law of Moses but simply fulfils it. However, parting with "their synagogues" Matthew's church took a new phase. "The many problems involved in this transition can be boiled down to one central crisis: a once strongly Jewish-Christian church is becoming increasingly gentile in composition. This shift in the Church's make-up demands a reinterpretation of many of the venerable Jewish-Christian traditions which had been handed down in Matthew's Church"³⁰. Theologians like Meier, Ellis and Bornkamm consider Matthew to be speaking about himself in 13:52 when he writes: "Every scribe who becomes a disciple of the Kingdom of heaven is like a house holder who brings out from his store room things both new and old". Considering him as a scribe who became a disciple, Matthew had a capacity to give a smooth transition from Judaism to Christianity. This view is held by Kingsbury when he writes: "That his community includes Gentiles is sure. What does this make the gospel? A witness to a far smoother transition from Judaism to

²⁹ K. STENDAHL, *The School of St Matthew*, xi.

³⁰ J. P. MEIER, *The Vision of Matthew*, 28.

Christianity than we usually suppose. Luke is irenic by effort, as his Acts show. Matthew is comprehensive by circumstance, and that makes it a rich and wise book”³¹.

So the Phrase “their synagogues” as opposed to our synagogues (James 2:2) gives us a clue of where the gospel of Matthew stands in relation to Judaism, the Gentile world and situation of the Church in the first century that triggered the writing of Matthew’s Gospel. This gives us a glimpse of a gospel that is meant to strengthen those committed to faith in Christianity (catechetical aspect) and an apologetic gospel against those who opposed the evolving Christianity.

1. 4. The context of the text

1. 4.1. Remote context

We have a rather broad remote context for the text we intend to take for exegesis. It covers the whole four Chapters (Ch. 1–4) of the beginning of Matthew’s gospel. As it has already been mentioned many have rightly tried to deduce the identity of the Matthew who wrote the gospel. Some think he was a Jew, a converted Rabbi, a highly educated Jewish Christian and some even doubt his Jewish identity due to lack of familiarity with Jewish matters like the way he confuses the identity of the Pharisees and Sadducees. In any case the gospel he has written is extremely Jewish in style and content. “His gospel shows his great respect for Moses, his passionate interest in the interpretation and fulfillment of the Law and the prophets, and his extensive knowledge

³¹K. STENDAHL, *The School of St Matthew*, Xiii-xiv.

of the Old Testament”³². Generally speaking in the first four chapters he tries to establish the identity of Jesus.

His rabbinic style of writing that is very meticulous and makes the gospel architectonic grandeur as one single piece of work has also been cited by Viviano as he speaks of Matthew’s theology. He says: “This gospel has two focuses, Jesus as the Christ and the near approach of the Kingdom of God which he proclaims. These focuses should not be separated, whereas the entire gospel could be read with either focus in view”³³. Viviano continues to say “these two focuses are closest together at the beginning of the Gospel, where Jesus is set forth as royal son of God and Immanuel, God with us, and at the end, where Jesus is given all (divine) authority as Son of Man over the Kingdom of God, in heaven and on earth”³⁴. What I would like to focus at as our remote context is the effort that Matthew makes in these four chapters to present Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. This will establish Jesus’ authority of doing what he does in his public ministry.

Scholars have pointed out Matthew’s gospel to be an ‘expansion’ of Mark’s gospel. In composition criticism, the tendency nowadays is to emphasize more on vertical approach than in horizontal approach³⁵. In this approach we just don’t consider the borrowing of the material from Mark, Q (quelle), and the material peculiar to Matthew, M, but focus more on how Matthew uses them and redacts them creatively to

³² P. F. ELLIS, *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 3.

³³ B. T. VIVIANO, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, NJBC, 631.

³⁴ B. T. VIVIANO, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, NJBC, 631.

³⁵ P. F. ELLIS, *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 9.

let Jesus speak to the church of his time and place. In so doing Matthew serves to show continuity and discontinuity between Judaism and Christianity.

One of the dominant issues for scholarship in the gospel of Matthew is the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. “Mt 1 is, as K. Stendahl ... has rightly argued, largely designed to announce who Jesus is. The title (1:1) and the genealogy (1:2–17) proclaim Jesus to be the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Son of Abraham- in sum, the *telos* of Israel’s history”³⁶. To show that Jesus is truly the Messiah that was promised to Israel Matthew cites out events in the infancy narratives (and in the ministry of Jesus) that fulfill what the prophets in the Old testament prophesied; and to prove this Matthew always says “this happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the Prophets” before or after he gives the citations. In many citations he has used Isaiah by employing ἵνα and the purpose clause. Because of Matthew’s use of this clause the Old Testament citations present in Matthew’s gospel have been popularly known as fulfillment citations.

There are about ten to twelve fulfillment citations in Matthew’s gospel and almost half of them occur in the infancy narratives: 1:23; 2:6; 6, 15, 18, 23, 4:15–16. As my professor of the Gospel of Matthew, A. Mutinda, says, Matthew uses them so much to the extent that some of those citations which Matthew says the “prophets spoke” cannot be found in the recorded prophetic literature. Matthew uses the fulfillment citations to back up what he wants to establish both for his church and for his adversaries that Jesus is truly the messiah. Perhaps we can sum up this discussion by

³⁶ DAVIES & ALLISON, *Matthew Vol. 1, I-VII*, ICC, 219.

what J. H. Neyrey say in his *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew*: “Matthew claims for Jesus the extraordinary worth both of being born from the most illustrious patriarchs and kings and of being acclaimed from his very conception as ‘God-loved’. All of the phenomena which accompanied Jesus’ birth herald him as a noble person, whether they are dreams, stars, or prophecies. In light of the rhetoric of praise, then Matthew claims for Jesus the highest of statuses and most honorable roles.”³⁷

Before Matthew can ‘invest’ Jesus with the authority to carry out his public ministry he has to invest him with the authority and the title of messiah, the Son of God. He is not the Son of God only because he is born from the most illustrious patriarchs and kings but also because of his virginal birth (1: 18–25) and also because the Holy Spirit testifies to this when he was baptized by John in the river Jordan (3: 17-18). What can we say about the temptations that follow after his baptism? “In sum, following God’s baptismal declaration Jesus Son of God proves, in conflict with Satan, that he is perfect in obedience to God and superior in strength to Satan”³⁸. It is in this context that having established the fact that Jesus is the Son of God and has authority to teach, to heal and to preach Matthew can now present his initial proclamation.

1. 4.2. Immediate context

The immediate context of the pericope begins with 4:12 and ends with 5:2. It begins after Matthew has presented Jesus as the Son of God and the Messiah and this as we have seen culminates with the fact that he has more power even to resist the

³⁷ J. H. NEYREY, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew*, 101.

³⁸ J. D. KINGSBURY, *Matthew as Story*, 54.

temptations of the devil, in the desert. As the “new Israel” Jesus overcomes what the “old Israel” failed to overcome in the desert. Thus in 4:12 we are given the “field” of his public ministry – the people who walked in darkness. Douglas Hare talks of three paragraphs of the Messiah beginning his ministry (4: 12-25): “The first emphasizes that the Messiah’s ministry will fulfill scriptures by bringing light to those in darkness”³⁹. After the initial proclamation (1: 17), in the second paragraph Jesus calls the four disciples who form the audience of his Sermon on the Mount. And it is in the last paragraph where Mathew gives the summary of Jesus’ ministry (4:23), which is our center of Interest. At the end of this immediate context the implied reader has the disciples, the crowds (given in 4:25) and the Jesus who has all authority to sit down and teach in 5: 2, as he begins to deliver his Sermon on the Mount in 5: 3.

1. 5. Form and Structure

1. 5.1 Form

The pericope is a narrative and 4:23 falls in what is known as the ending pericope. We have noted in the introduction that the simplest way to view Matthew’s gospel formally is to see it as composed of alternating narratives and discourses. As a gospel written in Semitic style Scholars normally see chiasmic structures in many parts of the Gospel. I consider giving Ellis’ chiasmic form of the Gospel here to be the best way we can see the parallels of the narratives and discourses, and hence the relationship between the narratives and the discourses.

³⁹ D.R.A. HARE, *Interpretation: Matthew*, 27.

The chiastic form of structure

Sermon ch 13 (f)	
Narrative ch 11–12 (e)	(c') ch 14–17
Sermon ch 10(d)	(d') ch 18
Narrative ch 8–9(c)	(c') ch 19–22
sermon ch 5–7 (b)	(b') ch 23–25
Narrative ch 1–4 (a)	(a') ch 26–28 ⁴⁰

Time and space will not allow us to analyze in detail the whole chiastic structure as given by Ellis. However from the chart above we can agree with W. Dicharry that “if there is a chiastic arrangement among the discourses, there is also one among the narrative portions which intersperse them, except for one notable instance”⁴¹. The narratives prepare us for the discourses. Ellis tells us that “Matthew constructs the narrative sections of his gospel so that they lead up to the material treated in the discourses either by stressing the same themes and keywords or by preparing and conditioning the minds of the readers to accept what Jesus will say in the ensuing discourses”⁴².

In summary, it has been seen that Ch 1–4 form the narrative that prepares for the discourse in Ch 5–7. Our text falls towards the end of this narrative. Thus, the text that we intend to take for exegesis is narrative in form.

⁴⁰ P. F. ELLIS. *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 12.

⁴¹ W. DICHARRY. *Human Authors of the New Testament Voll. Mark, Matthew and Luke*, 95.

⁴² P. F. ELLIS, *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 14–15.

1. 5.2 Structure

Structurally the text we have selected for exegesis can be divided into three parts. The first part is Jesus' return to Galilee as he prepares to start his public ministry and his initial proclamation of the kingdom (v.17). The second part is the calling of his first disciples and the third part is the summary that Matthew creates of Jesus' activities in his public ministry.

Different interpreters have interpreted Jesus starting his ministry in Galilee and not in Jerusalem differently. Meier tells us: "In the movement of his residence to Capernaum (Matthew 4:12–17) Jesus shows himself to be the eschatological, messianic light prophesied by Isaiah, now rising on a religiously deprived and benighted Galilee of the Gentiles. In 4:17, Jesus begins his public proclamation and the authoritative, indeed all powerful nature of the word he speaks will be abundantly illustrated in the following chapters"⁴³.

The power of the authoritative word he speaks can be shown in the call of his disciples. "Without any psychological preparations (contrast to John 1) they are called and claimed by the word of Jesus, which puts an end to the past they knew and opens up a future they cannot comprehend. All they can do is obey Jesus' word and follow"⁴⁴. Such is the authority that belongs to Jesus, which Matthew has already portrayed, and we have no doubt about it because he is the Son of God, the Messiah.

The last part of this pericope is of particular interest because our key verse, 4:23 lies in it. In dealing with the alternating narrative and discourse sections in Matthew's

⁴³ J. P. MEIER, *The Vision of Matthew*, 62.

⁴⁴ J. P. MEIER., *The Vision of Matthew*, 62.

gospel we also realize the function of the ending pericope as we have already hinted. “When one studies Matthew’s narratives, one becomes aware not only that each narrative prepares the way for the subsequent discourse but also that each narrative concludes with a pericope, either a narrated event or a saying of Jesus, which provides a well planned transition to the discourse, but also that each narrative concludes with a pericope. Either a narrated event or a saying of Jesus, which provides a well planned transition to the discourse that follows”⁴⁵. Frankemolle has also recognized the function of ending pericope when he compared the structure of Matthew’s gospel with that of the book of Deuteronomy. He says that “like Matthew’s gospel Deuteronomy is a narrative interspersed with speeches. In fact, the final formula is meant to bind together speech and narrative sections”⁴⁶.

It can be seen that 4:23–25 as the ending pericope for Ch 1–4 prepares the implied reader for the Sermon on the Mount (Ch 5–7) and in general gives us the summary of Jesus’ public ministry presented in Ch 5–9. Verse 9:35 which is similar in wording to 4:23 closes Jesus’ public ministry before Matthew presents the mission of Jesus’ pre-Easter disciples, which is elaborated in chapter ten.

1. 6. Conclusion

We have come to the end of chapter one. In this chapter we have situated the text for our exegesis in relation to the whole gospel. We should bear in mind that Matthew’s gospel is so interlinked to the extent that one section has to be read in the context of the whole gospel. It is my hope that this chapter has shed light on how Jesus’

⁴⁵ P. F. ELLIS, *Matthew: his Mind and his Message*, 17-18.

⁴⁶ D. SENIOR, *What are They Saying about Matthew?*, 27.

public ministry is related to the narratives of chapter 1–4 and to the rest of the gospel. To understand the exegesis we intend to do in chapter two we necessarily have to grasp this relationship.

Chapter II

EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF MATTHEW 4:12–25

2.1 Introduction.

In chapter one I have introduced the gospel of Matthew in an overview and also presented the introductory questions necessary for our exegesis. This chapter gives an exegetical analysis of Matthew 4:12-25. In the process I will be concise, taking into account that this paper is short and its scope cannot allow us to go into a detailed exegetical analysis of the pericope.

As it has been mentioned in chapter one, our pericope (Matthew 4: 12-25) can be divided into three sections which are interconnected but whose division can help to make its study and analysis simpler. Thus this exegetical analysis will be divided into:-

- (i) The beginning of Jesus ministry
- (ii) The call of the first disciples and
- (iii) The summary of Jesus public ministry.

Chapter one has already introduced how Matthew alludes heavily to Old Testament citations to establish the identity and authority of Jesus. Thus, the first

section will delve into the citation from Isaiah to which Matthew alludes as he introduces Jesus, the messiah of word and messiah of deed, in the consequent chapters.

Though I will try to balance the emphasis given to all the three sections the last section which is the ending pericope of the narrative section of Ch 4 will be given special attention, taking into account that our centre of interest, Matthew 4:23, lies in this section.

2.2 Exegesis of Matthew 4:12–25

2.2.1 The beginning of Jesus' Public Ministry in Galilee

We have cited in chapter one that Matthew is very meticulous and has interconnected the different parts and sections of his gospel. This has made it difficult for scholars to give distinct delimitations of many pericopes of his gospel. Consequently a clear delimitation of this pericope is not easy. Ulrich Luz says: “verse 17 is considered by many as a new beginning of the first main part of the gospel. But ἀπὸ τότε is intended precisely to establish the connection with vv 12–16”⁴⁷. Thus having given the delimitation of this section I move on to the exegesis of its individual verses.

4:12 Now when he heard John had been arrested he withdrew into Galilee.

John had been arrested: The verb παρεδόθη which is an aorist passive and means *was arrested*, or *handed over*, is of particular importance here. Matthew will use the same verb to describe the arrest of Jesus (Matt 26: 15, 16, 21, 23–25, 45–46, 48 to mention but a few). This is to show that Jesus will suffer the same fate as John the Baptist. “Jesus’ ministry to which John bears witness (3:11–12) will so threaten the

⁴⁷ U. LUZ, *Matthew 1-7*, 192.

status quo that the empire will subsequently arrest Jesus”⁴⁸. We are not told about John’s execution until in Matt 14:1–12. What we get from this context is that when John was arrested it was time for Jesus to start his public ministry. All the synoptic gospels show that Jesus started his public ministry after John was arrested.

“He withdrew into Galilee”: That Jesus began his ministry in Galilee is not a contentious issue but why he *withdrew* into Galilee has been interpreted differently and remains an open discussion. Viviano says that “Jesus’ move to Galilee after JBar has been ‘handed over’ to prison and execution has been understood both as courageous taking up of his mission and as a move to a greater safety”⁴⁹. Matthew does not use the verb ἦλθεν like Mark to describe Jesus’ move from Nazareth to Galilee; contrarily he uses ἀνεχώρησεν, the verb which indicates withdrawing or taking refuge.

4.13 *And leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zabulun and Naphtali.*

The arrest of John the Baptist might have sent danger signals to Jesus. But the same Herode who arrested John is the one who ruled Galilee (whose Capernaum is a part) and Capernaum belonged to the same territory as Nazareth. However, Capernaum being on the lake side (North West bank) of the sea of Galilee was a strategic place to escape to Decapolis or other towns beyond the lake in case of any reason to escape.

4.14 *That what was spoken by prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled.*

This verse introduces vv.15–16, where Matthew shows that the words spoken by Isaiah the prophet now find fulfillment in Jesus. If we can read this verse in the light of

⁴⁸ W. CARTER, *Matthew and the Margins: A social and religious reading*, 113.

⁴⁹ B.T. VIVIANO, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, NJBC, 638.

John's Gospel we find that Matthew uses it as a polemic to those who were against the work of messiah in Galilee. In other words, "the quotation which follows may be in part an attempt to make an asset out of a liability... The stumbling block which Jesus' associations with Galilee could have caused is known from John's gospel: 'No prophet is to rise from Galilee'"⁵⁰. Matthew is very selective in the citation in vv15-16. He only concentrated on the geographical places to show that the scriptures have been fulfilled in Jesus. "It is rather a loose adaptation of the Septuagint text designed to show that the beginning of Jesus' public ministry in Galilee was in accordance with the scriptures"⁵¹.

4:15 – 16 The land of Zabulun and the land of Naphtali toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles. The people who sat in the darkness have seen the great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.

As it has been pointed out above Matthew's interest is only on the geographical names of the Zabulun and Naphtali. He takes the quotation out of its context in the Old Testament and applies it to the New Testament. Isaiah in 8:23--9:1 had prophesied liberation for the people of Zebulun and Naphtali who were under Assyrian domination. This liberation was to be brought by someone from the stalk of David. Matthew takes this citation out of its original context and applies it to a different context, the fulfillment of the prophecy in Jesus the Messiah. "In Matthew the prophecy is taken up and applied to the ministry of the messiah, whom the evangelist undoubtedly took to be

⁵⁰ DAVIES & ALLISON, *Matthew Vol. I, I-VII*, ICC, 379.

⁵¹ D.J. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Matthew*, SacPag, 71. The citation is taken from Isa 8:23-9:1 and studies show that Matthew did not quote it verbatim, neither from LXX nor from MT.

the Son of Isa 9:6–7. Hence there is a shift from literal destruction and political plight to moral and spiritual darkness”⁵². As R.E Brown tells us that “besides using the formula citations to fit the general theology of the unity of God’s plan, the Matthean evangelist selected them to serve his particular theological and pastoral interest”⁵³. In this particular citation Matthew redacts the citation so that Zebulun and Naphtali are brought to suit the fact that Jesus began his public ministry in Galilee and to show that this prophesy has indeed been fulfilled in Jesus.

Galilee of the Gentiles (Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν): This is another catchy phrase in V15. It has been a matter of dispute among interpreters. Does Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν mean that Jesus began his ministry among the people living with the Gentiles or rather Galilee was solely occupied by Gentiles? Yet we know in the same Gospel Matthew emphasizes that Jesus was sent only to redeem Israel and even when he sends his disciples he commands them to go only to the lost sons of Israel and not to go to the towns of Gentiles or of the Samaritans (10:5). The door for salvation to the Gentiles is opened to them only when the Jews rejected it (21:43) and only the risen Christ gives the disciples the command to make disciples among the Gentiles (28:16–20), not the earthly Jesus. Though the original citation applied to occupation of these areas by Assyria (732 BC) Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν could still be applicable in the New Testament times, taking into consideration that Rome was now the imperial power that occupied these areas. So the citation fits in our context here that even now there were Jews here

⁵² DAVIES & ALLISON, *Matthew Vol. I, I-VII*, ICC, 380.

⁵³ R.E BROWN, *An introduction to the New Testament*, 208.

who were under the oppression of the Gentiles just as they had been under the Assyrians.

When we talk of ὁ λαὸς ὁ καθήμενος ἐν σκότει (the people who dwell in the darkness) as referring to the Jews who dwelt in these areas and were under the Roman control and for whom the messiah came, this does not rule out the possibility of the text meaning salvation for the Gentiles. As Matthew wrote this pericope he must have had the salvation for the Gentiles in mind. “Matthew thus wants to point out to a perspective which applies to the entire ministry of Jesus in Israelite Galilee. The formula quotation in 2:23 and 12:18-21 also indicates this hidden perspective. It is important for Matthew that salvation for the Gentiles is a Biblical perspective”⁵⁴. We can recall here that the situation in Matthew’s time was such that the Christians had parted with the Jewish synagogues and the Gentiles had now been admitted to the community of the Christians. This fact rules out the doubt that the pericope also applied to the salvation for the Gentiles.

People who dwell in the darkness (ὁ λαὸς ὁ καθήμενος ἐν σκότει): mentioned in v.16 originally applied to physical oppression by the Assyrians. Yet as it has been explained it may mean moral and spiritual darkness. In any case Jesus comes as the messiah to liberate people from physical oppression “darkness” and from moral and spiritual “darkness”. This is the great light that the people have seen (φῶς εἶδεν μέγα). And Christ is the light that has dawned (φῶς ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς) on the people who sat in the region and shadow of death. To sit in darkness is to be without hope and

⁵⁴ U.LU'Z, *Matthew 1-7*. 175.

consequently a person without hope is as good as a dead person. Jesus as the Messiah comes to give hope to these people. Definitely for those in darkness the gospel is good news. The gospel is a ray of hope to counteract their situation of hopelessness. “The light is Jesus’ presence which manifests God’s empire. His public ministry is to commence. As the light of the world (5:14), the community of the disciples will continue his salvific mission”⁵⁵. It is important to note how Matthew presents Jesus as the light. He uses φῶς ἀνέτειλεν while the Septuagint uses φῶς λάμψει. This is to show that that light is Jesus the one present now. “The change of the Septuagint’s *lampsei* (‘will shine’) to “*anateilen*” probably stresses the beginning (=dawn) made by Jesus in his public ministry”⁵⁶. So the “twisting” of this verb indicates that what was portrayed as “hope”, something that will take place in the future, is now taking place in the person of Jesus.

4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach saying “repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

From that time (ἄπο τότε): As it has been shown, the phrase serves to connect the events enumerated previously and those that follow. What Jesus does in the initial proclamation is to announce the light that has dawned to the people who sat in darkness. Referring to ἄπο τότε Luz says: “With this the evangelist picks up everything that was connected with Jesus’ residing in Capernaum - Jesus begins his proclamation of the kingdom of heaven”⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ W. CARTER, *Matthew and the Margins: A social and religions reading*, 116.

⁵⁶ D.J. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Matthew*, SacPag, 71.

⁵⁷ U. LUZ, *Matthew 1-7*, 195.

Joachim Jeremias emphasizes that the central message of this initial proclamation is not repentance but rather the kingdom of God that has drawn near. He says: “Until recently, Matt 4.17 (‘από τότε ἦρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς κηρῦσσειν καὶ λέγειν, μετανοεῖτε· ἤγγικεν γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν) has continually misled scholars into thinking that Jesus made his appearance with a call to repentance”⁵⁸. Conversely Luz sees the significance of placing the imperative μετανοεῖτε before ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. For Luz, people have to undergo μετάνοια before they listen to the messianic Torah soon to come in the Sermon on the Mount. Luz argues: “If by that is meant the conversion which precedes the Christian life and baptism then this imperative stands as the entry gate before the soon-to-come teaching concerning the higher righteousness which is to be realized in the life of the Christian”⁵⁹. But Luz finally coming very close to Jeremias emphasizes that μετανοεῖτε coming first does not mean the ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν occupies the second place in the ministry of Jesus. Thus Luz ultimately says: “The nearness of the kingdom of heaven ...is for Matthew not a second (‘indicative’) content of the proclamation which would follow after the call to repentance, but its foundational, intensifying, and sharpening underpinning”⁶⁰. Another thing we have to note in 4:17 is how Matthew differs from Mark in talking about Jesus’ relationship to ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν he proclaims. C.H. Dodd in *The Parables of the Kingdom* tries to emphasize (especially in Ch 2) that

⁵⁸ J. JEREMIAS, *New Testament Theology*, 42.

⁵⁹ U. LUZ, *Matthew 1-7*, 197-198.

⁶⁰ U. LUZ, *Matthew 1-7*, 198.

the kingdom has been fulfilled in Jesus' personage⁶¹. Against Dodd's view many scholars hold that while in Mark's gospel the kingdom is portrayed as fulfilled in Jesus Christ, in Matthew's gospel the kingdom is portrayed as inaugurated in the person of Jesus Christ but is yet to be fulfilled. "The central image of Matthew's story is that in Jesus Messiah, his son, God has drawn near to abide with his people and thus inaugurated the end time age of salvation"⁶².

2.2.2 The Call of the First Disciples (Matt 4:18-22)

Matthew, following the style of Mark 1:14–20, places the call of the first disciples soon after the initial proclamation in v.17. Both gospels manifest that the message of the kingdom that Jesus proclaims is not something abstract. The "new community" established by Jesus will show how concretely this "good news" can become. The disciples mentioned here and the crowds that are mentioned later in v. 25 will form the setting where Jesus can *teach* and *heal*, the practical realities of the βασιλεία. However, since Mathew presents Jesus as the Messiah of the word (Ch 5--7) and later on as the Messiah of the deed (Ch 8-9) this demands that Matthew break up with Mark in presenting the events at Capernaum of Mk 1.21ff. He has postponed the miracles of Mk 1: 21 till Ch 8-9. In a sentence, what we can say in introducing the "call narrative" is that before Matthew says in 5:1 "the disciples came to him" it is necessary that he places their call here. After their experience with Jesus he will then send them on a mission in chapter ten.

⁶¹ C.H. DODD, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, 29-43.

⁶² J.D. KINGSBURY, *Jesus Christ in Matthew, Mark and Luke*, 64.

4:18 As he walked by the sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

The sea of Galilee: Whereas Matthew uses the name, sea of Galilee, τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας, Luke uses the Lake of Genesaret, τὴν λίμνην Γεννησαρέτ. Luke is more accurate for it is a fresh water lake. Many scholars find Matthew used θάλασσα as a symbolism. The sea is always a symbol of chaos, threat, danger and Jesus will show that he controls all these when he walks on the sea and rebukes the storm in 8:26. This miracle of calming the storm is a symbolism of Jesus taking care of his church, which is in trouble.

He saw two brothers: Matthew wants to stress the relationship between the two who were called. As a matter of fact, Andrew is not a prominent figure in this gospel. We can agree with Saldarini when he talks about the author Matthew that “he affirms the traditional ties and duties that bind families together, that is, the command to honor father and mother (15:4–5; 19:19). But Matthew relativizes these family relationships in favor of a new commitment to Jesus”⁶³. What Matthew wants to point out here is the blood relationship, but in other instances he will show that Christ’s call and the βασιλεία may demand separation from the family.

Simon who is called Peter: By using τὸν λεγόμενον which is typical of Matthew, he gives precedence to Peter, anticipating the title which is given to Simon in 16:18 when Jesus tells him: “You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church”.

⁶³ A. J. SALDARINI, *Matthew’s Christian-Jewish Community*, 91.

For they were fishermen (ἦσαν γὰρ ἀλιεῖς): Here we are introduced to the fact that the disciples who were called by Jesus had their occupation already. They belonged to a fishing industry. Leaving their job and following Jesus means that the only motive of following Jesus was to obey Jesus' call.

4:19 *And he said to them, 'follow me and I will make you fishers of men'.*

The word ἀκολουθέω is very important in Matthew to signify discipleship and it appears for the first time here. Following Jesus' Μετανοεῖτε in v.17 we can see here that there is a big μετάνοια that takes place in these disciples. This change of direction is manifested in the change of occupation following the promise of Jesus, καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων. From fishermen they were to become fishers of men. This text has often been interpreted as signifying missionary activity.

It is Jesus who decides whom to call unlike the rabbinic tradition where the student is the one who searched for a master. There is a turning point in the discipleship and mission, which sets a threshold for discipleship in the New Testament that is different from that in the Old Testament. We can also deduce here that ἀκολουθέω implies the disciples will always remain as "followers" of Jesus. Jesus will always remain their master. There is no single time where these disciples will be fully grown to equal their master.

4:20 *Immediately they left their nets and followed him.*

The Anchor Bible claims "the call of the first disciples argues not a miraculous response to a sudden invitation but an invitation to those whom Jesus had already met

on previous occasions”⁶⁴. This is not indicated in the pericope. We therefore can stick to the prompt obedience of the first disciples. In chapter one, we introduced the authoritative word of Jesus. “Their instant (**immediately**) and sacrificial (**their nets**) response makes sense because the audience knows from 1:1– 4:16 that Jesus’ words express his God given commission. The verb **follow** denotes his authoritative call and their commitment of entrusting themselves to him at considerable social and economic cost”⁶⁵.

4:21-22 And going on from there he saw two other brothers James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father mending their nets and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

The nature and structure of the call of these two disciples is the same as the one in vv. 18-19. Nevertheless, there are additional remarks that can be deduced from here. It is understood commonplace that whatever is repeated in the bible is of particular emphasis. It can be drawn from here that Matthew’s repetition of their father Zebedee: τὸν τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου, μετὰ Ζεβεδαίου τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν and in v.21 τὸν πατέρα αὐτῶν is to emphasize that the disciples are getting separated from their father and their family. As it has been mentioned above in such instances Matthew shows following Jesus is of more importance than clinging to family ties. We can highlight here again that the situation in Matthew’s church was that Christians, having separated from the Jewish synagogues, had to suffer the painful separation from their families. Matthew wants to

⁶⁴ W. F. ALBRIGHT & C. S. MANN, *The Anchor Bible: Matthew*, 39.

⁶⁵ W. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A social and religious reading*, 12.

bring it out here. The mention of τὰ δίκτυα αὐτῶν and τὸ πλοῖον focuses on the material possession that they had to give up in their following Christ.

The little word εὐθέως (immediately) is of particular importance here. Jesus' authoritative word is to be obeyed. All that the disciples have to do is to follow Jesus when they are called. "The disciple is also expected to here the call of Christ (4:18–22;9:9) and to "follow" him (8:18–22), leaving behind his or her former mode of existence (10:37–39). The disciples of course must have "faith" in Christ putting complete trust in him, especially in the midst of trials and crisis".⁶⁶

We have already pointed out how meticulously Matthew has connected the three sections that form our exegetical text. Luz has pointed out how his middle section is connected to the other two. He found out that "with Γαλιλαίας (v. 18) our text makes a connection with the preceding section, with ἀκολουθῆω (vv. 20,22) it points ahead to the following one. The quotation serves as a link to the last section of the pericope we are analyzing.

2.2.3 The summary of Jesus public ministry.

As an ending pericope this section serves as an end for the narrative block (Ch 1–4) and serves to introduce the discourse that follows (Ch 5–7). Evidently the characteristic of ending pericopes in Matthew is crucial. Besides what has already been seen they "also lengthen narrative time, expand the geographical setting, create a picture

⁶⁶ D. SENIOR, *What are they saying about Matthew?*, 92

of movement (Jesus goes from here to there), highlight central themes, and tell us that the material in Matthew represents only a section".⁶⁷

4:23 And he went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

And he went about all Galilee: Matthew presents Jesus as an "itinerant preacher" in Galilee till he goes out of Galilee (in 19:1). The verb περιάγω is a proper word to express this phenomenon. Being imperfect in form and thus of unspecified duration the action is therefore continuous and fits in well in explaining the ministry of Jesus. Right from the start of Jesus' ministry he proves to be unique. He differs from the Rabbis and the previous prophets. "This part of the tradition seems well established. In contrast to John the Baptist, who evidently spoke only to those who went to him in the desert, Jesus sought out listeners"⁶⁸.

Teaching in their synagogues (διδάσκων ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν): By using ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν Matthew starts distancing Jesus from the Jewish synagogues. The synagogue is a place of learning and where the word of God is listened to and meditated upon. However, it is here where the word of Jesus will be rejected. Christians will eventually face opposition and be rejected from the Jewish synagogues following *birkhat ha minim* and eventually be expelled from their synagogues.

And preaching the gospel of the kingdom: The concern of Jesus was the message of the kingdom. This concern incorporates the demands of the kingdom. As Kingsbury

⁶⁷ DAVIES & ALLISON, *Matthew Vol. I, I-VII*, ICC, 412.

⁶⁸ DAVIES & ALLISON, *Matthew Vol. I, I-VII*, ICC, 413.

says: “Now the expression “the (this) gospel of the kingdom” in Matthean thought is thoroughly Christological in coloration. It may not seem so at first glance, because it reads ‘the gospel of the kingdom’. Still in 4:23 and 9:35 it refers to the message that specifically Jesus messiah, the Son of God proclaims”⁶⁹. It is important to underline Jesus’ central message in his proclamation, the Kingdom. “Jesus’ speech (which can not be sundered from his deeds: the latter incarnate the former) constitute the gospel. That is the Messiah’s revelatory words and commands and their complete realization in his deeds and person announce and tell about God’s activity (the kingdom) and are good news”.⁷⁰

Healing every disease and every infirmity among the people: (καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ἐν τῷ λαῷ: The mention of πᾶσαν connotes Matthew’s strive for perfection and completeness. Hill tells us: “The precision of every disease...every infirmity ought not to be generalized: Jesus did not heal everyone (according to the gospels) as if he wished to display the wonder of his power to the greatest possible extent; rather he performed certain cures indicative of the kingdom’s presence and of his personal authority”⁷¹.

Verse 4:23 and 9:35 have more or less the same message and structure. They form a kind of *inclusio*. The two verses act like membranes that sandwich the double office of Jesus, that of teaching and healing.

⁶⁹ J.D. KINGSBURY, *Matthew*, 28.

⁷⁰ DAVIES & ALLISON, *Matthew Vol. I, I-VII*, ICC, 414.

⁷¹ D. HILL, *The New Century Bible Commentary: The Gospel of Matthew*, 107.

4:24 *So his fame spread throughout all Syria and they brought to him all the sick those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics and paralytics and he healed them.*

So his fame spread throughout all Syria: Many commentators have said that Syria was probably the home of Matthew's gospel and that is why it is given here. Another thing that gives Syria prominence among scholars is that though Syria had a number of Jews majority were Gentiles and Matthew might have wanted to show that the gospel message is finding its home among the Gentile.

All the sick: This need not be taken literally that Jesus healed all the sicknesses. As a matter of fact only three illnesses are mentioned here: demoniacs, epilepsy and paralysis. It will be recalled here that one of the signs of the arrival of messiah was that he would heal the land and the people of all calamities, disasters and diseases. Matthew therefore has Jesus perform those healings and prepares the reader for the messiah of word (5-7) and messiah of deed (8-9). Certainly in 8:16-17 and 1:2-6 Matthew will tell us that these deeds of Jesus fulfill the messianic expectations.

4:25 *And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.*

And great crowds followed him (καὶ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ ὄχλοι πολλοί): V.18 has already given the significance of the word "follow" (ἀκολουθεῖω). The following of the crowds is not the same as that of the disciples. "For instance, while the crowds "followed" (ἠκολούθησαν) Jesus, the absence of a call from Jesus (Cf 4:18-22) suggests that the verb "followed" indicates physical movement, not the response of the new

disciples to Jesus' call as in 4:18-22"⁷². Some scholars present the crowds in Matthew's gospel positively, some present them negatively and some even present them as neutral to the message of Jesus. In any case the crowds form the part of the 'field' of his ministry. The crowds listen to his teaching and his preaching and they also benefit from his miracles. Their significance remains an open discussion but a balanced view of the crowds is required.

The places from where the crowds come are also significant. The implied reader "knows that the crowds' places of origin named in 4:25 are associated with negative as well as positive responses to God's saving actions: in Jerusalem plans are made to kill Jesus (2:1-13); death is wrought in the Bethlehem of Judea 2:1, 16..."⁷³. What can also be pointed out here is that the crowds come from both Jewish and Gentile worlds. Perhaps Matthew wants to point out that the Messianic Torah he is about to present in Ch 5 is already finding its home both in the Jews and Gentile worlds. The crowds he mentions in 4:25 together with the disciples Jesus has already called in 4:18-25 will eventually form the audience of the Sermon on the Mount which Matthew constructs in chapter five.

2.3. Conclusion

In the exegetical analysis we have seen how Jesus has the authority to teach and preach about the kingdom. The healings too show that Jesus is the Messiah that God sent to continue his plan of salvation. Eventually the risen Jesus will give mandate to his disciples, and the church, to go and make disciples of all nations by baptizing and

⁷² W. CARTER, *The Crowds in Matthew's Gospel*, CBQ 55, (Jan 1993), 55.

⁷³ W. CARTER, *The Crowds in Matthew's Gospel*, CBQ 55, (Jan 1993), 55.

teaching them. The centrality of the earthly Jesus to our faith and lives is that he shows us practically that it is possible to do all that he has taught and preached. This is how he challenges us to carry out our mission as Christians. His life proved that what he taught was not mere theories.

Chapter III

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION THROUGHOUT HISTORY

3.1 Introduction

In talking about theodynamics, God working throughout history, we take into account that there is only one mission. This comes out vividly in the gospel of Matthew. We can summarize the whole mission in one sentence: The mission of the father is the mission of the Son and it is same the inission of the disciples. This is rightly conceived by N. Fogliacco when he says: "Yes the Father sends the son, but at the end of his mission the son returns to the Father. Before leaving he sends the church (Mat 28: 18–20), and from that moment on the mission is the work of the church".⁷⁴

Theology rightly understood is not the history of a chain of facts that have taken place from the beginning of the history of man to the present. I would say theology is the history of the people's reflection on what God has done in history and in their lives. Faith makes us see that whatever happened in our lives did not happen by chance but God was the force that moved them and made them happen. This is rightly proved by

⁷⁴ N. Fogliacco, *The God of all Consolation: A Theology of Salvation and Mission as Divine Comfort*, 108.

Matthew when he uses the formula quotations. By the formula quotations, in a moment, he takes us back into history and brings us to the present again.

In this chapter I will first review in a nutshell God's work in history in his plan of salvation before the coming of Christ. The second letter of St. Peter says: "No prophecy ever came from Man's initiatives. When men spoke for God it was the Holy Spirit that moved them" (2 Pet 1:21). So connected to this, I will shortly deal with the work of the Prophets. Matthew writes to a society that was Jewish but was now becoming increasingly Gentile. He assumes the implied reader is familiar with the Jewish customs and laws and thus familiar with the history of salvation. To make it clearer in presenting the Father's plan of salvation I have 'visited' the Old Testament. I will then move on to the mission of Christ and finally to the mission of his disciples and the Church, from the early church to the present.

3.2 The Father's Plan of Salvation: The Source of Theodynamics

3.2.1. The Events of Exodus as a Turning Point in Salvation History

When God appeared to Abraham (Gen 12), he revealed his plan of salvation to humanity. It is reflecting on the dialogue between God and Abraham we come to see that mission, the plan of salvation, belongs to the Father. When he made the covenant with Abraham, the covenant meant God's determination to save humanity and since God does not go back on his word, the subsequent history proves how God's word stands forever. Indeed every created thing has to contribute to God's plan of salvation. Fogliacco tells us the deep meaning of *Missio Dei*, which means God's mission, is precisely this: "There is only one mission, the *Missio Dei* and the *Missio ecclesiae*, though distinct from it are in a sense internal to *Missio Dei*. The church is born of

mission and not vice versa"⁷⁵. The events of Exodus can indeed be referred to as a turning point in God's plan for salvation. That is why we have to view them closely here.

When God enters he makes his presence felt and one cannot ignore his presence. "Then I shall make Pharaoh's heart stubborn and he will set out in pursuit of them. But *I shall win glory for myself* at the expense of Pharaoh and all his army, and Egyptians will learn that I am Yahweh" (Exodus 14:4). People had believed the words of Moses (in Egypt) by hearing. But through the event of crossing the Red Sea, they continue on the faith of Moses. The passage through the Red Sea is at the same time the passage of faith from the faith of hearing to the faith of seeing what has been done to them. Undeniably, it is a passage from the salvation that was preached to the salvation that was experienced⁷⁶. The passage through the Red Sea is therefore foundational to the Promised Land, the land of salvation.

God elected Israel as a nation to show his glory on earth to the nations but there was an obstacle to be overcome. This obstacle was not compatible with his nature. Old habits die hard and this was the problem with the people. This people stayed in Egypt for over 400 years and all that they knew was a "pyramidal society", a society structured like the pyramids of Egypt. In such a society the elite enjoy life. In this pyramidal society God took those at the bottom to establish a new kingdom. The tendency was to establish a society which they knew. To counteract this God took them

⁷⁵ N. FOGLIACCO, *The God of all Consolation: A Theology of Salvation and Mission as Divine Comfort*, 108.

⁷⁶ Cf C. OWCZAREK, *Lectures on the Pentateuch*, 2002.

to Mount Sinai and made a covenant with them. K. Baker tells us “the book of Exodus is the heart and soul of the Old Testament. In fact, ‘testament’ is just another word for covenant that the Lord made with Moses and Israel at Sinai”⁷⁷. Indeed the Exodus is so central in the liberation of Israel that it recurs again and again throughout the Old Testament. In the covenant at Sinai God makes an agreement with them that determines the relationship between him and Israel as a nation. If they are to maintain the agreement then the relationship between him and them will be exactly that which he told Moses on Mt Sinai, that of all the nations the Israelites will be his very own. They will be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex 19:3–6).

God promised to make them his very own. By liberating Israel he was sending them for a special mission. By making them the kingdom of priests, he was making them a society of mediators of the word of God to the nations. As a holy nation, Israel had to abide to his commandments. This was to distinguish them from the nations.

Through the covenant, God wanted to create an egalitarian society where every one would be equal and experience the joy of being a child of God. When they entered the Promised Land, there was to be no one in need. For example, it is written, “when reaping the harvest in your field, if you have overlooked a sheaf in that field, do not go back to it. Leave it for the stranger, the orphan and the widow, so that Yahweh your God may bless you in all your undertakings” (Deut 24:19). Throughout the book of Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy there are casuistic laws which show that the covenant takes care of the most vulnerable and the less privileged ones. The social

⁷⁷ K. BAKER, *Inside the Bible*, 33.

security system of the holy nation was to be exemplary to the nations, of all the laws (casuistic laws) the Ten Commandments were to be highly guarded for they were the words of God himself.

The covenant was sealed in blood (Cf Ex 24: 4–8) and the people agreed: “We will observe all that Yahweh decreed; we will obey” (Ex 24:27). Was the covenant to end with Israel? No! God had a plan for all the nations. The book of Deuteronomy says:

“See as Yahweh my God has commanded me, I teach you the laws and customs that you are to observe in the land you are to enter and make your own. Keep them, observe them and they will demonstrate to the peoples your wisdom and understanding. When they come to know of all these they will exclaim, ‘no other people is as wise and prudent as this great nation’. Indeed what great nation is there that has its gods so near as Yahweh our God is to us whenever we call him? And what great nation is there that has its laws and customs to much this whole law that I put before you today?”(Deut 4:5–8).

This text from Deuteronomy is what is stressed by Pope Paul VI in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that above all the Gospel must be proclaimed by witness. No 21, of *Evangelii Nuntiandi* emphasizes that wordless witness speaks louder than proclamation by the words of mouth. The people who see the upright living of the believers ask themselves many questions: “Why are they like this? Why do they live in this way? What or who is it that inspires them? Why are they in our midst? such a witness is already a silent proclamation of the Good News and a very powerful and effective one”⁷⁸

3.2.2 Prophecy in Israel

The Israelites did not live up to the covenant. As the years passed, the Israelites strayed from the precepts of the lord. God sent them prophets. The prophets were

⁷⁸ PAUL VI, POPE. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 15.

people who saw themselves as speakers on behalf of the Lord and the defenders of the Covenant. The authority of their message was therefore the Covenant. At times, the prophets had to declare the wrath of the God that was to befall Israel due to their unfaithfulness and hence the times they went into exile.

Amos spoke about justice (משפט) as the essential value of the Covenant. Hosea moved to a more absolute value of the covenant, that is love (חסד). In Hosea 6:6 we read: "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings". When we come to Micah we find the combination of the two prophets mentioned above. "The two prophets have the same orientations as Micah (6:8) who combined the thought of both when he said 'what I require is to do justice, and to love mercy (love) and to walk humbly with our God'"⁷⁹. What I want to highlight here is that throughout the prophetic period there is a trend of thought that is connected. Though they worked and preached in different places and periods and whether they were prophets of doom or those who gave people hope they all served in unfolding God's plan of salvation.

In fact scholars find a connection between the works of the prophets. Schmidt writing about prophecy in Israel says: "Perhaps links between the great prophets themselves too are to be explained through mediation by these groups"⁸⁰. Schmidt continues to say that "a chain of tradition runs from Hosea to Jeremiah and perhaps on to Ezekiel, another one from Isaiah to Deutero-Isaiah (40–55), whose message is taken

⁷⁹ E. VANOOSTROM. *The Message of the Prophets*, 32.

⁸⁰ W.H. SCHMIDT, Trans. J. STURDY, *The Faith of the Old Testament*, 227.

up in turn by Trito-Isaiah (56-66)⁸¹. W. Zimmerli also finds a touch of Hosea's work in Deutro-Isaiah when he writes about the new exodus as presented in Deutro-Isaiah. Zimmerli says: "Here Deutro-Isaiah incorporates the message of Ezekiel 20:22 ff., which in turn had its prototype in Hosea's expectations of a new period in the desert followed by a new entrance to Canaan (Hos 2: 16--17)"⁸².

By focusing on the link between the prophets, we want to focus on the fact that the word of God endures forever. God had a plan of revealing himself to the nations and started with Israel. With all their unfaithfulness out of love God had to go on with his plan. I believe even the disasters that faced the Israelites spoke to the nation about Yahweh. This is portrayed by Deutero-Isaiah that when God came to liberate Israel this was an act that spoke by itself about the might of God. A look on Deutero-Isaiah can help us to get the link of this trend of salvation history.

3.2.3 Salvation Extended to the Nations in Deutero-Isaiah

The book is comprised of the chapters 40–55 of the book of Isaiah. It is now believed common place that these chapters were not written by Isaiah son of Amos, the prophet who wrote chapters 1–39 of the book of Isaiah. This unknown prophet must have exercised his ministry during the exile in Babylon and probably during the reign of Nabonides who reigned in Babylon between 555 BC and 539BC.

Second Isaiah is a book of consolations. "'Comfort, console my people' is the 'cry' which determines and sets the pattern for all that is to follow which the passage of

⁸¹ W.H. SCHMIDT, (Trans.) J.STURDY, *The Faith of the Old Testament*, 227.

⁸² W.ZIMMERLI, *Old Testament Theology in Outline*, 216.

Isa 40:1–11 is but a prelude”⁸³. It must be recalled here that Israel’s going to exile was a punishment from God due to their going against the stipulations of the Covenant which he made with them on Mount Sinai. “Surely, Yahweh has punished Israel, but he cannot forget her and his word of election stands (Isa 49:5–6). Israel had been struck down by death but he will give her a new birth and a new destiny”⁸⁴. Before Yahweh came to punish Israel but now he is coming to redeem her. “The whole sixteen chapters together are a poem about God’s relationship to his ‘servant’, Israel, in whom he has determined to glorify himself”⁸⁵.

How is God going to liberate and restore his people Israel? Second Isaiah introduces completely a new thing. “Cyrus...is the Yahweh appointed shepherd...”⁸⁶. Yahweh has come to redeem his people through Cyrus. For Israel to recognize a “redeemer” for them among the Gentiles is an eye opener in the whole relationship between God, Israel and the Nations. The king of Persia, Cyrus attacked Babylon in 539 BC and freed those who were in exile. “They recognized in him a type of conqueror, a savior–hero sent by Yahweh at a time when the people of Yahweh could not hope for a savior from among themselves”⁸⁷. Cyrus even approved repatriation and the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem: “Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house

⁸³ E. VANOOSRTOM, *The Message of the Prophets*, 24.

⁸⁴ E. VANOOSRTOM, *The Message of the Prophets*, 22.

⁸⁵ G.A.F.KNIGHTY, *The Servant Theology: A Commentary on the Book of Isaiah 40–55*, 3.

⁸⁶ J.W.MILLER, *Meet the Prophets: a beginner’s Guide to the Biblical Prophets*, 215.

⁸⁷ E. VANOOSRTOM, *The Message of the Prophets*, 22.

at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of his people, may the Lord his God be with him. Let him go up” (2 Chro 36:23).

What God promised by the mouth of the previous prophets he is now going to fulfill. God did not only create the world. He is the God of history (Isa 45:12–13). He is even now going to use a pagan king to write a new history. According to the prophet creation is not only, what is elaborated in the book of Genesis (1&2); “but creation is universal in time as well, embracing all of history. Creation (ברא , *br’*) of the ends of the earth (40:28), the constellation (40:26) and human beings (45:12), the fashioning of Israel (43:1) in the past are as much the work of the creator as the deliverance of the imminent future (45:8), which pours forth like the rain of the heavens and blossoms like flowers”⁸⁸. He is the living God, not like the gods of Babylon who are sterile and inactive. He is going to do this and thus prove that his word endures forever (Isa 40:8). God’s word is powerful throughout history and what he is going to do will prove this. “In 44:24–28 we find a great hymnic self-prediction in which Yahweh, using the participles typical of hymnic style, depicts himself as creator of the universe and the Lord of history, who frustrates the signs of the (Babylon) false prophets but fulfils his own servant’s prophecies, who makes Cyrus the instrument of his purpose and cause Jerusalem to be rebuilt”⁸⁹.

Israel however is not going to be saved for nothing. God is going to redeem Israel and send her for a mission. Through redeeming Israel God’s salvation is going to be extended to the Nations. Through redeeming, Israel God is going to spread his glory

⁸⁸ W.ZIMMERLI, *Old Testament Theology in Outline*, 219

⁸⁹ W.ZIMMERLI, *Old Testament Theology in Outline*, 218.

through the universe, not by force and violence but by gentleness. “In 45:18–25 the prophet uses a broad canvas to depict how, impressed by the God who speaks and acts in history, the ‘survivors of the nations’ and the ‘ends of the earth’ are summoned to share with Israel in God’s salvation”⁹⁰. In fact the fourth servant song, which is found in Isa 52:13- 53:12, is used at times to interpret the ‘difficult history’ of Israel through the years and how God is using Israel to redeem the nations. “He made Israel for his glory (Isa 43: 7) that he may declare his praise (Isa 43-21) and through Israel his holiness will be manifested and nations shall recognize that Yahweh alone is God”⁹¹. Thus, all peoples of all nations will be saved by the Lord, Yahweh.

Whatever we can cite as God’s extension of his plan of salvation to the nations, will only remain as a ‘seed’. Throughout the Old Testament, Yahweh will remain as the God of Israel. It will cost God his Son to reveal his plan of salvation to the nations. It is in the New Testament that we come to know God shows no partiality and that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him (Acts 10:34–35). Now we turn to the New Testament which tells us how God sent his Son to continue his plan of salvation.

3.3 The Mission of the Son as Presented by Matthew

A prophet or any influential man comes to be known through his words and deeds. “The early Jewish followers of Jesus recognizing that the Spirit of God was in him spoke of him as being anointed and called him ‘Messiah’. The equivalent Greek

⁹⁰ W. ZIMMERLI, *Old Testament Theology in Outline*, 220.

⁹¹ E. VANOOSRTOM, *The Message of the Prophets*, 28.

word is *Christos*⁹². But only a handful of Jews accepted that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah. Around 80–90 AD Matthew wrote his gospel about Jesus and undertook the task to organize the material in a very systematic way, as shown below, to prove to the Jews that Jesus is indeed the Messiah they had been waiting for.

It has been cited several times in the previous chapters that by the time Matthew wrote the gospel the Christians had parted with the Jewish synagogue and they were in a crisis of self identity. When we say Matthew wanted to prove to the Jews, through the formula quotations, that Jesus was the Messiah it does not mean that the gospel is only polemic through and through. Writing for a community that is in a transition, from purely Jewish to the one that has to accommodate the Gentiles and a community that is fighting for self identity, the gospel is pastoral in the sense that Matthew aims to strengthen the Christians against the efforts of Jamnia as described in chapter one. More than being pastoral the gospel is a missionary text. D.J Bosch tells us: “Our first gospel is a missionary text. It was primarily because of his missionary vision that Matthew set out to write his gospel, not to compose a ‘Life of Jesus’ but to provide guidance to a community in crisis and how it should understand its calling and mission”⁹³.

In chapter one, we hinted that scholars like Ellis and Bornkamm see the “Great commission” in Matt 28: 16–20 as the key to the gospel. Indeed scholars see this pericope as the pivot of the whole gospel or rather the whole gospel was written with this pericope in mind. There is no doubt that Matt 28:16–20 is a missionary text through and through. If we agree that this particular pericope is a missionary text and that this is the key to the whole

⁹² J.MARTOS, *The Catholic Sacraments*, 175.

⁹³ D.J. BOSCH, *Transforming Mission*, 57.

gospel, then we should see the missionary orientation of the whole gospel. Besides being polemical therefore, Matthew writes the gospel for his audience “to assist them in developing a missionary ethos that will match challenges of a new epoch. He does this in an exemplary fashion by prolonging logic of Jesus ministry into the historical circumstances he is facing”⁹⁴.

It is at this juncture we can see why I propose 4:23 to be our starting point. As a matter of fact if the “Great commission” has to be treated with justice it has to be read in the context of the whole gospel. The risen Christ must be in continuity with the earthly Jesus otherwise the “Great commission” becomes very theoretical and impractical. When Matthew prolongs Jesus’ ministry to his own historical circumstances he wants to show that the gospel is something effective and practical. It is the Jesus who walked in Galilee, the Jesus who taught, preached and healed in Galilee, who in 28:16–20 gathers his disciples and tells them to go and do what he did.

Though Matthew is very polemic in approach he is not anti-Semitic. The Jews who were God’s predilection were against Jesus who is “God-Immanuel” and cooperated with the Roman officials to hang him on the cross. But just like the tragic events of Israel going into exile even the death of Jesus has to be understood as God’s work through history. Thus the mission to the Jews has to be continued hand in hand with that to the Gentiles. “Matthew never doubts the continued validity of a mission to his compatriots. This remains the inalienable task of himself and his community; they continue to regard themselves as

⁹⁴ D.J. BOSCH, *Transforming Mission*, 58.

inwardly and outwardly tied to Israel”⁹⁵. The only thing that has changed in Matthew’s vision and his community is that Jews are no more God’s predilection. For Jews and Gentiles alike those who do the will of the Father are acceptable to God. However though salvation to the Gentiles is implied from the first chapter onwards, strictly the Gentiles come to salvation only when Jews reject it: “I tell you then that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce it’s fruits”(Mt 21:43).

This leads us to another important aspect of Matthew’s Gospel that of bearing fruits. The imperative, μετανοεῖτε, of Jesus in 4:17 is in line with that of John the Baptist in 3:8 and already in 3:8 Matthew brings in the aspect of bearing fruits. The kingdom is taken away from the Jews because they failed to bear appropriate fruits of the kingdom. Right from 4:23 Jesus will demonstrate the “fruits” worth of the kingdom. Jesus reveals this by doing and speaking. The two, doing and speaking, are interconnected. Words are at the service of facts and deeds. This is where the Jews went wrong; the Torah to them had become empty words and legalistic consequently they did not bear fruits. This is where the teaching of Christ comes in. With the anti-thesis (5:17–46) the Messianic Torah replaces the Mosaic Torah. In the Messianic Torah the believer is not to adhere to impersonal laws but the whole person is to be united with the will of the father. The Messianic Torah goes deeper than being legalistic. “It is not those who say to me, ‘Lord, Lord’, who will enter the kingdom of heaven but the person who does the will of my father in heaven” (7:21). Being a disciple is not being legalistic or speaking empty words; it is doing the will of the father. This doing the

⁹⁵ F.HAHN, *Mission in the New Testament*, 125.

will of the father is manifested in the greatest commandment of love of God and neighbor in 22:37–40.

The Sermon on the Mount (5–7) presents the cradle of Matthew’s gospel. Many however have criticized it as not being practical; they see its contents as set too high beyond the possibility of any man to be able to practice them all. Here is where we can bring in the fact that the ‘doings’ of Jesus were interconnected with his speaking. His teaching about the love of enemy in 5:44 is proved by his willingness to go to the cross. Had he not loved to that extent then the Messianic Torah would remain mere speculations. The Sermon on the Mount “gets its true binding force only through the exemplary life, suffering, and death of the Nazarene who sealed its validity with his own blood”⁹⁶. Indeed the deeds of Jesus made John while in prison to ask the timely question about the Christ in 11:2. Held talking about Matthew the evangelistic says: “After he has shown the Christ in his work in word and deed he now allows the Baptist to put the decisive Christological question (Matt 11:3 Σὺ εἶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἢ ἕτερον προσδοκῶμεν;)”⁹⁷. The deeds of Christ manifest his practicing of what he taught. In his deeds orthodoxy and orthopraxis converge. This is what it means to bear fruits that are appropriate for the kingdom. It follows therefore that whoever is to be his disciple has to take doing the will of the father as the central project of his or her life. In chapter ten when Jesus sends his disciples, he sends them to do exactly what he did. In 10:6 he commissions them to proclaim the βασιλεία and in 10:7 to cure the sick and to have power over demons.

⁹⁶ P. LAPIDE. *The Sermon on the Mount: Utopia or Action?*, 141.

⁹⁷ G.BORNKAMM. *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, 251.

3.4 The Church Shares in the Mission of Christ

3.4.1 *The Early Christian Community and the Matthean Community*

Jesus came to do the will of the father, to continue God's plan of salvation. In Matt 10:1 he sends the disciples to proclaim and heal (and in 28:20 to teach). We have already seen in Ch 2 that the teaching of Christ is addressed to his disciples and the crowds form the "off-stage" listeners. Here in chapter ten "the disciples have learned to some extent the methodology of Jesus. They are to go on their own now for a period of pastoral work"⁹⁸. There has to be continuity between the mission of the father, that of the son and that of the church. "Jesus is not only the Messiah in word and deed whose authority was given by God but he is also the Lord who makes his disciples sharers in his authority. To this extent the deeds of the disciples, given authority by Jesus (Matt 10:1) rightly belong to the ἔργα τοῦ Χριστοῦ"⁹⁹.

Even within the miracle stories themselves we see how Matthew has shown that Jesus shares his authority with his congregation. H.J Held tells us that "Matthew is also the only evangelist who makes known the participation of the disciples in the authority of Jesus not only on the composition of his gospel but also in the form of miracle stories themselves"¹⁰⁰. The pericope of Jesus walking on water and permitting Peter to do the same has two nuances. On one hand the pericope presents to us the nuance of the Church in danger and that the Lord is constantly awake in their tribulations. On the other hand the pericope has the nuance of Jesus sharing his authority and power to save with his disciples.

⁹⁸ A. MUTINDA, *Gospel of Matthew: Class Notes 2005*, 19.

⁹⁹ G.BORNKAMM, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, 252.

¹⁰⁰ G.BORNKAMM, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, 271.

David Hill tells us that Matthew “shows Jesus as the Lord who gives to his disciples the power to follow him, and interprets the motive of the uncomprehending horror of the disciples from the point of view of fear and their little faith”¹⁰¹. It shows Jesus has shared his authority fully with his congregation but on their part total faith and trust is lacking.

Another incident that shows how the Christ shares his authority with his Church is that of healing of the paralytic in Matt 9:7-8. Matthew takes the pericope from Mark 2:1-12 but has altered the conclusion. Matthew ends the story by saying: “A feeling of awe came over the crowd when they saw this, and they praised God for giving such power to men”(Matt 9:8). Is it by mistake that Matthew changed from a single man performing the miracle (Jesus) to plural (...such power to men)? Viviano tells us that: “This is Matthew’s crucial change from Mark. He shifts attention away from astonishment at the miracle to the theological theme that Jesus Son of Man (v.6) has the authority to forgive sins (already in Mark) and then extends that authority to members of the Church”¹⁰². Held also stresses that “In the plural τοῖς ἀνθρώποις the conviction of Matthew is manifested, that the authority of Jesus to forgive sins has become the possession of the congregation”¹⁰³. The use of plural “to men” therefore can be understood if interpreted in this sense. “The plural τοῖς ἀνθρώποις includes Jesus and his congregation and one can see once again that the Christology has acquired an ecclesiological accent”¹⁰⁴.

It has already been argued in the previous chapters that the mandate to *teach* is reserved to Jesus and given to the disciples only by the ‘glorified Jesus’ in the “Great

¹⁰¹ D. HILL, *The New Century Bible Commentary: The gospel of Matthew*, 247.

¹⁰² B. T VIVIANO, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, NJBC, 649.

¹⁰³ G.BORNKAMM, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, 273- 274.

¹⁰⁴ G.BORNKAMM, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, 274.

commission” in 28:16-20. The glorified Jesus who comes as the Son of Man of Daniel 7:13-14 has full authority in heaven and on earth. He now sends his disciples to teach, baptize and make disciples from all the nations. Here Jesus is identified with the Good News that they have to proclaim; what they have to teach is what he taught them (Ch 5-7); thus there is continuity between the earthly Jesus and the risen Jesus. Indeed the principle task here is that of making disciples. “The two participles ‘baptize’ and ‘teaching’ are clearly subordinate to ‘make disciples’ and describe the form the disciple making is to take”¹⁰⁵.

In one aspect, this is where we can see 28:16-20 as the key of the gospel. The commission to go and make disciples is central to the pericope and to the whole Gospel. The risen Jesus sends his disciples to go and make disciples; in other words to go and continue his mission. “In the final analysis, therefore, there is, for Matthew, no break, no discontinuity between the history of Jesus and the era of the church. The Community of believers of Matthew’s time does not constitute a new period in the economy of salvation”¹⁰⁶. This is where our church finds its roots.

3.4.2 Our Sharing in the Mission of Christ Today

The very first chapter of the decree on the Church’s missionary activity, *Ad Gentes Divinitus*, states that “The church on earth is by its very nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, it has its origin in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit. This plan flows from ‘fountain-like love’, the love of the Father”¹⁰⁷. Not only does it have origin in the mission of the Son but he continues to stay in his church

¹⁰⁵ Cf J. MATTHEY, *The Great Commission According to Matthew*, IRM vol. 69, 168.

¹⁰⁶ D.J. BOSCH, *Transforming Mission*, 74.

¹⁰⁷ Cf Dogm. Const. *Ad Gentes Divinitus*, 2.

and works through it. Unlike the Gospel of Luke in the Gospel of Matthew Jesus did not leave his church as Matt 28:20 asserts: "I am with you always, until the end of the age".

What we, as individuals and the church, have to be aware of is that God himself continues to work in the church to reconcile man and the whole creation to himself. In the *Theology Digest*, Jacques Matthey says that Christian churches have to be aware of the crisis of our own action and life. "With such awareness we can confess in liberating ways that our salvation and the salvation of the world do not rest on our shoulders but are in God's hands"¹⁰⁸. This is how we should understand the *Missio Dei*. Matthey continues to say: "At the same time, we human beings and churches within the *Missio Dei* have an irreplaceable unique mission: to build, increase and continually reform communities so that they become places of witness to the healing mission of the Spirit in signs, sacraments, and the process of reconciliation"¹⁰⁹. This is where the different church ministries and missions, *the Missio ecclesiae*, have to be understood to be at the service of *Missio Dei* as quoted from Fogliacco earlier.

Becoming a disciple of Jesus means practicing the love commandment which is central to the Messianic Torah. Bosch says Mission is not centrally evangelism: "Mission involves, from the beginning and as a matter of course, making new believers sensitive to the needs of others, opening their eyes and hearts to recognize injustice, suffering, oppression, and the plight of those who have fallen by the way side"¹¹⁰. Our

¹⁰⁸ J.MATTHEY, *Reconciliation as God's Mission: Church as Reconciling Community*, TD vol. 52 NO.2 (Summer 2005), 111.

¹⁰⁹ J.MATTHEY, *Reconciliation as God's Mission: Church as Reconciling Community*, TD vol. 52 NO.2 (Summer 2005), 111.

¹¹⁰ D.J. BOSCH, *Transforming Mission*, 81.

involvement to the community matters is central for being a disciple. This is what is highlighted by Fogliacco as he says: "Through all the talents and charisms granted to me in view of my call to the mission, Christ reaches out to suffering humanity with such immediacy that he becomes visible and audible, and in some way even tangible, to it"¹¹¹.

Every Christian has a role and duty to proclaim the Christian message and Christian values where he or she works. Whatever we can talk of George Bush, the President of USA, in his State of Union Speech on February 1st 2006 he spoke strongly on Christian values and principles. Concerning *Hopeful Society* the president said that there are fewer abortions, crimes have fallen to the lowest since 1970s, and drug use among the youth has gone down. Much still has to be done as the president says: "Yet many Americans, especially parents, still have deep concern about the direction of our culture, and the health of our most basic institutions. They are concerned about unethical conduct by public officials and discouraged by activist courts that try to redefine marriage"¹¹².

Concerning the *cloning ban* the president said: "Tonight I ask you to pass legislation to prohibit the most egregious abuses of medical research- human cloning in all its forms- creating of implanting embryos for experiments- creating human-animal hybrid-and buying, selling, or patenting human embryos. Human life is a gift from our

¹¹¹ N. FOGLIACCO, *The God of all Consolation: A Theology of Salvation and Mission as Divine Comfort*, 111.

¹¹² www.news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/1fr/-2/hi/americas/4668628.stm <1st Feb2006>.

Creator- and that gift should never be discarded, devalued or put up for sale”¹¹³. Every one wherever he or she is has to proclaim the gospel by standing for what the gospel stands for.

Evangelization is central to all the ministries undertaken by the church. John Paul II was a pioneer of inter-religious dialogue and religious tolerance but he never sacrificed the fact of preaching the Gospel of Christ. In *Redemptoris Missio* he says: “Nowadays the call to conversion which missionaries address to non-Christians is put into question or passed over in silence. It is seen as an act of ‘proselytizing’; it is claimed that it is enough to help people to become more human or more faithful to their own religion, that it is enough to build communities capable of working for justice, freedom, peace and solidarity”¹¹⁴. John Paul II does not concur with this view and asserts that the Gospel has to be proclaimed.

As Christians we have to perceive the difference brought by Christ. “The center of *Missio Dei* is Christ’s death and resurrection, the basis for the ultimate reconciliation between human beings and God, among human beings themselves, and between humanity and creation”¹¹⁵. Jesus Christ is God-incarnate and we can’t shy away from evangelization. “Those who obey the prompting of the Spirit of truth are already on the way of salvation. But the church, to whom this truth has been entrusted, must go out to

¹¹³ www.news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-2/hiamericas/4668628.stm <1st Feb2006>

¹¹⁴ JOHN PAUL II, POPE, *Redemptoris Missio*, No. 46.

¹¹⁵ J. MATTHEY, *Reconciliation as God’s Mission: Church as Reconciling Community*, TD vol 52 2005, 117.

meet their desire, so as to bring them to the truth. Because she believes in God's universal plan of salvation, the church must be missionary"¹¹⁶.

Above all what we need most in this present world is a witness value. Building communities that show real *Koinonia* and governed by Agape (true love of God and neighbor) speaks more than mere preaching. Bosch tells us that: "The 'disciples' of Matthew's time are not just linked to the first disciples but also to one another. Every disciple follows the Master, but never alone; every disciple is a member of the fellowship of disciples, the body, or no disciple at all"¹¹⁷. *Gaudium et Spes* says: "The church, at once a visible organization and a spiritual community travels the same journey as all mankind and shares the same earthly lot with the world: it is to be a leaven and 'as it were' the soul of human society in its renewal by Christ and transformation into the family of God"¹¹⁸. If we have to be a leaven as this paragraph claims what is needed is more witness value, unity first as a church then unity in diversity, meaning that of different denominations so that others can see something appealing in being a Christian.

3.5. Conclusion

In this chapter we have focused on God's single plan of salvation. Our history of salvation starts with the call of Abraham. Right from the call of Abraham onwards God has been revealing his plan of salvation in different ways. Reflecting on the Scriptures we see the deep love which God has for humanity and for the whole of creation. It is

¹¹⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No 851.

¹¹⁷ D.J. BOSCH, *Transforming Mission*, 74.

¹¹⁸ Cf Dogm. Const. *Gaudium et Spes*, 40 par 2.

this deep love that God manifests to us human beings and to the whole of creation that urges us to be co-workers in his plan of salvation. We do not engage in this plan with fear but with the love that God has shown us. As true believers we shouldn't just see theodynamics working in history but we should feel this power inside us, working in us and through us. God's Holy Spirit continues this plan of salvation in us and through us.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

When I set out to write this essay I was challenged by a Latin statement which I read somewhere, about twenty years ago. It reads: *Non scholae sed vita discimus*, meaning that we learn not for school but for life. I have already mentioned it the introduction that the theological methodology made me question myself so as to find what I would consider as theology I grasped in the classroom and that would help me to go beyond the classroom work.

Looking at the concept of theodynamics, we come to see where we stand in relation to our faith. It is true that faith is a gift from God but it is also handed over. Our faith is strengthened or weakened by that of our forefathers. Thus it is important to learn what they went through as they struggled to maintain their faith. God's love and his own work throughout history indeed strengthen our faith. All we need to do is to use our eyes of faith and see him working in history.

Matthew used his knowledge and talents to write to his community in crisis, the community that was struggling for self-identity after it parted with the synagogue. If Matthew could do that we should also try to see how we can support our present day community in all its trials and tribulations. We live in a world that is tormented with the fear of self annihilation, due to pollutions, industrial development, nuclear weapons and the like. We are also frightened by the experiments and the findings of genetics

especially in cloning and biological weapons. There are many other social problems like sexual promiscuity, what is so called as 'gay-marriages' et cetera. So looking at our contemporary world we see man is literally confused. As Christians we have to reflect if we are also totally confused.

We are people of the resurrection, people who are supposed to give joy and hope to the world. We saw in chapter three on the section of the prophets that God did not only create the world. He is also the God of history. In many epochs he has proved that his Word endures forever and that he has not said the last word in his plan of saving the world. St Paul reflecting on this writes in the letter to the Roman:

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (Rom 8:19-23).

Thus we can see that the history of salvation gives us courage as we struggle with our faith and shows us that the God of creation and history will never abandon us. He continues to write history in his own way; he can't fit in our frame of mind but at the end he is going to save not only us but the whole creation. This understanding urges us not to be careless but attentive to the plan of God and to cooperate with him in his plan of salvation. The new theologies like feminist movement, ecological movement that speaks about integrity of creation and the like show that God is still working in creation and in history. The concept of theodynamics tells us that we are collaborators in this great plan of God, his plan of saving humanity and the whole creation. No believer can be silent or say it is none of my business concerning anything that happens in the world.

APPENDIX I: RSV ENGLISH TEXT OF MATT 4:12-25

12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; 13 and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: 15 "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles 16 the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." 17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

18 As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

23 And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

APPENDIX II: GNT TEXT OF MATT 4:12-25

12 Ἀκούσας δὲ ὅτι Ἰωάννης παρεδόθη ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν. 13 καὶ καταλιπὼν τὴν Ναζαρά ἐλθὼν κατώκησεν εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ τὴν παραθαλασσίαν ἐν ὁρίοις Ζαβουλῶν καὶ Νεφθαλίμ· 14 ἵνα πληρωθῆ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος, 15 Γῆ Ζαβουλῶν καὶ γῆ Νεφθαλίμ, ὁδὸν θαλάσσης, πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν, 16 ὁ λαὸς ὁ καθήμενος ἐν σκότει φῶς εἶδεν μέγα, καὶ τοῖς καθημένοις ἐν χῶρᾳ καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου φῶς ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς. 17 Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς κηρῦσσειν καὶ λέγειν, Μετανοεῖτε· ἤγγικεν γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

18 Περιπατῶν δὲ παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας εἶδεν δύο ἀδελφούς, Σίμωνα τὸν λεγόμενον Πέτρον καὶ Ἀνδρέαν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, βάλλοντας ἀμφίβληστρον εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν· ἦσαν γὰρ ἀλιεῖς. 19 καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου, καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων. 20 οἱ δὲ εὐθέως ἀφέντες τὰ δίκτυα ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ.

21 Καὶ προβάς ἐκεῖθεν εἶδεν ἄλλους δύο ἀδελφούς, Ἰάκωβον τὸν τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου καὶ Ἰωάννην τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ μετὰ Ζεβεδαίου τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν καταρτίζοντας τὰ δίκτυα αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐκάλεσεν αὐτούς. 22 οἱ δὲ εὐθέως ἀφέντες τὸ πλοῖον καὶ τὸν πατέρα αὐτῶν ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ.

23 Καὶ περιῆγεν ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Γαλιλαίᾳ διδάσκων ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ κηρῦσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ἐν τῷ λαῷ. 24 καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ἡ ἀκοή αὐτοῦ εἰς ὅλην τὴν Συρίαν· καὶ προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας ποικίλαις νόσοις καὶ βασάνοις συνεχομένους [καὶ] δαιμονιζομένους καὶ σεληνιαζομένους καὶ παραλυτικούς, καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτούς. 25 καὶ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ ὄχλοι πολλοὶ ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ Δεκαπόλεως καὶ Ἱεροσολύμων καὶ Ἰουδαίας καὶ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου.

APPENDIX III: ABBREVIATIONS USED

AD	Anno Domini
BC	Before Christ
CBQ	The Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CF	Confer
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IRM	International Review of Missions
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NJBC	The New Jerome Biblical Commentary
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SacPag	Sacra Pagina Series

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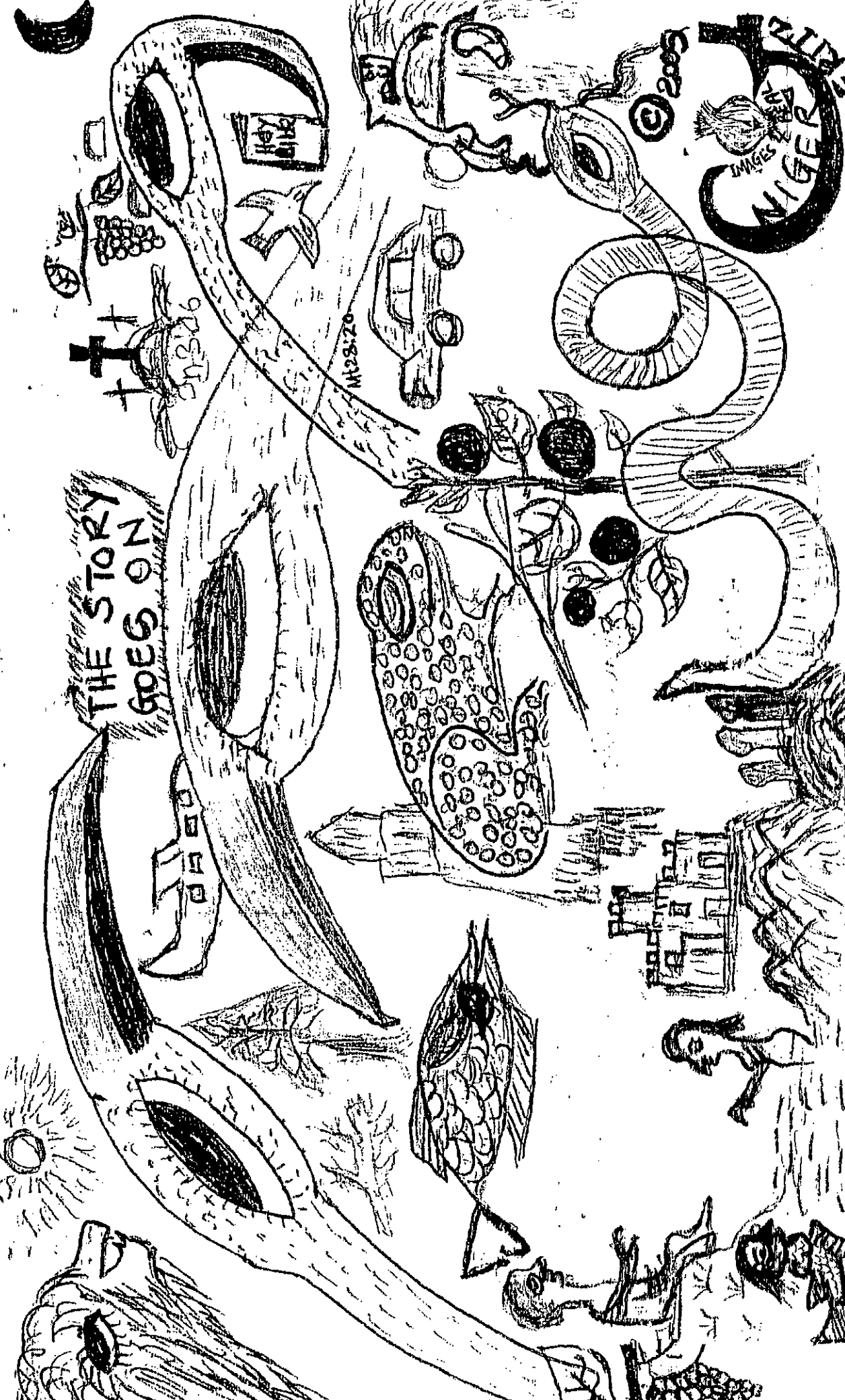
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www.news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-2/liamericas/4668628.stm <1st Feb2006>.

APPENDIX V: A PORTRAYAL OF THEODYNAMICS

Art speaks by it self but it is necessary that I give a kind of introduction to the portrayal. The picture is drawn in an African environment where the lion is known as the 'king of the jungle'; so the lion that appears here indicates that God remains the king of the universe, the only author of all that exists. What appears conspicuously as three heads of a certain bird is a symbolism of Duet 32:11 which reads: "Like an eagle watching its nest, hovering over its young, he spread out his wings to hold him, he supports him on his pinions". The first head stands for the creator the other two stand for the Son and his church; the point of intersection stands for Matt 28:20. The picture of the Temple where the glory of God dwelt can be seen a bit higher than the symbol of the Canaanite cultic religions. The tree of life and its fruits that the snake used to tempt the woman who in turn tempted the man with the fruits can also be seen. After the two fell in sin God's order in creation was disturbed and because of his love for the creation he had to send his Son (John 3:16). But before leaving he gave the Great Commission to his church and thus the story goes on. The rest of the images can be interpreted according to the vision of the beholder.

THE STORY
GOES ON



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