

Chapter 9

Narrative point of view and the ‘temporal’ function of the Old Testament in Matthew’s gospel

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Matthew’s gospel has to be read as a narration with an ongoing plot and an open end. The plot commences with a reference to the Old Testament and ends with an allusion to the consummation of time at the parousia. And yet, the Old Testament is not present in Matthew as a separate time sequence. The plot consists of two explicit time sequences, namely the ‘time’ of the pre-paschal Jesus commission and the ‘time’ of the post-paschal disciples’ commission. To convey his point of view to his readers, the narrator creates a correlative analogy between these two sequences. The thesis of this chapter is that the Old Testament functions as the point of analogy and continuity between the two commissions. This thesis is debated against the purport of the various opinions of Matthean scholars concerning the ‘temporal’ function of the Old Testament.

Willi Marxsen (1959:62ff), in his well-known work on the Gospel of Mark, pointed out the most important characteristics of the other two Synoptic gospels as well. In this way he noticed – as far as Matthew was concerned – that there was a correlation between the *earthly* Jesus’ commission and the *risen* Jesus’ presence in the (post-paschal) commission of the disciples until the coming of the parousia. An investigation of the narrative point of view on the temporal level of Matthew’s gospel has shown this insight to be of particular importance.

The Matthean gospel is a narrative written from a narrator’s point of view after the event. This after-the-event point of view enabled the narrator to give the plot of his story, from the perspective of reader involvement, an effective open end. Marxsen (1959:63f) makes the following reference to the open-endedness of the

Gospel of Matthew: Where Mark wrote against the background of an anticipation of Jesus' early return, Matthew began to allow for a possible delay in his return. He offered an interim solution. He enlarged upon the commission theme, which was also present in Mark (cf Mark 13:10), to make it an independent epoch with a typical Matthean function, which was to make disciples of all nations/people (cf Mt 28:16-20). This period of the disciples' commission follows the 'time' of Jesus. It extends from Jesus' resurrection from the dead to the 'time' of Matthew himself. It goes even further. It actually extends into our time. The end of the Matthean gospel is thus open since, after the conclusion of the epoch of Jesus, another began which continues up to the end of time.

Seen narratologically, the above insight amounts to the plot of the Matthean gospel continuing after its apparent conclusion, and only being resolved in its non-explicit continuation. Although the Matthean gospel, as a narration, begins with a reference to the Old Testament (Jesus' genealogical table in Mt 1:1-17), the 'time' from Abraham to David, and from David to the Babylonian exile up to and including Jesus, does not form a separate temporal sequence in the plot of the Matthean gospel. What, then, temporally speaking, is the function of the use of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Matthew? It does not serve as an *antithesis* to its interpretation by Jesus, nor as *promise-fulfillment* where the latter elevates the former; nor as the relationship *law-gospel* (cf Lohmeyer 1942). (Matthew was probably not influenced by Paul's letters, and he naturally did not read Luther's writings.) How should the portrayal of Jesus' *fulfillment* (πληρῶσαι) of the 'law and the prophets' be understood in the Gospel of Matthew? The thesis of the study is that the narrator uses the Old Testament functionally to build an *analogy* and a *continuity* between his Jesus-image (the first temporal sequence) and his disciple/church-image (the second temporal sequence). For this reason it is necessary once again to say something about these two sequences and the dominant perspective from which the narrator has told his entire story with a particular communicative purpose.

9.2 THE NARRATIVE POINT OF VIEW REGARDING THE FIRST AND SECOND SEQUENCES

Strictly speaking, as I have already indicated, there are three temporal sequences in the Gospel of Matthew. These are the sequence of the pre-paschal events, the sequence of the post-paschal events up to the parousia and the sequence known as, inter alia, ἡ ζωὴ in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 7:14; 18:8; 9; 19:17) or ἡ ζωὴ αἰώνιος (Mt 25:46), but also, for example, ἡ ἀπώλεια (Mt 7:13), ἡ γέεννα (Mt

10:28) and ἡ κόλασις αἰώνιος (Mt 25:46). Other 'places' that refer to this 'time' are found in Matthew 3:12, 5:22, 18:8, 9; 24:51, 25:10, 23, 30, 34, 41 and 26:28. This is the 'time' that begins with the parousia or at someone's death (Mt 22:23-33). This third sequence is mentioned in the Matthean gospel alone (chiefly in parables), but not expanded upon. For this reason the poetics of the Gospel of Matthew display only two basic temporal (and topographic) levels, namely the sequence of the pre-paschal events and the sequence of the post-paschal events. The following temporal phrases mark the time that concludes with Jesus' resurrection and his appearance and commission to the disciples: ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ (cf Mt 11:25; 12:1; 14:1), ἐν τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐκείνῃ (cf Mt 8:13; 10:19; 18:1; 26:55), ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας ἐκείνης (cf Mt 9:22; 15:28; 17:18), ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ (cf Mt 3:1; 7:22; 13:1; 22:23), ἀπ' ἐκείνης τῆς ἡμέρας (Mt 22:46) and τότε (cf Mt 2:16; 3:13; 4:1). The *participia* using 'time' to depict circumstances in Matthew 2:1, 13, 19 and 4:12 can be added to the above temporal phrases. The following phrases again mark the end of the post-paschal disciples' commission, that is, the parousia: τέλος (cf Mt 10:22; 24:6, 13f), ἡ συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος (Mt 13:39f, 49; 24:3; 28:20) and also ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις (Mt 24:19, 22, 29) and τότε (Mt 7:23).

There is a *continuity* as well as an *analogy* between the Jesus commission (the first sequence) and the disciples' commission (the second sequence). The first temporal level is oriented towards the second temporal level. This relationship can therefore be typified as that of a transparency. Exactly what the continuity and analogy involve should be defined from the ideological perspective of the narrator (with regard to the terminology, see Uspensky 1973; Lanser 1981). Seen thus, the continuity and analogy between the first and the second sequence is based on the narrator's image of Jesus as *Emmanuel*. Jesus is *God-with-us* in the first sequence and he is *God-with-us* in the second. Kingsbury (1973:471) describes this analogy as follows: '[T]he coalescence of the time of Jesus and the "time of the Church" in the theology of Mt is, ultimately, christologically motivated and has its roots in the pre-Easter-post-Easter continuity of the person of Jesus: The earthly Messiah is the exalted Lord.' One can expand upon this so that the continuity and the analogy between the pre-paschal Jesus commission and the post-paschal disciples' commission can be formulated as follows.

The 'ideological' point of view of the narrator in the Gospel of Matthew is closely associated with the expression *God-with-us* which occurs explicitly at the beginning (Mt 1:23), middle (Mt 18:19f) and end (Mt 28:18ff) of this gospel. The Jewish background against which the Matthean gospel should be understood comes to the fore through, inter alia, the above expression, which has been taken from the Old Testament. The gospel relates that God came to the world of mankind from his

own domain, the kingdom of heaven. Instead of coming through the temple, which had been the dwelling place of God in the Old Testament, but which had degenerated (cf Lohmeyer 1942:109f) as a result of the actions of the Jewish nation (cf Mt 21:12ff), he became God-with-us in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was 'greater than the temple' (Mt 12:6). This Jesus-mission had the purpose of forgiving the sins of all people, especially the Jewish multitude, but also the Gentiles (Mt 1:21; 3:6; 9:13). He did this by executing the will of the Father with total obedience, so as to 'fulfill all righteousness' (Mt 3:15). Theoretically, the 'will of the Father' is the 'law and the prophets' (Mt 5:17), and this turns into practical deeds when there is compliance with the radical demand for love (Mt 19:19b, 21; 22:37-40). It is in this sense that Gibbs (1968) refers to the Matthean Jesus as the 'Torah incarnate'. Jesus' obedience amounts on the one hand to compassion with the Jewish multitude and the Gentiles when they were, for example, sick (cf Mt 15:21-28, 29-31) and hungry (Mt 12:13-21; 15:32-39). On the other hand it contained his willingness (cf Mt 26:39) to give his life as a ransom (Mt 20:28; 27:50) for many, the Jewish multitude and the Gentiles – the new eschatological community (Lohmeyer 1942:60ff). Although he had already called disciples at the commencement of his work among the Jewish multitude and the Gentiles, and had made them 'fishers of men' (Mt 4:19) to stand by him, their mission into the world only began with Jesus' resurrection from the dead. The disciples, and similarly the reader of the Gospel of Matthew as the extension of the disciples, were commissioned to teach (Mt 28:16-20). This commission had as its content the 'law and the prophets' as the will of the Father, as interpreted and embodied by Jesus himself. The continuing presence of the risen Jesus as God-with-us until the end of the world became visible in the obedience of the disciples who, in executing their commission to make disciples of others, also did God's will by analogy with Jesus' action.

9.3 THE 'WENDE DER ZEIT'

In the Gospel of Matthew, Marxsen (1959:64) does not note a correlation between the 'time' of Jesus and the 'time' of the church. Furthermore, he considers that Matthew wrote his gospel on the basis of three temporal phases. He does not consider that these three are, as we indicated above, the 'time' of the pre-paschal Jesus commission, the 'time' of the post-paschal disciples' commission and the 'time' after the parousia. In his view they consist of the 'time of the Old Testament', the 'time of the earthly Jesus' (the first sequence) and the 'time of the evangelist and his community' (the second sequence). What is fundamental to Marxsen's theory is that a distinction has to be drawn in the Gospel of Matthew between the 'time of the Old

Testament' and the first temporal sequence. His view basically corresponds with that of Conzelmann (1977) in regard to the corpus of Luke-Acts. According to this the 'time of Jesus' forms a central point between the 'time of the Old Testament' and the 'time of the church'.

Or, as Marxsen typifies it with regard to the Gospel of Matthew: The time of Jesus is an epoch between two others. Conzelmann and Marxsen, with their viewpoints, initiated investigation into the so-called *Heilsgeschichte* in the theology of the Lucan and the Matthean gospels.

Research has shown that the so-called *Heilsgeschichte*, that is the parallel between christology and ecclesiology, forms one of the central themes, if not the most central theme, in the theology of the Luke-Acts corpus (cf i a Rengstorf 1969:6; Danker 1976:2). This statement can to some extent also be made applicable to the Gospel of Matthew. Questions that can be disputed in this connection as far as the Gospel of Matthew is concerned, are those regarding the number of sequences that are discernible in the gospel, the articulated spot at which one sequence ends and another begins, and the place and nature of the time of the Old Testament within the *heilsgeschichtliche* framework of the gospel. Although we will be focusing our attention on the latter, the three aspects noted above are closely integrated.

While in the Gospel of Mark there are only two occurrences (Mk 1:15; 14:49) of the prediction that the 'time of Jesus' is a *fulfillment* of a *promise*, which would be the Old Testament, the idea of *fulfillment* plays a much more prominent role in the gospels of Luke and Matthew (cf Combrink 1979:56). Marxsen has shown that, just as Matthew finds a correlation between the 'time of the earthly Jesus' and the 'time of the evangelist and his community', there is a correlation between the 'time of the earthly Jesus' and the 'time of the Old Testament'. He, moreover, pointed out that the latter correlation is expressed in the fulfillment citations in particular: The conclusion of the time of Jesus also refers to a previous beginning, namely that of the old Testament (Marxsen 1959:64). The question is that of the nature of this correlation, or continuity, which is expressed by the fulfillment citations, as well as by other Old Testament citations and Old Testament allusions.

I have shown above that there is an analogical continuity between the pre-paschal Jesus commission and the post-paschal disciples' commission, and that the continuity centers around the presence of Jesus as God-with-us. I will now show that the Old Testament is used particularly effectively by the narrator as something on which to base this continuity. Senior (1976:670) remarks correctly in this connection: 'Perhaps no evangelist performed this "ministry of continuity" with more skill than Matthew. To study his Gospel under the rubric of "continuity" is to discover the core of his message.'

Vorster (1981a:70), in his investigation into the function of the use of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark, remarked on a difference between the gospels of Mark and Matthew. He pointed out that, although the use of the Old Testament in both gospels functions according to the promise-fulfillment technique, this technique is implemented by the citations in the Gospel of Mark, unlike in Matthew, where the Old Testament is considered fulfilled in Jesus. He states this as follows: '...these quotations form part of the Markan narrative of Jesus and are fulfilled in that narrative. In other words it is not the same as in Matthew's account, where the Old Testament is regarded as fulfilled in Christ. In Mark's gospel these quotations are part of the narrative statement and are fulfilled within the boundaries of that text.' Vorster thus implies that, with this reference to the Gospel of Matthew, the 'time of the earthly Jesus' (the first sequence) and the 'time of the Old Testament' do not coincide, but that, according to Matthew, the latter would be the advance 'promise' of the former, which would then be its fulfillment. This view agrees with that which we find in, for example, Strecker (1966), Walker (1967) and Kingsbury (1973), while authors such as Barth (1961), McConnel (1969), Barr (1976), Senior (1976) and Aguirre (1981) do not hold the same view. Scholars such as Trilling (1969) and Meier (1975) adopt another interesting view in this connection.

I have already made the point that the poetics of the Gospel of Matthew only display two explicit temporal (and topographical) levels, namely that of the pre-paschal and that of the post-paschal. As a consequence the 'time of the Old Testament' does not function as a separate sequence in the Gospel of Matthew, but is a part of the pre-paschal Jesus commission. I thus differ from scholars such as Vorster, Kingsbury, Walker and Strecker with regard to the place and nature of the 'time of the Old Testament' in the Gospel of Matthew. If we were to concur with these scholars in this connection, it would imply that Matthew and Luke, coincidentally, broadly recognized the same *heilsgeschichtliche* theology. The Emmanuel perspective of the narrator in the Gospel of Matthew, however, makes a *heilsgeschichtliche* viewpoint, such as that maintained by the above-mentioned scholars, impossible. My own view is rather more that of, for example, Barth, Barr, Senior and Aguirre. With regard to the very important point that features in this context, namely the point at which the first sequence switches over to the second, our view agrees with that of men such as Strecker and Walker, as well as with that of Trilling and Meier. I will now explain my viewpoint against the background of the other opinions mentioned, and at the same time show that none of the scholars mentioned recognized the relationship between Matthew's Emmanuel theology and the different temporal levels in the Gospel. This relationship simultaneously serves

to explain the place and the nature of the 'time of the Old Testament' in the Gospel of Matthew, as well as the paradox between the so-called particular and the universal purport in the Gospel (see Combrink 1980:63f).

Although both Strecker (1966:86-93) and Walker (1967) were greatly influenced by Conzelmann, they differ from each other in respect to certain finer details. Both, however, agree that three temporal phases can be distinguished in the Gospel of Matthew. Walker (1967:115) refers to these three temporal phases as the 'prehistory of the Messiah', which began with Abraham, the 'history of the calling of Israel' (the particular purport) which consists of the service of John the Baptist as the precursor of the Messiah and Jesus himself as the *Mitte der Mitte*, and finally the 'history of the mission to the Gentiles' (the universal purport) which began with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus and extends to the day of judgment and thus partly coincides with the time of the evangelist. Strecker (1966:184-188) refers to these three temporal phases as the 'time of the fathers and the prophets', the 'time of Jesus' and the 'time of the *Heidenkirche*'. Like Walker (1967:115), Strecker (1966:187) regards John the Baptist as part of the 'time of Jesus'. After Jesus' death and resurrection this 'time' went over into the 'eschatological time'.

Unlike Strecker and Walker, Kingsbury (1973:471) does not distinguish three temporal phases in the Gospel of Matthew, but two. He formulated his view as follows:

It has long been recognized that especially the formula quotations in the first Gospel reveal that Mt has theological affinity for the categories of 'prophecy' and 'fulfilment'. These terms aptly characterize Mt's view of the history of salvation. There is the 'time of Israel', which is preparatory to and prophetic of the coming of the Messiah; and there is the 'time of Jesus...', in which the time of Israel finds its fulfillment and which, from the vantage point of Matthew's day, extends from the beginning of the ministry of John and of Jesus (past) through post-Easter times (present) to the coming consummation of the age (future). In Mt's scheme of history, one does not, strictly speaking, find any such epoch as the 'time of the Church', for this 'time' is subsumed under the 'last days' inaugurated by John and Jesus.

(Kingsbury 1973:471)

Kingsbury differs from Strecker and Walker not with regard to the *beginning* of the 'time of Jesus', but with regard to the *end* of this 'time'. He holds the opinion that there was no change in 'time' at Jesus' death and resurrection, but that the 'eschatological time' coincides fully with the 'time of Jesus'. This 'eschatological time' begins with the commencement of John the Baptist's work. In this connection the three scholars mentioned above consider that Matthew 3:1, as the beginning of John the Baptist's service, indicates the division between the 'time of the Old Testament' and the 'time of Jesus'. According to this view, the elements *promise* (the 'time of the Old Testament') and *fulfillment* (the 'time of Jesus') separate the two temporal levels of time. Kingsbury (1973:470; cf Strecker 1966:87) builds his argument chiefly on the time formula, ἐς ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις, which appears in Matthew 3:1 and 24:19, 22, 29. He considers that this time formula has an exclusive 'eschatological' connotation that refers to 'that period of time which precedes the consummation of the age and the return of Jesus Son of Man'. Matthew thus, according to Kingsbury, employs this time formula inclusively and uses it to refer to the 'time of John the Baptist', the 'time of Jesus', and the 'time of the church'. And, because of this inclusiveness, the Gospel of Matthew does not, according to Kingsbury, show a separation between the 'eschatological community' and the 'time of Jesus', but a separation between the 'time of the Old Testament' and the 'time of Jesus'. The latter begins with the 'time of John the Baptist'. '...Matthew, as 11:13 indicates, sees the law and the prophets, the entire OT, as "prophesying", as pointing forward, to the events that mark the eschatological age of salvation' (Kingsbury 1977:83f).

Kingsbury (1973), like Strecker (1966), considers that the three stages in the 'eschatological time', that is to say the 'time of John the Baptist', the 'time of Jesus' and the 'time of the church', should not be seen as a progressive increase in eschatological intensity. Although various 'historical' stages are distinguishable in the 'eschatological time', these stages, according to Kingsbury and Strecker, do not represent qualitative differentiation, but rather make a qualitative whole. Strecker, unlike Kingsbury, draws a type of distinction between the 'time of Jesus' and the 'time of the church'. These two 'times' function, according to him, alongside one other in the Gospel of Matthew. He formulates this mutual impact of the two 'times' on each other by saying that the eschatological element is historicized. In other words, eschatology is consequently organized in time, as, vice versa, the story of the Jesus of history can not be understood in secular-historical categories any more, but attains an eschatological quality (Strecker 1966:185).

As far as both the *beginning* and *end* of the 'time of Jesus' is concerned, I do not feel that Kingsbury is convincing. With regard to the end of the Jesus commission I have already pointed out that there is an analogy in the Gospel of Matthew between the pre-paschal Jesus commission and, in pursuance of this, the post-paschal disciples' commission ('the time of the eschatological community' – in Lohmeyer's terminology). Nevertheless these two sequences do not function as exclusive compartments. They are mutually integrated by means of thematic parallels (cf Mt 4:23; 9:35 with 10:6ff), cross-references (cf Mt 16:19 with 18:18; 23:13), prospection (cf Mt 5:12 with 23:34ff) and retrospection (cf Mt 14:13-21; 15:32-39 with 16:9ff). This mutual integration of the pre-paschal Jesus commission and the post-paschal disciples' commission relates to the comment above by Strecker, that the 'historical element' in the Gospel of Matthew has gained an eschatological quality and the 'eschatological element' has again been historicized. It is exactly what I want to express by means of the transparency concept. Aguirre (1981:152) formulates it as follows:

Matthew contains a level of narration, grounded in tradition and embodying an historical perspective on the past – though seen through faith and hence idealized. But there is also a second level that makes this past narrative relevant to the present needs of Matthew's community. Though neither level of discourse is ever totally absent, in some contexts one level may take precedence over the other, and the Gospel will slip imperceptibly from one to the other.

(Aguirre 1981:152)

Kingsbury's use of the time formula ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις in Matthew 3:1; 24:19, 22, 29, to support his point of view, is not valid here either. Similarly, this is the main reason that I differ from Kingsbury regarding the beginning of the Jesus commission. Since I do not draw a distinction between the singular form of the time formula ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ and the plural form ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις, I have pointed out that this time formula marks both the first sequence (Mt 3:1; 7:22; 13:1; 22:23) and the end of the second sequence (Mt 24:19, 22, 29). The time formula concerned has in other words an eschatological connotation in the so-called eschatological discourse (chapters 23-25), but not in Matthew 3:1. Kingsbury therefore integrates the pre-paschal Jesus commission with the post-paschal disciples' commission, with the result that the continuity and analogy between them are thereby lost.

It is therefore important to realize that the shift between these two sequences takes place at Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Trilling (1969a, 1969b), in two separate articles, has convincingly shown that the *Wende der Zeit* takes place at this point in the Gospel of Matthew (cf Meier 1975:207). He writes in the first article that Matthew 27:51ff is highly remarkable, since the death of Jesus not only causes the veil to tear - which signifies the end of the old cultic order - but also causes an earthquake and the resurrection of the dead. These are eschatological signs: The earthquake belongs to the apocalyptic elements; it marks the beginning of the end and the rearrangement of the world (Trilling 1969a:195). The same point of view is expressed in the second article when he states that, in regard to Matthew 27:51f, these verses can only be seen as an announcement, through the death of Jesus, of the beginning of the new aeon, a change that encloses the whole cosmos. It is a dramatic anticipation of Jesus' resurrection in the story of Jesus' death. It announces the destruction of the old and the dawning of the new time (Trilling 1969b:221f).

Because of difference with Kingsbury in this important matter regarding the *Wende der Zeit* in the Gospel of Matthew, I consider that he mistakenly wished to separate the 'time of the Old Testament' from the time of the *earthly* Jesus as Emmanuel (the first sequence) and, as far as I am concerned, also from the time of the *risen* Jesus as Emmanuel (the second sequence).

Meier (1975:207; 1976:30-35) also considers that the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus introduces the *Wende der Zeit*. He, however, holds the view that there is a radical distinction between the 'old time' and the 'new time'. He equates the 'old time' with the 'time of the Old Testament' and thus the demand for obedience to the Mosaic law and the time of Jewish particularism. He equates the 'new time' with the period of the universal purport, which began with the death and resurrection of Jesus and was foreshadowed during the 'old time' by texts such as Matthew 8:5-13 and 15:21-28. Meier builds his argument chiefly on the baptismal command to the disciples with regard to the πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Mt 28:19). According to him baptism replaces circumcision, which symbolized the 'old time'. Just as the particular purport went over into the particular, the demand for obedience to the Mosaic law, according to Meier, falls away with Jesus' death and resurrection. Variations on this view are encountered in Trilling (1964:211) and Hammerton-Kelly (1972).

What these scholars did not take into account, however, is that the use of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Matthew can be seen as a narrative technique which principally has the same function as narrator's commentary. Narrator's commentary serves the reader as an important directive to read the narrative as the

narrator intends it to be read. The introductory formula of the fulfilment citations can, seen thus, be regarded as the introduction to the narrator's commentary. By means of Scriptural proof and fulfilment citation the Old Testament functions in the Gospel of Matthew as the narrator's commentary, on which he bases the continuity and analogy between the pre-paschal Jesus commission and the post-paschal disciples' commission. This continuity and analogy lies in the presence of Jesus as God-with-us on both temporal levels. And Jesus' Emmanuel nature is manifested in his absolute obedience to the will of the Father (the 'law and the prophets'). Barr (1976:357f) has therefore rightly remarked that the relationship between *prophecy* (the 'time of the Old Testament') and *fulfilment* (the 'time of Jesus' and the 'time of the church') is not one of *antithesis*, but one of *completion*.

Just like Barr, Senior (1976:672f) also considers that Matthew uses the Old Testament to build a continuity and analogy between his Jesus-image (first sequence) and his disciple/church-image (second sequence). One finds the same conviction in Aguirre (1981). Although these scholars do not adopt an approach that explicitly takes into account the manifestation of the narrative point of view on the temporal level, the result of our investigation (with regard to the place and nature of the 'time of the Old Testament') largely agrees with their views on the levels of the pre-paschal Jesus commission and the post-paschal disciples' commission. I will now give a short explanation of this result.

9.4 THE FUNCTION OF THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Gospel of Matthew is circumscribed by Jesus' genealogical register (Mt 1:2-17) and the commission to the disciples (Mt 28:16-20). The genealogical register relates Jesus' origin and authoritative service with the Old Testament message (Abraham-David). The commission to the disciples relates the service of the ἐκκλησία with that of Jesus. In effect, the pre-paschal Jesus commission and the post-paschal disciples' commission are both linked to the Old Testament message (the 'law and the prophets'). In traditional theologoumena terms this means that the theology of the Gospel of Matthew is neither ecclesiological (cf e g Strecker 1966) nor christological (cf e g Kingsbury 1975), but that ecclesiology and christology, as a result of the God-with-us theology of the Gospel of Matthew, are a two-part unit (cf e g Frankemölle 1974:230, 239, 243). On the levels of both the pre-paschal Jesus commission and the post-paschal disciples' commission the Old Testament message (the 'law and the prophets') functions as the directive medium. This statement can be debated as follows.

Matthew 5:17-20 functions in the gospel as the key to the lasting validity of the Old Testament message. Jesus did not come to make the Old Testament invalid and replace it, but to illustrate its true meaning in his actions and disposition, and thus 'fulfill' it. This disposition contrasts, according to Matthew, sharply with that of the Jewish leaders. It is thus in obedience to the will of the Father that Jesus turns to the 'sinners' among the Jewish nation (Mt 9:13) – an obedience stripped of formalism (cf e.g. the question of keeping the Sabbath – Matthew 12:1-8; keeping the law – Matthew 15:1-6; temple service – Matthew 17:24-27; 21:12-17). His service is the embodiment of the core of the demand of the 'law and the prophets' (cf Mt 22:34-40). He is the perfect example of the absolutely obedient 'Son of God'. As far as discipleship is concerned, the following remark by Senior is important: 'To be a disciple of this Master is not to abandon one's heritage, but to bring that heritage to its fullest potential.' The success of the disciples' executing their call to be Jesus' helpers, and the criterion that will count during the parousia, are determined by obedience to God's will – the 'law and the prophets'. It is however not obedience to the 'law and the prophets' as such that will separate the sheep from the goats (Mt 25:38). The authority of the Old Testament is relevant 'only to the degree that they [the 'law and the prophets'] are embodied in the commands of Jesus' (McConnell 1969:97; cf Mt 7:28f; 22:16).

Nevertheless, scholars such as McConnell (1969:90) and Kingsbury (1977:82ff) point out the paradox between Matthew 5:17-20 and Matthew 5:21-48 (the so-called 'antithesis'). I have already mentioned that Matthew 5:17-20 explicitly states that Matthew considered that it was not Jesus' intention to reduce the validity of the Old Testament (cf Mt 24:35). It, however, seems that this very same positive approach regarding to the Old Testament can at least not be made applicable to the third 'antithesis' – the prohibition on divorce (Mt 5:31f; cf Mt 19:3-12; see i a Sigal 1979:104-146), the fourth 'antithesis' – the prohibition on oaths (Mt 5:33-37) – and the fifth 'antithesis' – the nullifying of the doctrine of retribution (Mt 5:38-42). Strecker (1978:69f) for example, on the basis of a traditional *redaktionsgeschichtliche* investigation, formulates his findings by stating that it is important to note that, in the distinction between 'real' (pre-Matthean) and 'false' (redactional) antitheses, the alternatives 'tightening the Torah' or 'annulment of the Torah' do not constitute a sufficient criterium. In antitheses 1 and 2 (verse 21ff and 28ff) the wording of the Old Testament is radicalized. However, in antithesis 4 (v 33f) the Old Testament oath is not only outdone, but totally abolished. Concerning the redactional antithesis, only antithesis 3 (v 31f) annuls the Old Testament law. Antithesis 5 (v 38ff), however, specifically criticizes the Old Testament *ius taliones*. The Matthean Jesus does not mention the will of God only with regard to the Jewish tradition, but also in critical analysis of the Mosaic Torah, in order to 'fulfill' its true sense.

Other examples of the use of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Matthew, like the picking and eating of the ears of corn on the Sabbath (Mt 12:1-8; see Sigal 1979:147-168), the healing of the man with the shrivelled hand (Mt 12:9-14; see i a Sigal 1979:168-176) and the interpretation of the regulations regarding what is clean and what unclean (Mt 15:1-20), can in a certain sense in this context be added to the third, fourth and fifth antitheses.

The resolution of the paradox should be sought in the manner in which Matthew took over traditions. Boers (1980:229) formulates Matthew's approach as follows: '...Matthew is a master of his material, which is especially evident in the fact that he produced a new, coherent whole without suppressing all the meanings that were already present in his material...'

Matthew uses the 'law and the prophets', as the will of the Father in heaven, to give authority to his ideological perspective. In as much as Jesus as God-with-us is the embodiment of the will of the Father, his mission (pre-paschal and post-paschal) is cloaked with authority (see i a Mt 28:18). This ἐξουσία manifests in the Moses-like teaching and the healing miracles of the Son of David. The *teaching* and the *healings* have as their content the *proclamation* of the gospel of the Βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν (cf Van Aarde 1980b:7-10, 24). What is therefore remarkable is the fact that it is the fulfilment citations, in particular, which emphasize these moments of teaching and healing as the realization of the 'law and the prophets' (cf i a Senior 1976:674; Combrink 1979:55). Those fulfilment citations in Matthew 4:14ff, 8:17, 12:17ff and 13:35 (and other Old Testament citations and allusions) that indicate Jesus' public service, as well as Old Testament motifs that are behind some of his christological names as indications of his task (cf i a Senior 1976:673; Rotfuchs 1969:121-128), cannot be seen as separate from Jesus' mission to the Jewish multitude and the Gentiles, and the opposition of the Jewish leaders. The interest of some fulfilment citations indeed lies in the conviction that the life and work of Jesus, as the revelation of God's grace, is meant for the lost ones from the house of Israel as well as for the other nations (Rotfuchs 1969:103; cf Senior 1976:675).

The fulfilment of the 'law and the prophets' by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew should be understood as a reduction of the Old Testament to the single instruction to *love* one's neighbor (cf Sand 1974:192). By 'reduction' I do not mean the legitimization of only a part of the Old Testament – the 'core' which, according to Matthew, would be the commandment to love – (see Luz 1978:400f). For Matthew, the call to love serves rather as the hermeneutic key according to which obedience to the whole 'law and the prophets' is demanded. To Matthew the authoritative explanation of the law by Jesus, in which the call to love should have precedence in all circumstances, and on which all the other laws are dependent, is crucial (Luz 1978:420).

Obedience to the call to love concretizes in the Gospel of Matthew in the service of the earthly Jesus as Emmanuel (the first sequence) with regard to the Jewish multitude in particular, but to the Gentiles as well – the indicative. During the period of the mission to all the people (the second sequence) the disciples were expected to continue this radical call to love by analogy with the example set by Jesus himself, the embodiment of absolute obedience to the will of the Father – the imperative. McConnel (1969:90) refers to this imperative which was to be realized in the service of disciples:

It is necessary that the disciples have a 'better righteousness' (5:20)...and this means performing the commands of Jesus which primarily concern showing love to God and to one's neighbour. As the parable of the sheep and the goats reveals, judgement is based on whether one has shown mercy to the needy (25:31ff). Matthew emphasized that judgement takes place according to one's works or his doing the will of God (7:16-17).

(McConnel 1969:90)

The analogical continuity between the disciples' service in the period of their mission to the πάντα τὰ ἔθνη in the second sequence (the universal purport) and the service of Jesus in the first sequence thus manifests in loving care towards the Jewish multitude (the particular purport), while the mission to the Gentiles is assumed. This continuity and analogy between the first sequence and the second is thus dialectically based on the one hand in the presence of Jesus as Emmanuel in both sequences and on the other in the obedience to the will of the Father (the 'law and the prophets') during both sequences.

As far as the former is concerned: 'His [Jesus Emmanuel's] bond with the disciples [and thus with the church] is repeatedly stressed by means of...catch-phrases such as 'with them', 'with you', 'with me'. And the abiding presence of Jesus...is a promise without end (18:20; 28:20)....[T]he risen Lord is present wherever a community of people hear the gospel and respond with...compassion and service' (Senior 1976:676).

As far as the latter is concerned, Jesus' way is the disciples' way, and the congregation who follows suit is reminded by Matthew, as by his predecessors, of the consequences of the following of Jesus. This following demands an instruction about its reason and meaning, which is strongly emphasized in the Matthean gospel through the five Jesus discourses which are referred to in Matthew 28:20 (πάντα ὅσα ἐντειλάμην ὑμῖν). The content of this instruction is God's long-standing will. As Jesus fulfilled it totally, so the disciples are called upon to fulfill God's will, which includes 'being with him' (Frankemölle 1974:82)

The closing words (Mt 13:52) of the parable discourse (Mt 13:1-51) express this analogy between the Jesus-image and the disciple-image, based in the radicalized Jesus-interpretation of the 'law and the prophets' (the 'old' and the 'new' in one): 'Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old' (Mt 13:52). Vorster (1977b:136) therefore rightly comments as follows on Matthew 13:52: '...the disciples are reminded of how Jesus in his teaching and work made the old things new and how he interpreted old traditions in a radically new way and are thus informed of how they should go about with what they already know but also with their newly acquired knowledge of the kingdom.'

Within the framework of the sequence of the pre-paschal Jesus commission Jesus functions as the protagonist's obedience to the 'law and the prophets' against the disobedience of the Jewish leaders as the antagonists. The δικαιοσύνη of the Jewish leaders, as the so-called 'sons of the kingdom' and 'teachers of the law of Moses', manifests generally as external formalistic show, without love for the outcasts. The disciples as Jesus' assumed helpers are warned against the διδασχὴ of the Jewish leaders and called to a δικαιοσύνη πλείον τῶν γραμματέων καὶ Φαρισαίων (Mt 5:20). This amounts to the following:

Both the disciples and the scribes and Pharisees have righteousness... This, however, does not mean that the righteousness of the two groups is identical. Jesus demands that the righteousness of the disciples is to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. This does not mean that the disciples are to live according to a different law but that they are to live according to a different interpretation of the law...The goal of this type of conduct is perfection...The disciples are to observe everything that Jesus commanded.

(Przybylski 1980:87)

The consequence is that the call to obedience to the will of God, as expressed in the 'law and the prophets', is present in both sequences, amid an analogically continuing opposition (see Aguirre 1981:152f). Jesus, as the embodiment of the will of God, is obedient unto death on the pre-paschal temporal level. The same must be said of the disciples during their post-paschal commission. In this event, the risen Jesus is *God-with-us* until the completion of the age.