JESUS THE JEW: ESCHATOLOGICAL PROPHET, GALILEAN HASID OR CYNIC SAGE?

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY

in the subject

NEW TESTAMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

PROMOTER: PROFESSOR PJJ BOTHA

OCTOBER 1995

BEDANKINGS

Soveel mense het oor 'n leeftyd 'n vormende invloed op my gehad. Met betrekking tot hierdie proefskrif is ek 'n paar uitsonderlike mense dank veskuldig.

Hoe kan 'n mens die dank verwoord wat ek aan Professor WS Vorster verskuldig is? Hy het my uitgedaag om my denkhorisonne te oorskry en sodoende vir my wêrelde laat oopgaan wat ek my skaars sou kon indink. Sy dood was vir ons almal meer as net 'n persoonlike verlies.

Aan Professor PJJ Botha my vriend vir byna twee dekades: "Pieter, dankie dat jy ten spyte van al die implikasies bereid was om onder moeilike omstandighede as promotor oor te neem. Ek het na jou toe gekom omdat ek die hoogste agting vir jou akademiese integriteit het. Die leiding wat jy aan my gegee het, het hierdie integriteit bevestig.

Vir Jan Bester, my medeleraar en goeie vriend: "Jan, dankie vir jou luister en veral vir jou eindelose ure van geduld met die gereedmaak van hierdie manuskrip. Met so 'n medeleraar soos jy, het 'n man nie vriende nodig nie!"

Vir Edith, my vrou, moet een woord alles omsluit - "Dankie vir jou liefde." Aan Iaan en Francois en later ook Riaan, julle ken my as julle studerende pa, ek hoop dat dit ook vir julle rede tot trots en inspirasie sal wees.

ABSTRACT

The diversity of Jesus images that resulted from historical Jesus research poses the single most pressing problem of the research endeavour. Diverse historical images lead one to ask questions about historiography. It is a fact that we do not have bruta facta in history but only interpretations of what might have happened.

The problem of diverse images is taken up in this thesis. Three different images that are the result of different points of departure and different methods of research are closely scrutinised. The images are: Eschatological prophet, Cynic sage and Galilean Hasid.

After close examination of each of these images one has to conclude that each of them is a viable image. One may question the proponents of each of these images on methodological aspects as well as their presuppositions. This line of questioning would not solve the problem. One would also expand the problem if one were to seek yet another image.

A way out of this impasse would be to try to understand the diversity. Is there an image that could explain the diversity? The modern diversity of Jesus images is a continuation of an ancient diversity that one could find in the ancient texts at our disposal. From this we could deduce that Jesus was understood differently by different people from the onset.

The challenge is to find an image that would clarify the diversity. What sort of Jesus would have been understood in so many ways? We have reason to take Jesus to be a Jew from Galilee. If we could find a Galilean Jewish image that would explain the diversity, we would be very near the historical Jesus.

The image of the Galilean Hasid is a very promising option. Some of the kingdom sayings, that are most probably authentic, were taken as test cases to see whether they could have been uttered by a Galilean charismatic and later interpreted as Cynic and/or eschatological. The conclusion is that the image of Galilean charismatic would open up new avenues to approach the diversity of images of the historical Jesus.

KEY WORDS

Jesus the Jew; Eschatological prophet; Galilean Hasid; Cynic sage; Diversity; Apocalyptic; Kingdom sayings; Son of man; Hellenism in Palestine; Cynics; Charismatic Judaism; Titles of Jesus; Two source hypothesis.

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"HISTORIANS RELATE NOT SO MUCH WHAT IS DONE AS WHAT THEY WOULD HAVE BELIEVED" -BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

CHAPTER I
THE PROBLEM OF DIVERSE IMAGES IN HISTORICAL JESUS RESEARCH

1 INTRODUCTION

Why do researchers go to all the trouble of historical Jesus research? Historical Jesus research is mostly referred to as problematic. The reason for this is not only the question of its probability and possibility (Bultmann 1960) but also the different images of Jesus that resulted from historical research. Crossan (1991:xxvii) even observed that it became a scholarly bad joke. This is because diverse and contradictory images of Jesus put the whole historical research endeavour in jeopardy. Different historical images reflected that research was biased towards the views of the researchers. The results were in many instances not historically reliable, because the theological points of departure of many of the researchers played a major role in the outcome of their research.

Although belief in Jesus supersedes what could be historically known about him, the fact still remains that he was a person who lived in a certain place at a certain time and had a tremendous effect on the history of the world. One needs only to look at the furore the film of director Martin Scorsese "*The last temptation of Christ*" unleashed in America (Time 15 August 1988. A holy furore, pp 2-10) and also in South Africa, to understand that we cannot escape the fact that Christianity is bound to a historical person, Jesus of Nazareth. The reaction that

Scorsese's interpretation of Jesus evoked, emphasises the importance of a historically justifiable image of Jesus. For this reason it is imperative to consider the historical images we have of Jesus. We have to ask ourselves whether they are justifiable by the rigours of historiography.

With this thesis I wish to assess some of the major divergent historical images of Jesus. The reason for this assessment is to examine their validity in the light of their claims to being the only valid historical portrayals of Jesus. Because supporters of opposing images make the same claims to validity, we are faced with the question of which image, if any, is correct.

For a proper assessment of the historical interpretations one has to use the tools and results of historical research. The validity of a historical image of Jesus has to be historically investigated. One of the underlying factors that gave rise to the problems of historical Jesus research, was that it was done mostly for theological reasons by people with theological interests. Therefore the theological stance of a researcher working on the historical Jesus has to be noted as a presupposition so that the validity of his research can be investigated on historical grounds (Vorster 1990:198).

In the following paragraphs we are going to look at the presuppositions that are to be found in the title of this thesis.

The title of this thesis makes a statement and asks a question. The statement is that Jesus was a Jew. The question is, what type of Jew was he? The question has to be answered on historical grounds so that the statement can be appreciated.

1.1 The Jewishness of Jesus as point of departure

To say that Jesus was a Jew, means that he has to be understood as part of his social, religious and political environment. For a long time the historical research on Jesus had been focused on the extent of Jesus' continuity or contrast with Judaism. The reason for this was the theological stance of both early Christianity and first century Judaism that emphasised the differences between these religions. This emphasis on difference was the outcome of the way that both early Christianity and Judaism defined themselves. Their self definition was largely based on the argument that the other is what the self is not. The main point of contention boiled down to the place and the meaning of Jesus in their respective religions.

As a result of this it was accepted without question that Jesus broke with Judaism and that he could be understood in contrast to Judaism.

Even if it could be proved without reasonable doubt that Jesus broke with Judaism, we still have to study him as a Jew that came from Nazareth, lived in Galilee, belonged to a certain walk of life and lived at a certain time. The one hard, irrefutable fact we have about Jesus is his Jewishness (Harrington 1987b:1). His Jewish environment played a rôle in his way of speaking, the way he thought and in the way he acted. Even the way in which he criticised the Jewish traditions of his time, accentuates his Jewishness.

The view that there was a contrast between Jesus and Judaism, is also due to a conception that Judaism was a unitary system with no divergencies. As soon as a person broke with what was seen as the essentials of Judaism, he was also perceived as someone who broke with

those things that made him a Jew.

The views of Käsemann are good examples of the opinion that Jesus broke with Judaism. Käsemann took Jesus' use of ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω in the fourth antithesis of the sermon on the mount, as Jesus' claim of an authority over and above Moses. He interpreted it as a break with Judaism (Käsemann 1954:144). Käsemann clearly pursued the identity of Jesus from the supposed contrast between him and Judaism.

On the other hand we also have the view that Jesus was in fact true to Judaism and was always part of it. This view was prevalent among some Jewish scholars that endeavoured to reclaim Jesus for Judaism. Constantin Brunner saw him as the super Jew (Kac 1986:26), and Martin Buber saw him as his great brother (Kac 1986:27). The most significant contribution in this sense was made by David Flusser with his wish that the Jews would rediscover Jesus for themselves (Kac 1986:41). These Jewish scholars had an openness towards Jesus that served to emphasise his Jewishness in spite of what was made of him by both Jews and Christians.

1.2 The place of Jesus in Judaism

As our knowledge of the social and cultural environment of Jesus increases, the view that Judaism was a unitary system, is fading away (Nickelsburg 1993:1). A great influence was exerted in this regard by the Qumran scrolls that made it possible to identify a divergent group within Judaism (Harrington 1987b:5-6). Palestinian Judaism is no longer seen as an autonomous phenomenon untouched by any other influence. It is rather, part of a wider Greco-Roman world (Harrington 1987a:35;

Nickelsburg & Kraft 1986:11; Porton 1986:59). The contact between East and West has a long history and could be taken back as far as we have historical data (Porton 1986:57). The Judaic or Hellenistic features of Jesus' ministry do not point to his continuity or contrast with Judaism. It serves to highlight the complexities of the society in which he lived. The diversity of first century Palestine was not only restricted to the different cultures and their role in society. Within the Jewish culture there was a large diversity as well.

Those acts and sayings that were used to imply a contrast between Jesus and Judaism, should rather be seen as an expression of diversity within Judaism. This becomes even more clear as we perceive the influence of Hellenism on the Jewish society and the way that different groups reacted to Hellenism (Porton 1986:57-80). Porton, with the inclusion of the Samaritans, distinguished nine distinct groups within Jewish society (Porton 1986:63). These groups could be divided even further within themselves. He warns us to be aware of these differences and not to gloss over them to merely satisfy our perceptions (Porton 1986:73)

The diversity in Judaism is further emphasised by the work of Harvey Falk (1985) with its focus on the differences between the rabbinical schools of Shammai and Hillel in Judaism between 20 BC and AD 70. Bowker (1973) also depicts diverse groups and views in Judaism. Even within a certain view of life, like the eschatological, there was a diversity (Yarbro Collins 1991:220). This means that not only the views within Judaism differed widely, but that there were differences in a particular viewpoint within Judaism, so that not even particular views

should be seen as governed by a monolithic Judaic dogma (Nickelsburg 1993:104). A difference in opinion with some group or the other would hardly mean a break with Judaism.

To establish that Jesus broke with Judaism would be, in the light of the above, more difficult than previously thought. An important reason for this is the fact that religion and everyday life were an integrated whole. To break with one's religion meant that one broke with the very fibre of one's nationality. The dispute between the Samaritans and the Jews illustrate that, despite internal diversities, the Jewish nationality was built upon the conviction that they were the Children of Israel (Purvis 1986:92).

It could further be asked with which Judaism Jesus broke? Because as we have seen, differences were tolerated and acknowledged, it would prove extremely difficult to indicate a break with the whole Jewish society and every line of thought within it.

The certainty of the Jewishness of Jesus necessitates that this investigation should include only works that use this point of departure. The book of Vermes "***Jesus the Jew***" is an obvious choice for our investigation in the light of the criterion above. Vermes himself is a Jew and this will give us the added opportunity to see Jesus as he is interpreted by a Jew. In addition to Vermes, Sanders' book "***Jesus and Judaism***" and the works of Mack and Downing that will be discussed, use the Jewishness of Jesus as a point of departure. In the case of Mack and Downing the Jewishness of Jesus was seen against the background of the influence that Hellenism had on the Jewish environment in the first century. This is one of the main points of contention between

Sanders and the people who use the Hellenistic influence as one of their premises.

The problem of diversity that will be surveyed below and forms the main problem with which this thesis is concerned, is already present in the statement about the Jewishness of Jesus. As we have seen, the environment in which Jesus lived was multi-faceted. The question is therefore not, was Jesus a Jew or not, but rather, where does he fit into the many facets of Judaism? What type of Jew would his contemporaries have thought him to be? We shall have to make out how Jesus interconnected with the seamless web of the Judaism of his time.

2 THE PROBLEM OF DIFFERENT IMAGES OF JESUS

As the question in the title shows, this thesis will focus on the problem of the diverse historical images that we have of Jesus. The diversity of historical images puts the whole historical research endeavour in question (Meynell 1983:52-57). The diversity of images reflects negatively on the point of departure and methods used in historical Jesus research. If one looks at the history of historical Jesus research, it becomes clear that the different images that developed posed the most urgent problem of the whole endeavour. In the following paragraphs we will take a glance at the influence the diverse images had on the different phases of the research venture.

2.1 Different images of Jesus in historical Jesus research

Any student of the New Testament will be aware of the fact that Albert Schweitzer effectively brought about the end of the nineteenth

century positivistic quest of the historical Jesus (Robinson 1983:32). His book ***Die Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung: von Reimarus zu Wrede*** (1906) portrayed the fact that the researchers of the nineteenth century drew the picture of Jesus that they found most in accordance with their own views. To write history as it happened, as the researchers of the enlightenment thought possible, was shown to be untenable because so many different images of the historical Jesus came about (Schweitzer 1963).

One of the repercussions of Schweitzer's research was that the historical quest came virtually to a standstill. The leading figure in this stage was Bultmann (Robinson 1983:3). It was under his influence that the quest of the historical Jesus was seen to be illegitimate and impossible (Bultmann 1960:1-25). He was more concerned with the theological reasons not to undertake a historical quest, than with methodological problems(Bultmann 1960:18-20). For him the different images was a result of the nature of the texts that made it impossible to go behind the kerygma to what Jesus actually said and did. In the so called new quest, the same problem of different images prevailed. Although their view of history and what could be achieved by historical investigation, differed largely from that of the original quest, they still had the same problems (Robinson 1983:94). In 1959 Robinson pointed out that at that stage he had hope for the possibility of the new quest (Robinson 1983:48-72). Despite the high hopes of the new quest, Kümmel (1985:535) concluded, at the end of his book on the thirty years of Jesus research from 1950 to 1980, that there is a shocking number of views that contradicted one another and in many instances excluded other views. This left an impres-

sion of a total chaos.

The outcome of the new quest after thirty years did not look better than that of the previous quest. The main problem was still posed by the diversity of images of Jesus. It is this diversity that still prompts new research and new ways to work with the problems that it poses.

We are now in what is termed the third quest by some researchers (Van Aarde 1991:1), or as Borg (1988:284) termed it, the interdisciplinary quest. As it is with each new endeavour, we have hope to resolve the problem of different images, but we have not achieved it yet. Harrington (1987:36) makes us aware of at least seven current images of Jesus: as eschatological prophet, as a political revolutionary, as a magician, as a Hillelite, as an Essene, as a Galilean charismatic and as a Galilean Rabbi.

The interdisciplinary approach has not solved the problem of diversity up to now. It appears as if it created a few new images like the storied Jesus of Hans Frei, the existential-historical Jesus of Schubert Ogden and Jesus as story-teller by James Breech (Batdorf 1984:195-197).

A possible solution for this historical problem has to be sought. We have to come to a point where we have to understand the ambiguity of history (Tracy 1987:66-69). This would imply that we open ourselves to conversation with the texts (Tracy 1987). Conversation implies that we have to be aware of the fact that we are working with language. In this conversation we will have to be open to a hermeneutical process. This process entails that we do not enforce our views on our subject matter. Our own history and the history of the other, in this case Jesus of

Nazareth, will have to interplay. This calls for a hermeneutics of both retrieval and suspicion (Tracy 1987:77). In this specific case we will have to retrieve as much about the time of Jesus and its social particularities as possible (Malina 1991:8). We will, at the same time, have to be suspicious about our own preconceptions (Bowden 1988:136). This entails that, for instance, we will have to make out whether the problem of diverse images of Jesus is not only our own problem. Is it not because of our own theological views that Jesus is supposed to have only one image? Could a person in the time of Jesus have been understood in diverse ways by different people without creating the problems of our historical sensibilities?

2.2 Early Christianity was not a unitary system

The fact that the writers of the texts about Jesus did not interpret him in the same manner, gives us reason to assume that there were divergent views about Jesus. The inventories of Crossan show us that a third of the Jesus material is attested more than once (Crossan 1991:434). Two thirds of the material are thus unique to their respective authors. This phenomenon could be interpreted as an indication of how divergent the views on Jesus were.

The one third of the Jesus material that is attested more than once, is in most cases used in diverse contexts and for different purposes. This is a further indication of the diversity of the interpretation of Jesus at the earliest levels of the Jesus tradition. Dunn (1977:80) draws the same conclusions, although he thought that the unifying strand was much larger than that which an inventory of the Jesus tradition shows it to be.

Crossan (1991:xxxi) aptly summarises the beginning of the process: "Jesus left behind him thinkers not memorizers, disciples not reciters, people not parrots."

What is true about first century Judaism is also true for the primitive church, they were both full of divergencies. The primitive church may thus have been more diverse than we were inclined to think before (Nickelsburg 1993:2). The notion that the church was a unity with a scope of tolerable diversity is increasingly questioned. Markus (1980:3) blames this view on Eusebius' view of the history of the church that portrayed the church as an orthodox unit from which the later sects broke away. Many of the divergencies that were later seen as the hallmark of the so called sects, can be directly ascribed to some of the primitive communities (Markus 1980:2).

The primitive communities had no elaborate doctrinal systems or institutional structures. Their appeal were in their intimate fellowship that gave alienated people a sense of belonging (Markus 1980:3).

Archaeological evidence collected at Nazareth, Capernaum and Bethany, supports the view that the early church was not an orthodox monolith. This is disclosed by the different series of Christian shrines found on top of another at various archaeological sites. The architecture of these shrines points to different types of beliefs held by their builders. The difference in the orientation of the shrines, the iconography, the graffiti on the walls and the different languages, all point to a rich diversity in the early church (Strange 1983:21). Strange concludes on archaeological grounds, that reality is more complicated than what we came to believe.

We have to take account of the fissures in early Christianity that ran along several lines. We are able to identify an urban-rural split, the divisions created by status and rank, wealth and poverty gave rise to diversity as did ethnic identity (Strange 1983:21). The fact that Christianity flourished in at least five different cultures, also resulted in diversity (Cupitt 1972:135).

The eucharist provides us with another example of diversity in earliest Christianity. We have to be aware that the earliest texts that give us clear unambiguous evidence on the words of the institution of the eucharist, are the church fathers (Smith & Taussig 1990:15). The New Testament opens up a vista on different banquets that were an integral part of life in the first century. In Hellenistic society banquets were an important part of the social interaction of people that formed societies or clubs for people with the same interests. The Jewish society held common meals in equal high esteem, we can deduce that many of the rabbinical discussions took place at meals. These multiple meals that took place in multiple settings, were later taken out of their multiplicity into orthodox liturgies for the eucharist (Smith & Taussig 1990:37).

We have to be aware that the meal practices of Jesus that are reflected in the Gospels, give us an insight into the meal practices of the community in which the particular gospel functioned (Smith & Taussig 1990:51). Thus the Markan narrative on the meal focuses on the call of discipleship as a call to martyrdom (Smith & Taussig 1990:54). Luke-Acts portrays a community where the breaking of bread signified the unity and cohesion of the community (Smith & Taussig 1990:57). Matthew transformed the Markan meal material to emphasise the

sacrificial nature of the meal (Smith & Taussig 1990:59). The differences between Paul and Peter in Antioch also originated in their interpretation of the Christian banquet (Smith & Taussig 1990:59-63).

From the diverse meal practices that became unified in an orthodox liturgy, we are made aware that there was diversity even in those Christian acts that we perceive to be of a unifying nature.

2.3 Assessment

We find two strains of diversity when we survey the historical Jesus. The first could be called modern diversity and the second ancient diversity.

Modern diversity came about because of the prejudices of the modern researchers as well as the nature of the texts that we have about Jesus. Both prejudice and the nature of the texts resulted in a divergence of images of the historical Jesus. The diverse images of the historical Jesus discredited historical research and gave the whole research endeavour a problematic tone.

Ancient diversity is only recently being recognised. The reason for this is the fact that church fathers such as Eusebius promoted a view of an orthodox Christianity that stemmed from the apostles and was the bench mark of "true" Christianity . Because the researchers were mostly tied by their own dogmatic presuppositions, they never questioned the notion of an orthodox unity.

One has to be aware that the views stated above on ancient diversity are not taken for granted in New testament scholarship as a whole.

W.R. Farmer, the American scholar and supporter of John Knox, is

best known for his critique on the two document hypothesis. Wendell Willis (1987:265-286) pointed out that the basis of Farmer's theology is the view that the development of the early church was a peaceful process, formed around a core gospel that could be traced to Jesus himself.

Farmer advocated the view that the gospels were written to assist an ecumenical tendency in the first century. He argued that there was a basic agreement between Peter and Paul. The incident at Antioch could be overcome because they both agreed on God's acceptance of the outsider. The theology of God's acceptance of the outsider could be traced to Jesus (Willis 1987:268). Farmer left place for division amongst Christians in his reconstruction. This division was mainly caused by the difference between the mission to the Gentiles and the Jewish mission that sought to live in harmony with the Jewish community. According to Farmer this diversity was tolerated and did not lead to strife (Willis 1987:272-273). Out of this follows a conviction that a historically acceptable reconstruction of Jesus could be made. This reconstruction is able to indicate a development in the words and deeds of Jesus (Willis 1987:282).

From Willis' interpretation of the views of Farmer, I wish to point to a few fundamental problems of Farmer's reconstruction of the early church and the life of Jesus.

The first problem relates to the nature of the gospels. The diversity of the gospels in their use of the same basic materials do not point to a development that stemmed from ecumenical interests. If the gospels had been interested in promoting unity, they would have used the material

in more similar ways. When we look at the gospels we find that roughly the same material was used in diverse ways. This would surely point to a movement away from unity. Each gospel wanted to promote its own interpretation of the material. The fact that the diverse gospels were taken up in the same canon was *the* unifying act, and that took place at a much later stage. The preoccupation of the writers of the earliest synopses indicate that the diversity amongst the gospels in the same canon posed a problem.

The consequences of Farmer's construction for historical Jesus research is also significant, but brings us to a second fundamental problem. As soon as the gospels become witnesses to a unified Christianity, it becomes easy to read from them into the historical Jesus. It is then possible to see a development in the thought and conduct of Jesus as the answer to some of the diversity encountered in the gospels.

As we have seen above, and will encounter further, the composition of the gospels is not that uncomplicated. There is a vast number of historical, sociological and literary circumstances that have to be taken into account if we wish to use the gospels as witnesses to the historical Jesus.

It is how these circumstances of ancient diversity are interpreted, or disregarded, that is one of the main reasons for modern diversity. We shall see that the pattern of ancient diversity was followed by modern diversity so that both boils down to eschatology versus a non-eschatological image.

3 THE ESCHATOLOGICAL JESUS VERSUS OTHER IMAGES

Even a superficial look at the results of historical Jesus research will reveal that there is a division of images along the lines of eschatological and non-eschatological.

Albert Schweitzer (1963:vi) drew a division between the historical images of Jesus along the lines of eschatological and non-eschatological. He concluded that Weiss was correct in taking the first steps to recognise this division (1963:237).

We still find ourselves in the same dilemma. The division between the images still runs between eschatological and non-eschatological. Sanders (1992:11) argues against the non-eschatological images of Jesus and concludes that the eschatological image is the only one that does justice to Jesus' Jewish background.

It is therefore imperative that our examination should at least include an eschatological image. The image of Jesus as prophet of restoration eschatology of Sanders (**Jesus and Judaism** 1985) is the best current example of an eschatological image. Likewise we will have to examine those works that deny the eschatological content of Jesus' life and seek his identity in wisdom. Here we will concentrate on Downing (**Christ and the Cynics** 1988), Mack (**A Myth of innocence** 1988)and Crossan (**The historical Jesus** 1991).

4 THE REASONS FOR DIVERSE IMAGES

Before we study the different images of Jesus, it is imperative to try and understand the reasons for the diversity. The reasons for the diversity will underscore the complexity of the question. This will keep

us from looking for an easy answer to a very complex situation.

4.1 Historiography is an interpretation of what happened

When we use the phrase "historical Jesus", it does not mean Jesus as he was. It means Jesus as constructed with the tools of the historian (Robinson 1983:26). The reasons for the diversity are all connected to the fact that we are busy with historiography. In historiography there are no such things as bruta facta. Historiography is the most probable reconstruction of the past from the available sources.

Historical judgements are by their very nature not objective (Vorster 1990:202). As we have seen, the idea of objective historiography in a positivistic way is unattainable. We are simply not able to rewrite events as they actually took place.

The way to responsible historiography is not attained by striving for objectivity, but by bringing one's preconceptions to the fore and having them checked and controlled by the text (Vorster 1990:199).

The control that is exerted by the text is not self evident. We have to appreciate that we are busy with a text that has to be interpreted before it could make any contribution to our understanding of a historical event. Even this interpretation is fraught with danger because as Tracy (1987:79) said: "There is no innocent interpreter, no innocent interpretation, no innocent text." To come to a honest interpretation we have to understand the processes involved in reading (Malina 1991:8-12). To read a text, and do it justice, we have to comprehend the world in which the text came about. Such a reading necessitates knowledge about the social world of the text (Malina 1991:11). We have to be

aware of our own social world as well. The sociological world of the text and the interpreter is not the only dimension in the reading process. We have to take into account the psychological aspects of writer and reader as well (Malina 1991:11-12). This could be done by using the tool of psycholinguistics.

Responsible historiography is only possible if we understand the ambiguity and plurality that affect all (Tracy 1987:79). Batdorf (1984:212) proposes a way to responsible historiography in historical Jesus research:

> In sum we need as participants in the quest (1) to abandon the myth of objectivity (2) to formulate for public inspection what our personal hermeneutic prejudices are (3) to formulate for public inspection the total image of Jesus on the basis of which our investigation proceeds and (4) to make explicit how personal bias and total Jesus image are related to each other and to the canon's insistence on reading the story of Jesus in its totality"

4.2 The problem of prejudice

Both Vorster and Batdorf mention that total objectivity is unattainable. That does not mean though, that no control is necessary over the historian's prejudice. The preconceptions of the researcher has to be accounted for. This is a very difficult task, because preconceptions tend to slip in unannounced. One therefore has to be aware of one's own preconceptions, but also of those of others (Tracy 1987:77).

The researcher is bound to the ideas, beliefs and concepts of his own time. These are further complicated by personal factors such as optimism

or pessimism. Cultural influences such as the social position of the historian also play a role. These factors are difficult to account for and it is inevitable that a certain amount of bias will always be present.

Furthermore the researcher never uses the texts without a pre-understanding as to their relative value. Sanders is inclined to value eschatological texts more than those that are not. It is evident that where Crossan has to make personal choices about authenticity in his appendices, he does not accept eschatological texts, although they may have multiple attestation in the first stratum. An example is: item no 28 "Before the angels" (Crossan 1991:436), where his methodology provides us with a strong case for the authenticity of this saying, but he assesses it negatively. One may not ignore texts, or play them down just because they do not fit one's view. The disagreement with texts and reasons why certain texts are chosen and others not, have to be clearly argued.

4.3 The problems posed by the texts

The nature of the texts about Jesus is another reason for the diverse images of him. These texts are ancient and not written in the conventions of modern historiography. The majority was written for religious purposes and not as history.

A close scrutiny of the texts reveals that they used the same subject-matter in different ways. A good example is the use of the subject matter in the sermon on the mount by Matthew (Mt 5:1-7:29) and the sermon on the plain by Luke (Lk 6:17-49). These texts about Jesus are just as diverse as their modern counterparts in the image they convey of him.

4.3.1 The texts are not historiography

The scholar who did most to convince us of the fact that the Gospels are not historiography was Rudolf Bultmann. Bultmann refined the concept of kerygma theology that was started by Kähler, that was largely responsible for the acceptance of the view that the writers of the Gospels were not writing history but theology. He consequently summarised the problems that the difference between the Jesus of history and the Christ of the kerygma pose for researchers:

> (1) In the synoptics we have, instead of the historical person of Jesus, the kerygmatic mythological son of God. (2) Jesus, messenger of the kingdom of God, became the content of the message of the gospels. (3) The historical Jesus concentrated on ethics. Ethics took a second place in the kerygma (Bultmann 1960:6).

These problems made Bultmann very sceptic about the possibility to reconstruct an image of the historical Jesus (Bultmann 1962:7). The legacy of kerygma theology was a negative assessment of the gospels as historical sources (Bornkamm 1978:21).

4.3.1.1 Methods for finding authentic parts in the texts

In spite of the scepticism about the historical value of the Gospels, researchers admit that there was a historical kernel in the Gospels. To find this historical kernel, they employed a range of criteria to verify authenticity.

The use of these criteria depend on a common view of how the texts came into being. The commonly held view could be broadly outlined as

follows:

1 At first logia and deeds of Jesus were orally transmitted.

2 These oral traditions were at different stages written down but not necessarily as comprehensively as we have it in the canonical Gospels.

3 The writers of the earliest writings about Jesus used the logia at their disposal to form their own image of Jesus.

This links up with the two source hypothesis as the most acceptable hypothesis up to now, to explain the inception of the Synoptic Gospels. This hypothesis takes Mark to be the primary gospel used by Matthew and Luke. Both Matthew and Luke also used another source namely Q. This is a hypothetical source which is only possible to find through reconstruction from Matthew and Luke. In addition Luke had another source (L) and Matthew had another source (M). These are also hypothetical sources only available through reconstruction.

Although the two source hypothesis is widely accepted, its acceptance is increasingly being questioned. Michael Goulder (1993:150-152) has an ongoing debate with Gerald Downing (1992:15-36) concerning the composition of the texts of the canonical gospels. He argues that Luke used Matthew in his compositional process. His hypothesis uses the existing material and has the advantage that no lost sources need to be postulated. Another well-known critic of the two source hypothesis is W.R. Farmer.

For the moment I will use the premises of the two source hypothesis, simply because most of the works that are used in this thesis use it. The critique on the two source hypothesis however, has to be kept in mind.

Criticism of the two source hypothesis implies that Mark could not be seen as an older document than Matthew and Luke. The historical stratification of the texts would change, and this would change the arguments for the authenticity of a particular logion.

Many arguments on authenticity are based on the Q document (Meier 1991; Boring 1988). The rejection of the two source hypothesis would make arguments based on the Q document invalid. This would impair the argument for the Cynic image, although the Cynic nature of the document is also questioned in favour of the prophetic (Catchpole 1992:220).

Both the criteria of dissimilarity and similarity as well as the approach of Crossan work within the broad lines of the two source hypothesis.

The criterion of double dissimilarity had been followed for a long time as a means of authentication. This means that a saying could be taken as authentic if it did not correspond with Judaism or could not have come from the primitive church. The problem of this method is that it leaves very little authentic material. It is also biased towards the uniqueness of Jesus and his discontinuity with Judaism (Harrington 1987a:40).

Another criterion was developed with the assumption of the Jewishness of Jesus. The rule of similarity was applied, which meant that the phrases that were similar to Judaism were taken to be authentic. This criterion was biased towards Judaism (Harrington 1987a:40).

Both these criteria were subject to the problem of circularity, this means that results of the research are used to control the research. There

is no scientific way out of the problem of circularity, because it is inevitable that it should creep in where hypotheses are formed. It, nevertheless, has to be accounted for (Harrington 1987a:40). The best possible way to do this, is to clearly state where an argument is subject to some form of circularity and to explain its implications.

Crossan lately approached the problem from a textual perspective. His method consists of a triadic act of inventory, stratification and annotation of attestation. He firstly made a complete inventory of all the available sources. The second step was stratification of the texts in different strata according to their age. Lastly the multiplicity of independent attestation for each complex of the Jesus tradition was annotated. This enables one to determine the attestation of a logion in all the strata wherein it is found (Crossan 1991:xxi). The method of Crossan will be discussed in more detail below.

If a logion is found in multiple independent (more than three times) attestation in the first stratum it means that it has a high probability of authenticity. The emphasis is on independent attestation because this signifies that the part that is to be authenticated has not been particular to a select group of people. The probability of authenticity diminishes with the decline in independent attestation and the incline in stratum. Crossan does not deny that an authentic logion in the fourth stratum may be overlooked in this way (1991:xxxii). For methodological discipline and investigative integrity, he takes the stratum closest in time to the historical Jesus as the most important witness. A further important consideration is to bracket any logion that is only attested once. The inventory of Crossan enables one to make use of Jesus' logia in a

controlled environment. It also makes it possible to see how each logion is reinterpreted in each of the texts.

I intend to make use of the inventories of Crossan in the research of this thesis. It has the advantage of being the least arbitrary of all the methods of authentication. It also enables researchers to clearly state the reasoning behind the choices they make. Of great importance as well, is the possibility to differ from Crossan although one uses his inventories.

The biggest disadvantage of Crossan's method is the fact that it is possible to have a singly attested logion or deed in the fourth (latest) stratum that could be authentic as we have seen above. One could thus exclude possible authentic material. Despite this, the possibility of including unauthentic material, is smaller. The authentic elements that remain, when using this method, are enough to draw a comprehensive image of Jesus if one uses the literary and sociological disciplines as well. This method enables one to make responsible choices, and be able to describe one's reasoning in making those choices.

4.3.2 The texts use the same logia in different ways

The diversity of images also result from the fact that different texts use the same logia for different purposes. This implies that we do not have the logia in their original setting, which makes it difficult to understand what was originally meant by a logion.

An example of this is the complex, "When and where" (Crossan 1991:435). I have chosen this complex because it demonstrates how the same logion is used both eschatologically and as wisdom, which is important because of the rôle of these images in the debate. The complex

consists of five clusters which are all attested in the first stratum. This means that it could be taken as authentic beyond reasonable doubt. The complex reads as follows:

(1a) **GTh 3:1** **Jesus said ' If those who lead you say to you, '"See, the kingdom is in the sky",' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you,'"It is in the sea,"'then the fish will precede you. Rather the kingdom is inside of you, and it is outside of you'.** The other text in this cluster is ***P.Oxy.654.3:1*** that is the same as GTh 3:1.

(1b) **GTh 51:2** **He said to them, "What you look forward to has already come, but you do not recognise it."**

(1c) **GTh 113:2** **"It will not come by waiting for it. It will not be a matter of saying 'Here it is' or 'There it is'.Rather the Kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and men do not see it."**

(2) **2Q:Lk 17:23** **"....And they will say to you, 'Lo, there!' or 'Lo, here!'Do not go, do not follow them."** The other text in this cluster is **Mt24:26** **"So, if they say to you,'Lo, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out; if they say,'Lo, he is in the inner rooms' do not believe it."**

(3) **Mk13:21-23**" **And then if any one says to you,'Look here is the Christ!' or 'Look there he is!' do not believe it. False Christs and false prophets will arise and show signs and wonders, to lead astray if possible, the elect."** The other text in this cluster is: **Mt 24:23-25** **"Then if any one says to you,'Lo, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!'do not believe it. For false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Lo, I have told you beforehand."**

(4) **DialSav 16b**"...what you seek and inquire after, [behold it is] within you...."

(5) **1Q: Lk 17:20-21** "The Kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say,'Lo here it is!'or,'There! 'for behold, the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you."(Crossan 1986:92).

It is important to observe that we have a logion of Jesus about the seeking of signs of the kingdom. We do not have a context for this aphorism other than the context in which the different authors put it. This aphorism of Jesus is written in such a way by the Gospel of Thomas, Luke and the Dialogue of the Saviour that it is not eschatological. In Mark and Matthew it is clearly eschatological. If a researcher does not use all the texts in his research he will come up with a one-sided image of Jesus. It is not enough to make a choice for either of the interpretations. We have to acknowledge that this aphorism of Jesus was interpreted in diverse ways by the authors in the first stratum. The historical questions that beg an answer is: Why was this logion interpreted in opposing ways? What type of person could have been interpreted in such opposing ways?

4.3.3 The texts are not examples taken from a uniform Christianity

Researchers like Davies (1983:14) take it as a given premise that there were several "Christianities" about in the first century. The numerous interpretations of Jesus' logia and deeds point to a diverse Christianity. White (1991:25) concludes that all reported activities of

Jesus are slanted by an editor's perspective for the consumption of a particular audience. Vorster (1987) indicated, with texts from Luke, Mark and Paul that early Christians did not have a single theological view or frame of reference. This is supported by our knowledge about the diverse views in early Christianity that ranged from Apocalypticism to wisdom. The diverse social settings of Christians also gave rise to diverse interpretations of Jesus (Vorster 1987:33).

4.4 Assessment

Modern diversity and ancient diversity are both part of historical Jesus research.

Modern diversity came about because of the prejudices of the modern researchers as well as the nature of the texts that we have about Jesus. Both prejudice and the nature of the texts resulted in a divergence of images of the historical Jesus. The diverse images of the historical Jesus discredited historical research and gave the whole research endeavour a problematic tone.

Ancient diversity is only recently being recognised. It has to be seen as one of the reasons for modern diversity. The pattern of ancient diversity was followed by modern diversity so that both boils down to eschatology versus a non-eschatological image.

5 OBJECTIVE

The problem of historical Jesus research that I wish to address was expounded above. It could be condensed into one word namely, diversity.

Diversity was handled in different ways. One could choose one image and reject all the others. A compromise between two images could be sought as an answer to the problem. The problem could be redefined. The quest of the historical Jesus could be abandoned altogether as an unattainable goal. One could even construct still another image and take it as the most probable. Each of these solutions was tried at one time or the other, with different degrees of success.

An approach to the problem that may be of value was proposed by Crossan (1988:122). It entails that the diversity itself be probed and the meaning of its multiplicity sought.

The objective of this thesis will be to investigate three diverse images of Jesus. In the investigation I will concentrate on how each image came into being and what its relationship is to the whole historical research endeavour. After this investigation I wish to approach the problem of what type of Jesus could have given rise to these different images.

6 METHOD

The three images that I have chosen are:

(1) **Jesus the eschatological prophet** (3 above)

(2) **Jesus the Cynic sage** (3 above)

(3) **Jesus the Galilean Hasid** (1.1 above)

How the available texts were used to establish each of these images will form the most important part of the investigation. The inventories of Crossan (1991) will be used in the establishment of authenticity as well as the tracing of the development of particular Jesus material where appropriate.

In the last chapter I will endeavour to answer the question: "***What type of person was Jesus to be interpreted both as eschatological prophet and sage?***"

6.1 The comprehensive methodology of Crossan

It is not within the scope of this thesis to develop a new methodology for authentication. I have chosen the method of Crossan because it offers a model for integrated use of social anthropology, history and literature. This makes it possible to really talk about an interdisciplinary quest. The main reason for my choice of Crossan's method is the fact that it restricts the material that is taken as authentic. I would rather work with a minimum of authentic material, than come to conclusions that may be invalid due to a large presence of unauthentic material. The fact that no one method is foolproof has to be borne in mind as well. The method of Crossan is subject to criticism that has to be considered. (For a discussion of the methodology of Crossan see the appendix below.)

Crossan's objective was to provide a common methodology for historical Jesus research. He is "concerned, not with an unattainable objectivity, but with an attainable honesty" (1991:xxxiv). This to my mind addresses one of the biggest weaknesses of historical Jesus research, because it affords us a way to assess the total image of Jesus in a controllable manner.

Crossan's methodology uses a triple triadic process. The first triad involves the full and equal co-operation of social anthropology, Hellenistic history and the literature about Jesus (1991:xxviii). All three levels have to be used with the same sophistication at the same time.

The second triad focuses on the textual problem of the Jesus tradition. The first step is an inventory of all the major texts about Jesus. The second step is stratification of the texts in a chronological sequence. The third step is to present the stratified data base in terms of multiplicity of independent attestation (1991:xxi).

The third triad consists of the manipulation of the inventory that was established. The first element is the sequence of strata. The investigation must begin with the first stratum and then proceed to subsequent strata. The second element is hierarchy of attestation. The higher the attestation in the first stratum the more serious the consideration the complex deserves. The third element is bracketing of singularity. If a unit is attested only once it has to be left out of consideration (1991:xxxii).

I accept this formal procedure of Crossan. It will enable me to proceed in an orderly manner and to define my choices and conclusions. Because the images that are going to be studied concentrated on the literary material to establish the image, the two literary triads will be used more than the first. In the conclusions about an image the first triad will also be employed. Wherever the first triad is used I will rely on Crossan's use of social anthropology and to a lesser degree his use of Hellenistic History.

7 CONCLUSION

Throughout this chapter we have identified the problem of different images of the historical Jesus. Because of the diversity of Judaism we have seen that to say Jesus was a Jew, does not give us a conclusive image of Jesus. The identity of Jesus still has to be sought within the

first century Judaisms. Furthermore there are two broad demarcations: eschatological and non-eschatological. Within these divisions there is diversity as well.

We have seen that the diversity is found in the texts that we study as well as in the results of the research. The reasons for the diversity in the results of historical Jesus research have been examined as well. This gave us the opportunity to make sure that the preconceptions that bias researchers are accounted for in this thesis.

The object of this thesis was identified as to investigate three images of Jesus and to try and find the reason for this diversity. This will be done by asking how Jesus must have been to be interpreted in such diverse ways. In the next chapter we will investigate the most influential of all the images of Jesus, the eschatological image.

CHAPTER II
THE ESCHATOLOGICAL IMAGE OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS

1 INTRODUCTION

The image of Jesus as eschatological prophet is one of many ways to construct a framework for a historical understanding of who Jesus was. It uses the numerous allusions to the end of time and the anticipation thereof in the Old and New Testament and literature contemporaneous to it, to construct an image of Jesus. The material that is utilised in this construction is referred to either as eschatological, or as apocalyptic. The eschatological image had been the accepted historical effigy of Jesus for almost a century.

1.1 Objective

To say that Jesus was an eschatological prophet immediately raises a number of questions. What is eschatology? What are the suppositions that played a rôle in the construction of this image? What do the texts that form the basis of the eschatological image say? The objective of this chapter is to answer the questions above and to demonstrate that this image is not only part of the diversity of images of Jesus, but also subject to a diversity of interpretations within itself. We will then be able to compare the eschatological image with that of Jesus as Hasid and Cynic sage.

1.2 Method

I intend the work of Sanders, ***Jesus and Judaism*** (1985), to play an

important rôle in the discussion of the questions about the eschatological image.

* The introduction of Sanders will give us the opportunity to scrutinise the rôle of his presuppositions in the construction of an eschatological image.

** Part one is the most crucial part of Sanders' hypothesis. It is here that he lays down the foundation of evidence that he finds the most secure. These arguments form the basis of the rest of his hypothesis. We shall follow his arguments and put them against the background of the debate on the issues that he brought forward.

*** Part two deals with the traditional eschatological topics namely, the kingdom of God, son of man and messiah.

We shall examine how Sanders makes these topics part of his hypothesis against the background of the debate on them.

**** In part three Sanders uses the image he has established thus far, to answer the questions on the death of Jesus. His conclusions will once more be put into the framework of the debate on these issues.

We have to note that Sanders' image depicts Jesus as a prophet of restoration eschatology but he does not make much of the fact that he calls Jesus a prophet. Prophecy will be investigated in chapter three.

By commencing in this manner I will be able to achieve the goal of firstly answering the question of what the eschatological image is about, and secondly, have a close examination of a particular eschatological image.

The most recent study of Crossan (1991) will also play an important rôle in this chapter. As it was expounded in chapter one, the sociological and textual comments of Crossan will be used to form a total image of the environment of Jesus and the development of the texts about him. In questions concerning authenticity I will rely on the inventories of Crossan.

1.3 The importance of E.P Sanders as exponent of the eschatological image

Sanders is the most important exponent of the eschatological image in recent times. Mack (1988:11) comments that in Sanders we have the Anglo-American counterpart to Albert Schweitzer's "thoroughgoing apocalypticism". As we shall see below, Sanders criticised the methods used to establish the eschatological interpretation of Jesus. He is also critical of the methods employed in the eschatological paradigm. His solutions, the method he employs and the fact that he still defends the eschatological view in a time of growing dissatisfaction with it (Sanders 1992), makes him of utmost importance for this investigation.

2 THE TERMS APOCALYPTIC AND ESCHATOLOGICAL

At this stage we have to acquaint ourselves with the terms apocalyptic and eschatological. The image of Jesus as eschatological prophet demands an understanding of the terms used to describe it. In the introduction these terms were already frequently used and there it was implied that both terms relate to the end of time.

2.1 Eschatology and apocalyptic are modern terms for an ancient phenomenon

At the onset of the discussion of these expressions we have to understand that they are modern terms to describe certain religious views, or parts thereof, that were prevalent in the time of Jesus (Aune 1992:594). The people, literary events and theological views that we describe with these expressions were not known by these terms in their own time (Nickelsburg 1992:80). Thus nobody that lived in the time of Jesus would have used the terms eschatological or apocalyptic to describe him. Our investigation is occupied by the question whether the traits which we describe by these terms would have been ascribed to Jesus by his contemporaries.

The question about the meaning of these terms that has to be cleared at this stage is: What are the differences between the terms eschatology and apocalyptic as used by modern scholars? To answer this question we will define the terms eschatology and apocalyptic and look at how they were used by modern scholars. This will enable us to determine the differences, if any, between the terms.

2.1.1 Eschatology

The term eschatology is derived from the Greek adjective ἔσχατος that means "last" or "final". It was first used as a term in dogmatics to denote the study of the "things of the end". The term is currently used in a broad sense to denote the beliefs and reflections about the end of history in parts of early Judaism and early Christianity (Aune 1992:594).

2.1.2 Apocalyptic

Lately scholars preferred to describe apocalyptic in a triad of definitions: Apocalypse as a literary genre, apocalyptic eschatology as a religious perspective and apocalypticism as a social movement (Hanson 1992:280). All of these are designated by a term that is derived from the literary genre of the apocalypse.

Apocalypse is derived from the word ἀποκάλυψις used in the book Revelation to describe the book as a "revelation" or "disclosure". The literary genre of an apocalypse could be recognised by its distinctive narrative structure. It entails "a revelation given by God through an otherworldly mediator to a human seer disclosing future events" (Hanson 1992:279). Other distinctive features are that apocalypses are pseudonymous in many instances and contain heavenly journeys, lists of natural phenomena and diverse cosmic and celestial speculations. One also finds the metaphoric use of numbers and various other symbols in apocalyptic works.

2.1.2.1 Apocalypse and apocalyptic eschatology

The development of an apocalypse has to be preceded by apocalyptic eschatology. For the purposes of historical investigation modern researchers have only the literary work, the apocalypse, to make inferences about the community in which it originated. Historical investigation thus has to work in the opposite direction as that of how the literary work came into being. We have to infer from the result what the cause could have been. We have to be cautious though, to infer social movements from literary evidence, because a literary work could

also be the product of a relatively isolated individual (Yarbro Collins 1992:284).

The nature of our method of historical investigation explains why the term "apocalyptic" is used to designate a religious perspective, a social movement and a literary genre. It is because we can only know the religious perspective and the social movement from the literary work and that work is known as apocalypse.

A problem raised by the definition of apocalypse, is how many of the features that designate a text as apocalyptic have to be present in a literary work to enable one to designate it as an apocalypse? Which of these features are indispensable to designate a conception as apocalyptic? Could one decide that the orientation of an author was apocalyptic if we find some strands of the above mentioned phenomena in his writings? If we look at the question whether Jesus was an apocalyptic, it would mean that we would have to find out how much of the apocalyptic traits would make him an apocalyptic. The next paragraph will try to give an acceptable answer to these questions.

2.2 Judaism and Christianity are occupied with the end of time

We have to keep in mind that religion in general, and Judaism and Christianity in particular, are concerned with the end of time, when the wicked will be punished and the righteous will be vindicated. In this sense both Judaism and Christianity could be seen as eschatologically orientated.

The diversity we find in the texts about the end in Judaism and Christianity, makes it clear that the views about the end were never

systematically worked out to form a unitary doctrine about the end (Nickelsburg 1992:580). This could be seen when texts such as Isaiah, Zachariah and Malachi, are compared with Daniel and 1 Enoch. In the first century AD the same diversity prevailed. One needs only to compare the Synoptics with Paul and John to see how diverse the views about the end were. The diversity becomes even more pronounced when we include extra-canonical texts such as The Assumption of Moses, The Qumran literature, The Shepherd of Hermas and The Apocalypse of Peter.

The views that people had about the end and the rôle that they played in their religious outlook, was influenced by their perception of their circumstances (Hanson 1992:281). The differences between the pre-exilic prophets and their post-exilic counterparts illustrates this phenomenon. The pre-exilic prophets had a more optimistic world view than their post-exilic counterparts and the latter was exposed to a broader mythology with which to express their thought.

Although sociological circumstances played a formative rôle, the outlook of people were also formed by their exposure to other forms of thought about the end. In this regard Grayson (1992:282) expounds the probability that the Akkadian "apocalyptic" literature could have influenced Judaic apocalyptic. The long held view about the influence of Persian religious views on post-exilic religious thought in Judaism also illustrates this point.

From the above we may conclude that there was no unitary dogma about the end. The views of individuals and groups about the end were influenced by their circumstances and their exposure to various other

views of the end. We must thus not be tempted to try and find an unitary apocalyptic view. There may be several strands of eschatological thought in a particular writing but we would not be able to designate it as eschatological or apocalyptic as if there were only a singular apocalyptic or eschatological view. Each text will have to be interpreted on its own merit.

2.3 The ambiguity of the terms apocalyptic and eschatological

From the literature that use these terms, it becomes clear that the terms apocalyptic and eschatological are subject to ambiguous interpretations. Because eschatology came to mean theory of history in the German speaking world (Klein 1980:270), it led to the use of apocalyptic to describe everything that related to the parousia.

The difference between these terms often hinged on a value judgement that took the one to be authentic and "right",and the other to be inauthentic and "wrong". Aulen (1976:146-149) for instance, saw eschatology as nearly synonymous with the kingdom of God. As such it was seen as the total content of the message of Jesus. Aulen perceived apocalypticism as an unreliable offshoot of eschatology and would not describe Jesus in terms of apocalyptic.

Hengel (1981:39) concluded that the question whether Jesus was an apocalyptic, depends on the definition of the term. If one defines it as an expression of Jesus' expectation of an imminent parousia, as Käsemann sees it, Hengel supports the term as a description for Jesus. He would not support it, if apocalyptic was taken to mean "...the speculative description and computation of the events of the end,..". De

Villiers (1987:30) describes eschatology as the expectance of the parousia, this correlates with Käseman's use of apocalyptic as we have seen above.

The examples above serve to show us that there was no clarity about the meaning of these terms. There is no aspect of eschatology that could not be designated as apocalyptic (Aune 1992:595).

2.4 Eschatology and apocalyptic, two names for the same phenomenon?

The designations "eschatological" and "apocalyptic" are not used by the authors of the early texts. They are imposed on the texts by researchers as a mode of classification.

We have come under the impression of how diverse the views about the end of time are. It makes it difficult to determine where eschatology ends and apocalyptic begins. If one compares the discussion of apocalypses and apocalypticism with the discussion of eschatology in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (1992), it is interesting to note that both discussions utilise the same ancient texts.

We have to conclude that the terms apocalyptic and eschatology are both used in different ways by different people where the ancient material is concerned. This emphasises that all thought about the end of time in the time of Jesus, was not the same. The diversity is so widespread in both ancient and modern texts, that we will have to make sure what each author means in his own right. We have to avoid the temptation to give these terms the meaning that we prefer.

3 THE REASONS FOR HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION

The reasons that researchers gave for investigating the historical Jesus determined the outcome of their investigations, as we shall see below. It is therefore imperative to come to terms with the reason why Sanders undertook the historical investigation that we find in his book "**Jesus and Judaism.**"

The reason Sanders gives for his research is pure scientific curiosity. He wishes "to know and to state whatever can be known about Jesus" (1985:2). In his approach he feels himself akin to those scholars that did not undertake the investigation to answer the theological question of the relationship between the historical Jesus and Christian faith (1985:2). Because he does not profess a theological reason for his research (1985:2), it enables him to ask questions that would seem inappropriate from a theological point of departure.

Sanders takes up the question as to what can be known about Jesus, by asking four interrelated questions with regard to: His intention and his relationship to his contemporaries in Judaism, and furthermore the reason for his death and the motivating force behind the rise of Christianity (Sanders 1985:1). The nature of these questions immediately makes it clear that Sanders wishes to go beyond the kerygma to seek the motives of Jesus, those of his executors, and those of the primitive church. These questions may prove extremely difficult to answer because by nature they give rise to a myriad of theological problems. By rejecting any theological motive for his work he comes closer to asking the questions that may lead us to substantial answers on who Jesus was.

The first question is concerned with Jesus' intention. This question

seemed inappropriate from a theological point of departure, because it could imply that Jesus had planned the continuation of the church (1985:2). There was a time when such an implication would have seemed concerned with the Roman Catholic view that Jesus set out to bring about the church.

The second question is concerned with the relationship of Jesus with his contemporaries in Judaism. In the light of the later animosity between Judaism and Christianity this question led to controversy and apologetics (1985:3). The fact that Sanders asked these questions, enabled him to draw a comprehensive image of Jesus as prophet of Jewish restoration eschatology. The comprehensiveness of the work of Sanders is very important because he intended to answer all the questions about Jesus from the eschatological perspective.

4 SANDERS' METHOD

Sanders wishes to construct his hypothesis on "material generally considered reliable without, on the other hand, being totally dependent on the authenticity of any given pericope" (Sanders 1985:3). This is sound historical practice (Vorster 1990:209). To find this reliable material, Sanders moves away from the sayings of Jesus as source to the "facts" of his life. There are facts about Jesus, his career, and its consequences which are very firm and which do point towards solutions of historical questions; and the present study is based primarily on facts about Jesus and only secondarily on a study of some of the sayings material (Sanders 1985:5).

His reasons for using the sayings as secondary material are twofold:

first, there is not consensus about the authenticity of the sayings material, and secondly, one assumes that Jesus was a teacher when one starts with the sayings (1985:4). This immediately leads one to try and establish the content of his teaching (Sanders 1985:4). Sanders points out that the enormous effort that went into the study of the sayings material did not yield a convincing historical depiction of Jesus (1985:5). That there is less argument about the "facts" of Jesus' life may be due to the phenomenon that his sayings took the most prominent place in the debate, as Sanders remarked himself (1985:5). This does not prove that the facts are less problematic than the sayings. The problems of the sayings are just more articulated than those of the facts because the investigations utilised the sayings as primary material.

Sanders listed what he views as the almost indisputable facts of Jesus' life :

1 Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist.

2 Jesus was a Galilean that preached and healed.

3 Jesus called disciples and spoke of them as twelve.

4 Jesus confined his activity to Israel.

5 Jesus engaged in a controversy about the temple.

6 Jesus was crucified outside Jerusalem by the Roman authorities .

7 After his death Jesus' followers continued as an identifiable group.

8 At least some Jews persecuted at least parts of the new movement, and it appears that this persecution endured to a time near the end of Paul's career (Sanders 1985:11).

4.1 The temple act

Out of the "facts" above, Sanders chose the temple controversy as point of departure to construct an image of the historical Jesus. This is a new variant in the research and it forms the backbone of Sanders' hypothesis concerning the image of Jesus. It is therefore imperative to investigate the outcome and implications of the temple act.

In the paragraphs below I will investigate Sanders' application of the temple act. Firstly the authenticity of the temple act will be examined. This will be done by stating Sanders' findings and using the inventories of Crossan as a control for my findings.

Secondly the question will be asked whether the temple act was a cleansing or a symbolic act. Sanders advocates the view that the temple act was symbolic of the destruction of the temple. If one takes the temple act to be symbolic the meaning of the symbolism has to be expounded as well. For Sanders the temple act symbolising its destruction, was a pointer to Jesus' program of restoration eschatology. I want to compare Sanders' symbolic interpretation with those of Neusner and Crossan to demonstrate that even when there is agreement on the way in which an act is interpreted, the interpretation is not necessarily the same.

4.1.1 The authenticity of the temple act

Sanders holds the temple controversy in very high historical esteem:

> I have chosen to begin with the temple controversy, about which our information is a little better and which offers almost as good an entry for the study of Jesus' intention and his relationship to his contem-

poraries as would a truly eyewitness account of the trial (1985:13). The burden of proof is on Sanders regarding the authenticity of the temple act. It is important to be sure about the historical integrity of the temple act because Sanders' thesis, that Jesus was a prophet of eschatological restoration, has the temple act as its main point of support.

4.1.2 Sanders' views on the authenticity of the temple act

In "Jesus and Judaism" Sanders does not make much of the method for asserting authenticity (Sanders 1985:13). He subscribes to the commonly held view that the material was altered in many ways and that we have it as it was transmitted by the early church. He is not as optimistic as the form critics that we are able to know in which ways it was changed (1985:15-16).

The test of double dissimilarity to authenticate sayings of Jesus, is according to Sanders biased towards the uniqueness of Jesus. This is the case because it rules out material that is similar either to Judaism or the primitive church. The material that remains is also without a meaningful context. Sanders argues that the sayings have to be put into the context of the "facts" about Jesus and these "facts" have to be seen in the context of Palestinian Judaism in the time of Jesus (1985:17). The "facts" then form the basis to authenticate sayings. Sayings that are supported by "facts" could then be seen as authentic (1985:17).

The method of Sanders regarding authenticity, offers no means to authenticate the "facts" about Jesus. In point three above I stated that Sanders merely took the eight "facts" about the life of Jesus as historically authentic. In the light of this, we are able to understand why

he does not dwell in any length on the issue of the authenticity of the temple act.

Sanders concedes that there is no consensus about the unity and integrity of Mark 11:15-19 or the authenticity of the sayings about the destruction of the temple (Mk 13:2 and parr; Mt 26:61/Mk 14:58). There are three other passages that reflect a threat against the temple as well; the crucifixion scene (Mt 27:39-40 and Mk15:29-30), Stephen's speech (Acts 6:13-14) and John 2:18-22. This is indication for Sanders to conclude that something controversial regarding Jesus occurred at the temple. Sanders (1985:365 n5), as most scholars do, takes multiple attestation as an indication of authenticity.

4.1.3 A further investigation of the authenticity of the temple act

Sanders did not go to great lengths to prove that the temple act was authentic. In point three above the necessity to establish the authenticity of the temple act was argued. I will now proceed with an investigation into the authenticity of the temple act according to the method of Crossan, which I have chosen in Chapter one.

A more rigorous methodology is used by Crossan whereby he assesses the temple and Jesus (Crossan 1991:355-360).The attestation of the temple act ranges from the first stratum (GTh), composed between 50 AD and 70 AD, to the fourth stratum (Ac) composed between 120 AD and 150 AD (Crossan 1991:437). For Crossan material in the first stratum is the most important because it is chronologically closest to the time of Jesus (1991:xxxii). In this case the historicity is corroborated by its attestation in four strata. In the light of the stratification of the

relevant texts, the sayings about the destruction of the temple seem very secure evidence.

The sayings about the destruction of the temple are found in triple independent attestation (i GTh 71;iia Mk 14:55-59 = Mt 26:59-61; iib Mk 15:29-32a = Mt 27:39-43 = Lk 23:35-37; iic Ac 6:11-14; iii Jn 2:18-22). The attestation in triple independent form is in itself a positive indication that something could have been said about the destruction of temple that gave rise to the tradition. The stratification and attestation of the texts about the temple event gives us ample reason to assume that something about the destruction of the temple was said by Jesus.

The saying about the destruction of the temple has its most primitive attestation in the Gospel of Thomas 71: **I shall [destroy this] house, and no one will be able to build it[...]** (Crossan 1991:355). Although this text does not mention the temple by name, the similarity with the other relevant texts makes it possible to assume that it is a "temple word" (1991:355).

4.1.4 Assessment

Crossan used sayings material to argue the possibility of the temple act. The method of Crossan emphasises the fact that the authenticity of the temple act cannot be assessed just by using the "fact" as we find it in Mark 11:15-19 and parallels.

The sayings about the destruction of the temple actually enhance the possibility of the authenticity of the temple act. This is in contrast to the view of Sanders. He argued that more than the sayings material is needed to get to historically reliable evidence of Jesus (1985:17). For him that which was needed, was the "facts" about Jesus. Crossan uses

the event as well as the sayings to establish authenticity, the difference in his method with that of Sanders, is that the authenticity of the event as well as the saying has to be proved.

So far we have established the authenticity of the sayings about the destruction. The sayings about the destruction of the temple have to be brought into conjunction with the temple act in Mark 11:15-19. A threat could easily have been made against the temple without the actual temple act taking place. We further have to bear in mind that the description of the temple act was, most probably, also changed in the process of transmission and redaction.

Crossan (1991:359) proposes a trajectory whereby an action took place at the temple with an accompanying word such as Gospel of Thomas 71. The words that Jesus spoke fit in to the context of an accompanying act at the temple. The saying later became separated from the act as we now find it spread throughout the tradition with different lines of interpretation. Crossan concluded that we could be sure without a doubt that an action and an equal saying about the destruction of the temple can be traced to Jesus. Further interpretations that referred it to the actual destruction of the temple or the parousia are later explanations. The actual destruction of the temple made the act of Jesus even more enigmatic afterwards than at the time it actually happened (1991:359).

At the end of this debate about the temple act we are able to conclude that our investigation complies with Sanders' assumption namely, that the temple event is authentic without reasonable doubt.

Despite the methodological differences with Sanders the findings corroborate his point of departure.

4.2 The cleansing of the temple?

For Sanders' thesis that Jesus was a prophet of Jewish restoration eschatology to be accepted the temple act not only has to be historically authentic, but also has to be an act of eschatological significance. To interpret the temple act as a cleansing makes it of no eschatological consequence. Sanders sets out to prove that the temple act had an eschatological meaning. This means that it had to have a symbolic content and that it was more far reaching than a mere cleansing of the temple from defilement.

It is imperative to interpret the temple act from a Jewish point of view. For Jews, just like any other people of that time, a temple was a place of sacrifice. Sacrifices require the supply of suitable sacrificial animals (Sanders 1985:63). The sellers of animals rendered an important service by supplying such animals. This service was important especially with regard to Diaspora Jews who had to travel long distances to the temple. The same reason applies to the money-changers. They also rendered an important service by supplying Tyrian money for payment of the temple tax. The presence of traders in animals and money-changers in the temple precincts, was thus accepted as necessary and desirable. An act against these people would thus not easily have been interpreted as a cleansing.

An attack against the sellers of animals and money-changers was an attack against the sacrificial system and the financing of the cult (Sanders

1985:66). The demonstrative act of overturning some of the tables could not have been enough to interfere with the daily routine in the temple. The people who saw it, or heard of it, would have known that it was a gesture to make a point, rather than to have a concrete result (1985:70). An act that symbolically destroyed the essence of the temple, the sacrifices, symbolised the destruction of the temple itself. Sanders (1985:75) further interprets the symbolic act at the temple as ultimately symbolising its restoration. In this way the temple act opens up the possibility to depict Jesus as prophet of Jewish restoration eschatology.

There are scholars who interpret the temple event as a symbolic act along with Sanders but do not attach the same meaning to the symbolism. Two cases in the argument are Jacob Neusner and J.D. Crossan.

Neusner (1989:287-290) accepts Sanders' contention that the temple event was a symbolic act. He wishes to offer an alternative view that to his mind refines that of Sanders (1989:287). In our discussion of this "refinement" we shall see that he actually deviates entirely from what Sanders wishes to prove.

According to Neusner the tax in the temple was used as a communal fund to carry out the daily whole offering which atones for Israel's sin (1989:288). For him Jesus' overturning of the tables meant that he rejected the teaching of the torah concerning the daily whole offering. Jesus' action did not symbolise the destruction of the whole temple but only the institution of the whole offerings as atonement for sin (1989:290).

Neusner interpreted the symbolism of the temple act eucharistically. According to his interpretation Jesus intended to put the table of eucharist in the place of the tables he overturned (1989:290).

J.D. Crossan (1991:357) holds the opinion that the temple event should be interpreted as a symbolic act. The cursing of the fig tree in Mark 11:12-14 and its withering in 11:20 that form a frame around the temple event in Mark 11:15-19, is an indication for Crossan that Mark intended the temple act to be understood symbolically." As the useless fig tree was destroyed, so, symbolically, was the useless temple" (1991:357).

Crossan does not interpret the life of Jesus eschatologically. He would rather seek the identity of Jesus along the lines of wisdom and sees Jesus as a peasant Jewish Cynic (Crossan 1991:421). If one thinks along the lines of Crossan, the symbolism of the temple act could be sought in Jesus' opposition to the brokered religion that the temple stood for (1991:360).

4.3 Assessment

The historical value that Sanders ascribes to the temple act is corroborated by the multiple attestation in the first stratum of the sayings. It may be accepted beyond reasonable doubt that something took place at the Temple that could have been taken as a threat and that it was accompanied by a saying that could have been interpreted likewise.

The interpretation of the temple act, as most interpretations go, is more problematic. The most recent studies of the temple act agree that it is not a cleansing, as was previously accepted, but a symbolic act. The

interpretation of Sanders makes it clear that from a Jewish background it could not have been a cleansing because the overturning of the tables would more obviously have been interpreted as being against the sacrifices. It is only in the Lukan context that it could be interpreted as a cleansing. The Lukan redaction turns the temple act into a pronouncement story. The temple act is then to be understood as a purging so that the temple could be fit for Jesus to do his teaching from there (Fitzmyer 1986:1262). The alternative is to interpret it as a symbolic act.

Taken from a historical point of view, not one of the Gospel interpretations of the temple act could be taken as historically correct. Each evangelist reconstructed it to serve his own theological purposes, as Luke illustrated in the previous paragraph. The symbolic meaning of the event thus has to be constructed as part of a total image of Jesus.

The interpretations of the symbolism of the temple act by Sanders, Neusner and Crossan all differ from one another. Because we have a symbolic act, it is difficult to infer from the act itself what its meaning was. If the act was self explanatory it would not have necessitated a complex investigation to determine its meaning. This indicates that we need more than just the temple act to understand its meaning for the historical Jesus.

It is here that one finds circularity in the study of Sanders. He has to interpret the temple act eschatologically to establish it as proof for an eschatological interpretation of Jesus. The temple act, although it is historically reliable, is still subject to interpretation in order to establish

it as grounds for his thesis that Jesus was a prophet of Jewish restoration eschatology.

Sanders assumes that one could get to "bedrock material" where the "facts" are concerned (1985:10). Vorster (1981:15) points out that facts are never bare. As the investigation of the Temple act indicated, we do not encounter facts without the mediation of some theory of interpretation or perception. Thus, whether we study a saying or a fact in a text, the same problems regarding authenticity and interpretation apply.

The problems of historical research are not solved by using facts instead of sayings. Sanders' method thus has to be seen in the same light as any other study that has as its basic method to secure a reliable fragment and from there construct a historical image. It makes no difference whether this fragment is an event or a saying.

Sanders wishes to use the temple act as the fragment to support his eschatological view of Jesus. The question is: Would people who saw the temple act, understand Jesus as a prophet that by this act indicated that God would restore Israel at the end of time? Sanders has to corroborate his interpretation of the temple act with other material. He has to prove that there was an interest in restoration eschatology at the time of Jesus.

5 RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY IN JUDAISM

The task of Sanders is to answer the question, whether the people that saw the temple act would have understood it as a symbolic act that indicates the restoration of the temple (Sanders 1985:77). To do this he has to demonstrate that there was an eschatological expectation among

the contemporaries of Jesus. The content of their expectation had to be the restoration of the Jewish nation and its national and religious symbols with particular reference to the Temple.

There are texts in the Old Testament that are generally accepted as indication of Jewish eschatological expectation (Is 49:5-6; Is 56:1-8; Is 60:3-7; Is 60:10-14; Is 66:18-24; Mi 4). In these texts one finds numerous indications of restoration; restoration of "Jacob", the submission of the gentiles and the beautification of the temple (Sanders 1985:79). These visions were not fulfilled in the second temple period and Sanders reasons that the anticipation of its fulfilment still existed in the time of Jesus (1985:80). The book of Tobit (13-14) that could be dated between Nehemiah and the Maccabean revolt, supports the view that for at least some people, the anticipation in Isaiah was not fulfilled in the temple of Nehemiah and was moved to the eschaton (Sanders 1985:80). The same sentiment is found in 2 Maccabees 2:7. Sanders points out that 1 Enoch 89-90 depicts the hope of a future restoration of the temple. This is also the view reflected in the Apocalypse of Weeks found in I Enoch 91:12-17 and 93. Restoration is also a theme of the Dead Sea Scrolls where a new temple plays a significant rôle (Sanders 1985:82-85).

After a survey of the texts Sanders finds no uniform theology of restoration eschatology although there are numerous instances referring to it (1985:87). In these references to restoration, the restoration of Israel was more prominent than the restoration of the temple (1985:87). The material that was utilised by Sanders is enough though, to make the point that at least some people or groups held the eschatological

expectation of restoration. It is possible that they could have interpreted the temple act as an indication of restoration. The question remains though, whether this is strong enough evidence to substantiate a general view of restoration eschatology. Would Jesus have performed a symbolic act at the temple that would be correctly interpreted only by a few people? If only a few people saw it in that light would surely be further evidence for the diversity of views held at that time.

One of the facts that Sanders uses to strengthen the image of Jesus as prophet of Jewish restoration eschatology, is the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus. The relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus is a very important point of discussion in the eschatological, as well as the historical Jesus debate (Sanders 1992:11).

6 JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST

The baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist is the first of the list of the "facts" about Jesus that Sanders views as beyond doubt (1985:11). Sanders made much of it that the first "fact" we have about Jesus is clad in eschatological terms. He stressed that the aftermath of Jesus' career, the primitive church, also had an eschatological essence. That the beginning and aftermath of Jesus' life was eschatological, is used by Sanders in his argument for the eschatological interpretation of the historical Jesus (1985:91).

To use the relationship with John the Baptist to strengthen the eschatological image of Jesus, Sanders firstly established that a very close relationship existed between them. In the second place he interpreted John as an eschatological prophet. Thirdly he used Matthew

11:11 to establish how Jesus saw his work in relation to John (Sanders 1985:92).

6.1 Jesus, a disciple of John the Baptist?

Sanders established that Jesus and John the Baptist had a very close relationship. The effort of the writers of the Gospels to prove that John the Baptist was subordinate to Jesus, was so pronounced that it convinced Sanders of the opposite (1985:91-92). That Jesus drew his first disciples from the ranks of John the Baptist (Jn 1:35-40), is used by Sanders to support the view that Jesus was a disciple of John the Baptist. The view that Jesus was a disciple of John the Baptist, is also held by Boers (1989:53) and Crossan (1991:237-238).

Sanders does not have a lengthy discussion on the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist and most of it is done in two footnotes. He has a discussion in the notes to page 91-92 of the Gospel evidence and the evidence in Josephus. He draws attention to Goguel's hypothesis that Jesus and John the Baptist had a similar ministry and that they parted after a disagreement (1985:371 n3).

6.2 John the Baptist as eschatological prophet

Sanders uses the accounts of the Evangelists and Josephus to depict John the Baptist as an eschatological prophet. The Gospels pose a problem that is known to us by now. They are not historical biographies, but texts that employed the traditions about Jesus for their own theological purposes. The same could be said about the works of Josephus. They are writings written to achieve the ends of the writer. One has to

be aware that Josephus at first wrote as an "apologist for Romans to Jews and ended as apologist for Jews to Romans"(Crossan 1991:94). These tendencies have to be remembered when interpreting both the Evangelists and Josephus.

Sanders (1985:93) sees John the Baptist as an eschatological prophet who called Israel to repent in view of the coming kingdom. He takes Mark 1:3 as an indication that the Baptist was an eschatological prophet. Mark 1:3 uses Isaiah 40:3 to depict John the Baptist as the forerunner of Jesus. From Mark it was taken up by the other Evangelists. Mark gives a conscious recollection of the desert as place of the ministry of John the Baptist. There was a view in Hosea 2:14-20 that the desert would be the place of the **restoration** of the worship of Israel (1985:371 n5). John's ministry in the desert is taken by Sanders as an indication of eschatology.

Sanders emphasises the clothing of the Baptist as we find its description in Matthew 3:4. He sees it as a depiction of the clothes of prophets as Hengel (1981:36n71) argued. This depiction of John the Baptist coincides with the conviction of the Evangelists that he was Elijah that came to make the way for the messiah. Although Sanders concedes that the expectation of the coming of Elijah cannot be seen as widespread, he detects a conscious recollection of Elijah by the Evangelists. The expectance of Elijah is interpreted by Sanders as a further indication of eschatology.

Sanders (1985:92) notes that there is general acceptance amongst scholars that John the Baptist's message was one of repentance in preparation for the coming judgement. We find the preaching of John the

Baptist about repentance in Matthew 3:7-10 and in Luke 3:7-9. Sanders also used the account of Josephus (Ant 18) about John the Baptist:"**...for Herod slew him who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism.**" According to Sanders the account of Josephus is in harmony with those of Matthew and Luke. Sanders (1985:371 n4) notes the tendency of Josephus to play down eschatology. Although Josephus does not emphasise eschatology, Sanders still interprets the account of Josephus as implying that John was an eschatological prophet (1985:92). This is because he recognises an agreement between Josephus and the Gospels about the preaching in the desert, the dress and the message of repentance. In line with Hengel (1981:36) he interprets all these as evidence of eschatology.

6.3 Jesus' view of John the Baptist

Sanders (1985:93) uses Matthew 11:11 to define Jesus' view of John: "If John the Baptist was great, all the greater will be those who share in the fullness of the kingdom". Sanders thus concludes that Jesus saw his own work as of final significance (1985:93).

6.4 Conclusion about the relationship between the Baptist and Jesus

We have seen that Sanders did not go into the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist in great depth. He took the Gospel accounts about John the Baptist and from them deducted that Jesus could have been a disciple of John the Baptist, that John was an eschatological

prophet of repentance and that Jesus saw John as the greatest in the present state but that the least in the future state would be greater than John the Baptist.

6.4.1 Who was actually superior?

Sanders was convinced that Jesus was a disciple of John the Baptist. This view is corroborated by Murphy-O'Connor. That Jesus had a subordinate rôle to John the Baptist, is argued forcefully by Murphy-o'Connor (1990:359-374). His hypothesis is built mostly on material from the Gospel of John. It is constructed along the following lines:

> **1** Jesus encountered John on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem (1990:361). **2** He was baptised by John and stayed with him beyond the Jordan (Jn 3:26; 1990:362). **3** Jesus remained with John for a considerable time and some of John's disciples joined Jesus at the suggestion of John (Jn 1:35-37; 1990:362). **4** Jesus and John divided forces to reach more people. John worked in Samaria and Jesus moved to Judea (Jn 3:22-24; 1990:363-366). Jesus was more successful than John (Jn 3:26; 4:1; 1990:366). **5** After John's death, Jesus returned to Galilee to continue the baptising ministry of John (1990:368-372). **6** There came a change in the ministry of Jesus, from baptism to healing and exorcism (1990:372).

Murphy-O'Connor (1990:367;372) bases the proof for the baptising ministry of Jesus on two texts (Mk 6:14; Ac 18:24-19:7). He tries to go beyond the changes the Evangelists made to the texts to depict John the Baptist as subordinate to Jesus.

That Herod saw Jesus as John redivivus(Mk 6:14), could only be because Jesus continued John's work of baptising. It could not have been because of the miracles as Mark 6:14 depicts it (Murphy-O'Connor 1990:372).

In Acts 18:24-19:7 we find the description of Apollos in Ephesus, that preached about Jesus, as well as disciples (μαθητάς) that only knew the baptism of John. If it is as Murphy-O'Connor maintains, that the disciples of John in Ephesus were baptised by Jesus with the baptism of John, the passage becomes understandable and it substantiates his thesis(1990:367). The question then arises why Jesus changed from a ministry of baptism to a ministry of miracles. Did the change in ministry mean that Jesus also changed his views about eschatology? If Jesus' and John the Baptist's ways parted, could we use John the Baptist as a model to base an image of Jesus on?

We see that the article of Murphy-O'Connor agrees with Sanders' view about Jesus and John. The question remains whether this close relationship is reason enough to postulate that an eschatological driving force motivated Jesus' whole life.

6.4.2 John the eschatological prophet

There is general agreement that John the Baptist was an eschatological prophet. One is struck by the little evidence we have about him and that should warn us to take any of the material about John the Baptist as conclusive evidence.

All the works cited on this topic in the paragraphs above made it clear that the texts about John were reworked to fit the theological

purposes of the writers. How far this reworking went is extremely difficult to assess.

The clothing of the Baptist was taken by Sanders as an indication of the resemblance between John and the prophets of old. The resemblance between John and Elijah was seen to be a construction of the Evangelists. Even if it was authentic, the resemblance does not prove that John was an eschatological prophet, because it is not proven that Elijah was an eschatological prophet. Likewise John's performance in the desert is not conclusive eschatological evidence.

The tendency of Sanders to interpret events and sayings eschatologically is depicted by his use of Josephus (Sanders 1985:371n4). He acknowledged that Josephus played down eschatology. He substantiated a general agreement between Josephus and the gospels about the dress of the Baptist and the place of his appearance. This made him interpret John eschatologically from a source that was not eschatological at all.

The evidence used by Sanders does not prove beyond reasonable doubt that John was mainly concerned with eschatology. His message of repentance had an eschatological tone, but his ethical teaching as we find in his repudiation of Herod for marrying the wife of his brother, shows that he was not concerned solely with eschatology. One first has to accept eschatology before these texts convince one of eschatology. This applies particularly to the interpretation of John's dress and his appearance in the desert.

6.4.3 Jesus' view of John

Sanders used the logion in Matthew 11:11 to establish Jesus' view of John the Baptist.

The saying in Matthew 11:11 is found in two sources in the first stratum namely The Gospel of Thomas 46 and the sayings Gospel 2Q that we find in Luke 7:28 = Matthew 11:11. The saying as we find it in the Gospel of Thomas 46, reads as follows: **Jesus said."Among those born of women, from Adam to John the Baptist, there is no one so superior to John the Baptist that his eyes should not be lowered (before him). Yet I have said, whichever one of you comes to be a child will be acquainted with the Kingdom and will become superior to John."** (Crossan 1986:61). The fact that the logion is attested in the Gospel of Thomas, that has no interest in John the Baptist and eschatology (Crossan 1991:237), in conjunction with its double attestation in the first stratum, secure its authenticity beyond reasonable doubt. Sanders interpreted the logion to mean that Jesus gave himself the final eschatological significance, as we have seen above. The logion could also be interpreted in such a way,though, that John the Baptist was the final eschatological figure. Jesus would then be the first of the Kingdom of God and everyone that follows him would be superior to John (Boers 1989:53). This interpretation makes a distinction between the eschaton and the Kingdom. The Kingdom was the object of Jesus' preaching and it did not necessarily have to be eschatological. This will be discussed in more detail below under the topic of the Kingdom of God.

6.5 The difference between Jesus and John the Baptist

Murphy-O'Connor (1990:374) suggests that the social conditions in Palestine were instrumental in determining Jesus' conduct. For him this corresponds with the views of Sanders on Jesus' offer of God's favour without insisting on restitution (Sanders 1985:174-211). For Sanders though, Jesus was motivated by an overpowering eschatological motive that went beyond the mere sociological conditions of his time (1992:11).

For Crossan (1991:304-353) the miracles of Jesus were in response to the social and religious conditions. "Religion was official and approved magic, while magic was unofficial and unapproved religion"(Crossan 1991:305). Likewise open commensality was against the very fabric of the social structure of society. The behaviour of Jesus was a reaction brought about by socio-economic and socio-political factors bearing down on a Mediterranean Jewish peasant of the first century.

Hendrikus Boers (1989:53) accentuates the fact that Jesus' conduct was diametrically opposed to that of John the Baptist. For him the reason is not so much sociological, but rather theological. For Boers Jesus' understanding of John as the final eschatological figure, and of himself as the first in the Kingdom of God, is the reason for his conduct (1989:49). Boers labels Jesus' conduct as scandalous. It coincides with the views of Crossan on commensality and miracles. Jesus went against the very fabric of society by practising open commensality and his unofficial mediation in matters of religion.

There was a difference between the conduct of the Baptist and Jesus. This is important for our study of Jesus because the difference in conduct means that
we cannot draw a direct line between the image of Jesus and that of John the Baptist.

6.6 Assessment

The importance of John the Baptist for the study of the historical Jesus, is that it helps one to construct a type for Jesus. Surprisingly the construction is not based on the assertion that John the Baptist was an apocalyptic visionary, but on the point that their conduct and message eventually came to differ. John was an ascetic but Jesus ate with the people and lived amongst them. John was a baptiser, but Jesus eventually exorcised and did miracles. This leads us to conclude that the close relationship between John and Jesus, cannot prove beyond reasonable doubt that Jesus was as concerned with apocalyptic thought as John the Baptist. This is especially true of his conduct after the death of John.

The reasons for Jesus' conduct could thus be sought in an eschatological perception, as Boers interprets it, or as a response to sociological circumstances, as Crossan sees it. Sanders uses Jesus' offer of forgiveness without restitution as an eschatologically motivated action. The sociological circumstances consequently gave rise to the eschatological option. The reason for Jesus' conduct is thus open to interpretation, although there is general consensus about his actions. Though Murphy-o'Connor established grounds for assuming a master-

man and that some of his followers will not die before it happens (Mt 16:28). He teaches his followers to pray for the coming of the Kingdom of heaven (Mt 6:10 and par.). He initiates the eucharist and says he will be drinking wine in future in the Kingdom of God (Mt 26:29 and parr.). He blesses the poor (in spirit) and those persecuted for the sake of righteousness and promises them the Kingdom of God (Mt 5:3 and parr. Mt 5:10).

As soon as one then reads the ambiguous texts, in the light of the futuristic texts, it becomes highly probable to interpret them in a futuristic sense as well. One could then argue that the futuristic passages indicate that the ambiguous sayings were intended to be understood in a futuristic way. With the futuristic texts as point of departure one could understand how Schweitzer could arrive at his program of thoroughgoing eschatology. Although his methodology could be questioned today (Sanders 1985:124), his influence remained because a reading of the texts supports his conclusions.

7.1.3 Sayings referring to the present

There are, however, also sayings that declare the opposite of what we have seen above. The sayings below cannot be interpreted in any other way than that the Kingdom of God has come.

> Matthew 12:28 and par. **But if it is by the Spirit (finger in Lk) of God that I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you.**

> **Luke 17:21** **nor will they say, "Lo, here it is!" or "There!" for behold, the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you.**

Gospel of Thomas 51 **He said to them, "What you look forward to has already come, but you do not recognise it."**

These sayings immediately cause a problem. If we only had the ambiguous and the futuristic texts the problem could easily have been solved. The present sayings open up the possibility to interpret the ambiguous sayings as if they were present.

As we have seen above, C.H. Dodd took up the view that the Kingdom was present. He regarded thoroughgoing eschatology as a compromise that tried to bridge the gap between futuristic eschatology and the presence of the Kingdom of God (Dodd 1970:34). He argued that the apocalyptic imagery of Jesus, was a common trait of many teachers (Dodd 1970:42-43). He sought the unique teaching of Jesus in his proclamation of the realism of the parables that exhibited the presence of the Kingdom (Aulen 1976:106). Dodd accepted the sayings that stressed the immanence of the Kingdom as authentic. He suggested that for Jesus the Kingdom was entirely present in his own life (Hiers 1987:24). This meant that Jesus saw the coming of the Kingdom in his coming and the manifestation thereof in the miracles and exorcisms (Mt 11:4-6; Lk 7:21-23). Sanders (1985:134-135) puts down the arguments of Dodd which are built on Matthew 12:28 **But if it is by the spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you (ἔφθασεν).** He concludes that one could only understand ἔφθασεν as present if one uses a circular argument that Jesus saw the miracles as evidence that the Kingdom has come.

Dodd coined the term realised eschatology in his Shafer lectures of 1935 (Hiers 1987:19). The term "realised eschatology" has a certain

inner tension, how could an eschatological event be realised in history? Dodd does not deny the eschatological ring of the sayings, only that they have to be interpreted in a realised manner. This means that Jesus saw in his coming the coming of the Kingdom of God and that in him the eschatological hopes of Judaism were fulfilled.

7.1.4 Perrin's reaction to the temporal problem of the Kingdom

The problem posed by the temporal setting of the Kingdom lies at the root of almost every other question asked about the Kingdom. The most obvious response to the problem was seen in the methods of Schweitzer and Dodd above. Schweitzer ignored the texts that emphasised the presence of the Kingdom. Dodd rejected the authenticity of the texts that emphasised the futurity of the Kingdom. Depending on the criteria one uses, the authenticity of all the sayings above could be argued. In spite of his positive approach Perrin could, for instance, ascribe only four Kingdom sayings to Jesus (Mk 1:15a; Lk 11:20; Lk 17:20-21 and Mt 11:12).

The way that Perrin sought out of the temporal impasse, was in contrast aimed at the interpretation of the Kingdom and not at the temporal problems raised by it. He interpreted the Kingdom as a symbol rather than a concept. According to him the parables were used to invoke the myth of the kingship of God (Perrin 1976:1-12;202-203). As symbol it need not be interpreted in terms of time, but only in terms of the mythological content it tries to convey (1976:40). The mythological content of Kingdom of God is the activity of God as king. This symbolism was deeply rooted in the consciousness of the Jews who saw

themselves as the people of God with God acting on their behalf in history. This point of Perrin has to be tested. We have to ask ourselves whether the Kingdom of God as eschatological idea was deeply rooted in the thought of the Jewish people.

7.2 The Kingdom in Judaism

A most important question that has to be borne in mind is whether the Kingdom of God was a notion only of Jesus. Did the Kingdom of God have a distinctive meaning in Judaism ? Could the use of the term in Jewish texts explain its use in early Christianity?

The first thing that strikes one when one looks for the phrase Kingdom of God in the Old Testament canon, is its infrequent occurrence (Patrick 1987:67-69). Perrin sees evidence of the Kingdom of God in the enthronement psalms (Perrin 1976:17).

Mack (1987:10) focuses on the fact that the term simply does not appear in apocalyptic texts, and that the kingship of God was taken for granted. He questions the assumptions scholars made without searching the Jewish texts, that led people to believe that Kingdom of God was abundant in Jewish apocalypticism.

In the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha Kingdom of God is not used as a standard fixed expression (Collins 1987:81). If Kingdom of God was not abundant in the Jewish texts and not used as a standard fixed expression with an eschatological content, it cannot be used as an indicator for the eschatological content it has in later texts.

This poses a problem because we find Kingdom laden with eschatological connotations in the literature of the first century AD. We

must not commit the error of reading into earlier texts notions from later texts. The eschatological content of the Kingdom of God has to be explained, but the material before the Christian era is not sufficient in supplying the answers.

This is underlined by the suggestions of Crossan that the ancient diversity, in the interpretation of Jesus, is much more complicated than we have come to believe (Crossan 1988:123). Yarbro-Collins (1991:220) also focuses our attention on the diversity of eschatological ideas in Judaism at the turn of the era. The Judaic view of the Kingdom of God is in itself so riddled with questions that it could not be used to substantiate more than the mere fact that some of Jesus' contemporaries could have had some eschatological expectance that was linked to the Kingdom of God.

7.3 Sanders, the Kingdom and the sayings material

Sanders' approach of the problems related to the Kingdom of God, questions many of the presuppositions and results of the eschatological paradigm.

The conclusion of Schweitzer that there was an established dogma in the first century is shown to be untenable. There was a common hope for the restoration of Israel, although there were various restoration theologies (Sanders 1985:124). This finding of Sanders coincides partially with the conclusion above, that there was an eschatological hope of some sort amongst at least some of the people. Sanders' conclusion is much more assertive though, by narrowing the expectation down to the restoration of Israel.

In opposition to Perrin's opinion that the Kingdom of God is to be interpreted as a symbol Sanders asserts that the phrase has a conceptual content (1985:126). The content of the concept is to his mind the reign of God, or the sphere where God exercises his power. Sanders infers from Mark 12:18-27 that Jesus saw Kingdom as the ruling power of God (1985:127). The passage is from the second stratum in which it is found only in single attestation (Crossan 1991:455). This makes it improbable that the excerpt could have been authentic.

Sanders evades the problem of authenticity by assuming that there are no texts that are authentic that contradict his inference from Mark 12:18-27 (Sanders 1985:127).

Having established in this way the thought of Jesus about the Kingdom, Sanders corroborates this assumption by the results of Jesus' ministry, namely an eschatological movement of his followers (1985:129). That the beginning of Jesus' ministry with John the Baptist, and its aftermath, are both eschatological, strengthens Sanders' grounds for assuming that the thought of Jesus about the Kingdom was eschatological.

Sanders conveys the view that the problem, whether the Kingdom is present or in the future, is due to the fact that we have sayings that were taken out of their original context, mixed with other sayings, put in new contexts and used for different purposes (1985:131-132). This makes it difficult to come to Jesus' views on the concept of the Kingdom. Although this is the case Sanders is confident that the high instance of the term, in comparison with the other Jewish literature, makes it beyond doubt that Jesus used the term. The temple act and the call of the

twelve, are confirmation for Sanders that Jesus saw his career as significant and intimately bound to the Kingdom (Sanders 1985:140). Sanders concludes that from the sayings and the facts we may deduct that:

> "Jesus looked for the imminent direct intervention of God in history, the elimination of evil and evildoers, the building of a new and glorious temple, and the reassembly of Israel with himself and his disciples as leading figures in it" (1985:153).

He admits that, given the nature of the sayings, the nuance and specifics of Jesus' view of the Kingdom will never be known with certainty.

7.4 Assessment

We have seen in the discussion above that the Kingdom of God does not give us easy access to the contents of the message of Jesus. The first problem is posed by the temporality of the Kingdom, so that we do not know whether Jesus used it as futuristic or present. The Judaic background of the Kingdom of God does not bring us nearer to an answer as to what it meant for Jesus. Sanders' treatment of the Kingdom of God showed us that it could be interpreted eschatologically. The eschatological content of the term is not self-evident. Sanders had to substantiate his eschatological interpretation with other material that he viewed as eschatological, for instance, the temple act, the calling of twelve disciples and as we have seen, the beginning and aftermath of his ministry. We have also been confronted with the divergence of views about the Kingdom of God that are both modern and ancient.

I intend by way of conclusion to look at a particular cluster of texts to see whether we may deduct from them in which way our questions about the Kingdom should lead. I have chosen the cluster ***43. Blessed the poor***. It is attested independently three times in the first stratum namely in the Gospel of Thomas, 1Q as well as James: ***Blessed are the poor, for yours is the Kingdom of heaven\God.*** In the Gospel of Thomas the passage is in a context that is not eschatological. In Luke 6:20b, that is derived from 1Q the context is ambiguous about the temporality of the Kingdom. The use of *νῦν* in 6:21 and 6:25 makes it very likely that it was not meant eschatologically. Matthew 5:3 is also derived from 1Q and is clearly more eschatologically oriented. 1Q could be taken more sapientially than eschatologically (Crossan 1991:429). The reading in James 2:5 is once more to be taken as eschatological in the light of James 5:7-11.

We see that there are an eschatological and a non-eschatological interpretation of Kingdom in the same cluster and that it was so from the first stratum. This means that the term was diversely interpreted from the very start of its use. This state of affairs brings us back to the question in chapter one : What did Jesus say about the Kingdom of God that could be so diversely interpreted? That we have to ask this question rather than the questions about temporality of the Kingdom of God, seems the appropriate approach.

At the risk of seemingly procrastinating I shall return to this question in chapter five where I will be able to answer it within the context of the results of all the research.

8 SON OF MAN

The Son of Man problem is a very important issue in New Testament studies (Donahue 1986:484). It is far from being conclusively solved. There was a consensus two decades ago under influence of Bultmann but this came apart with the contributions of Perrin, the Aramaic investigation into the problem by Vermes, and the discovery of *1 Enoch* (Donahue 1986:485).

In the Gospels we always find the term Son of Man on the lips of Jesus as a self-designation. If this term could be proven to have an eschatological meaning it would help to substantiate an eschatological image of Jesus. To use the term as proof for eschatology it has to meet a few requirements. Firstly the Son of Man sayings, or at least some of them, have to be authentic. In the second place their eschatological content has to be ascertained. Closely related to the eschatological content of the phrase are the questions about its origin and whether it had a titular use or not.

8.1 The authenticity of Son of Man

There are forty Son of Man sayings. Of these eighteen are eschatological, ten are earthly, two could be designated as suffering and rising Son of Man sayings and ten are Johannine (Crossan 1991:454-455).

The futuristic Son of Man sayings were widely accepted in an axiomatic manner (Borg 1986:87). In some instances the futuristic Son of Man sayings are taken to be authentic on the grounds of their being futuristic Son of Man sayings, Hill (1979:191) is an example of this

approach. It is clear that this is a circular argument that does not prove much. It is becoming more questionable whether these sayings are authentic. Borg (1986:88) names the growing consensus amongst scholars, the fact that we have no contemporary literary proof that it was used in terms of a super-natural end of the world and the work of Vermes, as reasons not to accept Son of Man as indication of an eschatological Jesus.

Jeremias (1975) is important for our discussion because of his interest in Aramaic as Jesus' mother tongue. He works with the conception that Jesus spoke Aramaic and not Greek. To understand the meaning of many phrases that we have in the Greek Gospels, Jeremias postulated that they have to be translated back into Aramaic. He argues that "Son of Man is the only ***title*** used by Jesus of himself whose authenticity is to be taken seriously" (1975:258). He bases this on four assumptions:

1. The term was in use in the Aramaic-speaking early church in a pre-Pauline period. One could take it back one step further to Jesus because in sayings of Jesus that can lay claim to considerable antiquity, there are references to Daniel seven (Lk 12:32 ; Mt 19:28 ; Lk 22:28)
2. Jesus spoke of the Son of Man in the third person. If it had been a construction of the primitive church it would have been in the first person because the identification of the Son of Man with Jesus went without saying after easter.
3. No Son of Man saying speaks of both resurrection and parousia at the same time. Jesus saw both as alternate ways of describing

the same thing and thus would not have used them together. The distinction between resurrection and parousia was a post-easter phenomenon.

4. The Greek church avoided the title but we still find it in the gospels. It is found exclusively on the lips of Jesus. The conclusion must then be, that although they avoided the use of the term, it was sacrosanct because Jesus used it and no-one dared to eliminate it (Jeremias 1975:265-267).

Vermes used basically the same point of departure as Jeremias and although he also took the Son of Man sayings to be authentic, he did not see it as a title. We shall consider his views below.

Sanders does not treat Son of Man as a separate subject, but as part of the question about the coming of the Kingdom of God (1985:142-146). He does not argue the authenticity of a particular passage, but concludes that it would be rash to deny Jesus the complex of ideas about a cataclysmic end in which a heavenly figure plays the leading rôle (1985:146).

There are however scholars who do not accept the authenticity of the Son of Man sayings. Perrin (1976:58) sees the coming of the Son of Man as a reinterpretation of the coming of the Kingdom:

Earliest Christianity used the symbol Son of Man to evoke the myth of apocalyptic redemption where Jesus had used the symbol Kingdom of God to evoke the myth of the activity of God" (Perrin 1976:59).

Jacobs (1991:129) comes to the conclusion that the authenticity of the Son of Man sayings was questioned in the German speaking world because the term was seen as an allusion to the messiah expected by the

Jews. I have named the views above to demonstrate that there is not consensus about the authenticity of the phrase. We are by now aware of Crossan's method where multiple attestation in the first stratum indicates a high probability of authenticity. For the eschatological Son of Man sayings we have nine clusters in the first stratum. In five clusters we find the ***unit*** in multiple attestation. In none of the clusters, though, the ***expression*** "Son of Man" is in multiple attestation.

From this information we may deduct that the expression "Son of Man" is not as secure as one may have expected. It is significant that Sanders is only willing to accept as authentic the general notions about a heavenly figure that would return as judge.

8.2 The origin of Son of Man

We are by now aware that it is highly problematic to prove that Jesus used the term Son of Man of himself as an indication of his own messiahship. This does not diminish the fact that it was understood in this way by ancient writers as well as their modern counterparts. In the following paragraphs I shall investigate what the phrase meant to those that used it.

8.2.1 The meaning of Daniel 7:13

The first canonical use of Son of Man is found in the Old Testament in the book of Daniel. If one reads Daniel seven it becomes clear that the vision of "one ***like*** a son of man" denoted the "people of the holy ones of the most high" (Dn 7:27). One has to keep in mind that one like a son of man is not the same as the Son of Man. A great deal of

development had to take place to get from the former to the latter, that is if the former gave rise to the latter.

The issue at stake in the exegesis of Daniel seven, is seen by some interpreters, as whether the Kingdom inherited by "one like a Son of Man" is a heavenly or earthly Kingdom (Davies 1985:100) and not if Son of Man symbolised a future messiah.

Other interpreters concentrate on what is meant by Son of Man (Collins 1974:50-51). Son of Man is mostly interpreted as either the nation of Israel or angelic beings (Collins 1974:50-51). In this context Son of Man clearly did not allude to a singular person. It is used with three other metaphors,.. one like a lion,..like a bear,...like a leopard. They represented four Kingdoms (Dn7:17). How Son of Man developed from a metaphor used for a corporate body of persons to a title for the expected messiah is to be sought in Jewish apocalyptic that made a connection between Son of Man and Messiah (Fledderman 1978:140).

Collins (1974:58-66) combines the two viewpoints that heavenly host indicated the faithful of Israel, and that it denotes angelic beings. He investigated the angelology of *Daniel* 8 and 10:12 -12:13. From this he deduced that *Daniel* had the perception that the angels were fighting with God against the enemies of Israel. In this battle they were joined by the faithful Jews. Their leader was then depicted as Son of Man in Daniel 7:13. He is seen as the representative of the corporate body of angels and pious Jews. Collins (1974:64) identifies the Son of Man in *Daniel* as the archangel Michael.

In *Enoch* the Son of Man figure appears once again. Although he is not depicted as Michael, he is nevertheless an angelic being (Collins

1974:64). In the Gospels Son of Man is frequently used in close propinquity to some of the angels. This brings us closer to the New Testament passages where the Son of Man is depicted with his angels (Mt 16:27 13:41; Mk 8:38).

In *1QM* 17:7-8 Michael is represented as leader of a host consisting of both men and angels (Collins 1974:64). In *Revelation* 12 we find a description of the battle between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels. The Kingdom is however, awarded to Christ (Rv 12:10). Collins (1974:65) sees this as an example of angelic christology. We find further examples of this in other New Testament writings (2 Thes 1:7; 1 Thes 4:16).

This may indicate that amongst some people of the intertestamental and New Testament time, the view of Son of Man as leader of an angelic and human host, existed.

8.2.2 Son of Man and Messiah

Messiah has not always been understood as an eschatological term (Russel 1964:304). Uffenheimer (1982:259) writes that it had no eschatological meaning in the Old Testament. The word messiah was originally used for the anointed and as such was used for the kings of Israel (2 Sm 19:21 ;23:1). In the post-exilic period the priests were anointed and we also know that the prophet Elisha was anointed. This indicates that messiah originally referred to a historical person (Russell 1964:305). Without using the term the prophets gave indications of the anticipation of the ideal Kingdom and its king. Sometimes this alluded to a historical person, for example, Zerrubbabel in Hagai 2:23. There

are instances however, where they allude to a future Kingdom and king (Is 9:6; 11:1; Jr 23:5; Mi 5:2; Zch 9:9). Kee describes how these allusions led to the apocalyptic expectations:

> After the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon, the Maccabean revolt, and the imperfections of the Hasmonean Kingdom there were two ways open to have the faith of the covenant people survive . It could repeat the hopes of the ancient prophets and leave the time of its fulfilment in the hands of God, or it could shift the final triumph of God to the cosmic realms. The first way was followed by the Pharisees and can be found in the Psalms of Solomon . The second way led to apocalypticism and can be found in the book of Daniel, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Enoch, IV Ezra and portions of the Qumran scrolls (Kee 1984:84-85).

The eschatological interpretation of Son of Man developed because it was linked to the eschatological interpretation of messiah. Both Fitzmyer and Vermes agree that Son of Man is not a messianic title in any of its pre-Christian usages (Donahue 1986:487).

8.3 The titular use of Son of Man

The titular use of Son of Man is being questioned increasingly by a number of scholars. Vermes (1983b) and Casey (1979) debated the titular use of Son of Man in detail. We have also seen above that Fitzmyer agrees that it was not used as a title.

8.3.1 Son of Man in Aramaic

Vermes and Casey played an important rôle to shed light on the Aramaic use of Son of Man. Vermes was further in debate with Fitzmyer on the same issue (Donahue 1986:487). Yarbro-Collins (1990), amongst others also made a contribution to the debate.

The Aramaic use of the term is important because linguistically speaking, the Greek term *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* is not idiomatic Greek and this may have played a rôle in explaining it as a title (Donahue 1986:486). Vermes accepted the general consensus that בר אנש was the normal term for "man" or "a man" in Aramaic (Vermes 1983b:162). He takes the argument one step further by postulating that Son of Man was used as a circumlocution for the first person singular and concludes:

> In Galilean Aramaic i.e.the language of Jesus and his followers, Son of Man was at least occasionally employed as a circumlocution. By contrast, no trace survives of its titular use, from which it must be inferred that there is no case to be made for an eschatological or messianic office-holder generally known as "the Son of Man".

Fitzmyer differed with Vermes on the point of the use of the term as a circumlocution for "I". His critique revolved around the question whether בר אנש was written with or without the initial aleph in New Testament times. Furthermore the methodological question arose whether the evidence of a later period could be used, where the aleph is omitted (Donahue 1986:488). Literature from before the Second Revolt has the aleph.

Casey argued that a shift in meaning took place, that changed an Aramaic idiom that was used to apply a general statement to the speaker into a title, in the translation of Son of Man from Aramaic to Greek (Casey 1979:234-239). Although these viewpoints came under criticism (Vermes answers criticism against him by Fitzmyer and Jeremias 1983b:188-191), they are valuable because they challenged the assumptions that bound Son of Man to the messiah. Furthermore, the criticisms are based on the dating of documents (Vermes 1983b:190) rather than linguistic grounds. We must conclude that on linguistic grounds בר אנש cannot be made out to have the titular meaning ascribed to it, even if it is not taken as a circumlocution for the first person singular. Its meaning is totally dependent on how the Evangelists understood it, in the various contexts we find it (Jacobs 1991:154).

In conclusion we have to take into account the significance of the particular way in which Son of Man is attested in the sources. The phenomenon that the expression is only attested once in every cluster is significant for the titular understanding of the phrase, because the instances where it is used may signify that it was seen as a title by the writers who used it. The evangelist in question could thus have inserted Son of Man into a text that did not have it in the first place. The reason could most probably be that it had a titular meaning for the evangelist. The titular use might have stemmed from the fact that Jesus actually used the term for himself (Hurtado 1979:312). We do not have any conclusive evidence of what the term would have meant for Jesus. If he used the term, as Hurtado suggests, it is still open to a wide range of interpretations. Yarbro-Collins (1990:191) suspects that Jesus used the

term exegetically and not as a title. She argues that Jesus interpreted *Daniel* 7:13 for his teaching. The followers of Jesus were thus encouraged to use the term in the same way and applied it to Jesus (Yarbro-Collins 1990:192). The problem is not solved by this hypothesis because we still don't know what Jesus' use of Son of Man would have meant. Donahue (1986:496) concludes rightly that the Aramaic debate leads to no conclusive evidence either way.

8.3.2 Son of Man as used in the texts

I will use the cluster [2] 28."Before the angels" to demonstrate the use of Son of Man in the texts (Crossan 1991:454). The cluster has four sources (2Q; Mk 8:38; Rv 3:5; 2Tm 2:12b). We shall examine the development of each of the sources.

The development of the first source moved from 2Q to Lk 12:8-9 and Mt 10:32-33. We will have to reconstruct 2Q to obtain the starting point of the development therefore we will have to analyze the saying in Matthew and Luke. Matthew 10:32-33 reads as follows: **"So every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.**

The reading of Luke 12:8-9 is: **"And I tell you every one who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God."**

For the reconstruction of Q we will have to secure those words or phrases that are characteristic of a particular evangelist. The phrase **"Father who is in heaven"** is characteristic of Matthew who avoids the use of the name of God. The other discrepancy between these texts is

"**Son of Man**" that Luke has in place of "**I**" in Matthew. The question is whether Luke would have added Son of Man, or whether Matthew would have deleted it? It is typical of Luke to introduce Son of Man to his text where other texts do not have it (6:22 Mt 5:11 has "me"; 12:40 vs. GThom 21, 103; 19:10 added to Ezk 34:16; 22:48 added to Mk16:7) (Fitzmyer 1986:210). Q would thus read as follows:

> **So every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before the angels of God.**

The reconstruction of Q clearly points out the development of the texts. We are able to see how Luke added Son of Man to this text because it had a particular significance for him, as his use of the phrase shows us. To use Son of Man in place of the pronoun, it must have meant more than just a pronoun. From this we may deduct that Luke must have seen it as a title, or else the change would have been unnecessary.

In contrast to the attestation above, Mark 8:38 has Son of Man. It is thus attested in the first stratum. Matthew 16:27 and Luke 9:26 both took over the phrase. The other two sources, Revelation 3:5b and 2 Timothy 2:12b do not use Son of Man.

We thus have Son of Man attested in one source in the first stratum whilst the other text from the first stratum omits it. Because these texts are independent we need not argue which one was the oldest. From the very beginning Son of Man played a distinct rôle in the thought of some of the writers. We could easily attempt to prove that one of the sources was inauthentic, but this would not bring us nearer to an answer. The

problem could not be solved in this manner because there is no conclusive evidence to prove authenticity. We have to assume that from the onset Son of Man was used by some of the writers to designate Jesus in a specific way. The question that we have to ask ourselves is: why did it happen?

8.4 Assessment

We may conclude that the term played a theological rôle, and was used for those purposes (Donahue 1986:498). We can also be certain beyond reasonable doubt, that Son of Man was not used as a title by Jesus otherwise it would have been attested on a regular basis throughout the clusters that have it. The titular use of Son of Man is an interpretation of the person of Jesus by the Evangelists where they use it. This is also borne out by Theissen (1978:25) that regards the use of Son of Man as expression of the internal perspective of the Jesus movement.

The question that forms the point of departure of this thesis comes to the fore once more. What did Jesus say and do that it could have been interpreted so diversely as we see it in the texts? Son of Man is part of this question and we have to ask what Jesus said and did to be interpreted with the title Son of Man by some of those that saw and heard him.

That Son of Man had an eschatological content for Jesus, cannot be proven without doubt. As we have seen above, it is improbable that Jesus used the term of himself as a title. This was indicated linguistically by pointing out that בר אנש could not be used as a title in Aramaic. The form of it in Greek is not idiomatic. Thus ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου could

have come to be interpreted as a title and given an eschatological content after Jesus. If Jesus had not used it as a title, it could not have had a special connotation, be it eschatological or anything else. The problem is not resolved, though. This means that we have to be extremely cautious in our use of this term to substantiate one image or the other.

9 THE DEATH OF JESUS AND ITS AFTERMATH

A comprehensive image of Jesus has to account for his death. The two main questions concerning his death are: Why was Jesus put to death and who were his adversaries?

9.1 Jesus and the Law

An assumption that was generally accepted, was that Jesus was crucified because he opposed the Law (Sanders 1985:246). Harvey Falk (1985:111-137) expounds the anti-nomistic sayings of Jesus in the light of the disputes between Bet Shammai and Bet Hillel. These were two schools of rabbinic authority that existed between 30 BC and AD 70. They had large disputes about the interpretation of the Torah that divided Judaism (Falk 1985:114).

On the cases of dispute between the Pharisees and Jesus about the Sabbath, ritual cleanliness and the Temple, Falk could point out similar disputes between Bet Shammai and Bet Hillel. One need not accept the arguments of Falk, to deduct from his work that Jesus' attitude towards the law did not warrant his death. His views coincided with those of Bet Hillel. By implication this means that there was scope for these

differences in Judaism and that it would not have led to the death of Jesus.

Sanders (1985:252) names one instance that could be seen as a transgression of the law and that was the saying to let the dead bury the dead (1Q, Lk 9:59-60, Mt 8:21-22). He also focuses our attention on the point that Jesus' attitude towards the Temple reflected his attitude towards the law (1985:251). A third point of dispute could have been the admission of sinners into the Kingdom without demanding restitution. In these instances Jesus challenged the adequacy of the Mosaic law and looked forward to another dispensation. This attitude is according to Sanders a reflection of restoration eschatology, but in itself no reason for the death of Jesus (1985:269).

9.2 The opponents of Jesus

The opponents of Jesus are usually depicted as the Pharisees or the chief priests. This view is supported by Sanders (1985:286). The animosity between Jesus and the hierarchy of Judaism was due to the fact that Jesus and his followers were posing a threat to the common values of Judaism (1985:287).

The temple act would have angered more than just the priests, and the admission of sinners without restitution would have offended many (Sanders 1985:287). That the temple act played a rôle in the condemnation of Jesus is accepted by Bowker (1973:49), Boers (1989:93) and Bornkamm (1978:163) along with Sanders. It is acceptable that the temple act resulted in the people of Jerusalem's

rejection of Jesus, so that he did not have such a large following as one would expect (Sanders 1985:288).

Sanders (1985:292) concludes that we know about no substantial difference about the law that Jesus had with the Pharisees. The chief opponents of Jesus were the chief priests but numbers out of the populace and Pharisees could have supported them.

9.3 The death of Jesus

The question that remains about the death of Jesus is: Why did he die on a Roman cross if he offended the Jewish hierarchy and a number of the Jewish people? To die on a cross was reserved for bandits (Crossan 1991:172). The death of Jesus thus evokes certain political overtones. Sanders uses the temple act once again to establish the reason for this "political" death (1985:296). The temple act could be interpreted as a religio- political challenge to the leaders of Israel. This was not enough reason for the Romans to act on their own. Had the tumult been larger, the Romans would have acted on their own accord. If this happened, surely many of the disciples would have died with him, as was the case with other leaders of popular uprisings (Crossan 1991:175-187). The fact that none of the followers of Jesus died during his arrest, indicates that the Romans did not see them as a threat as they would have, if Jesus had a large following that started an uprising. This heightens the possibility that the Romans killed Jesus at the insistence of the chief priests.

9.4 Assessment

The eschatological picture that Sanders drew of Jesus is taken to its fullest by his description of the death of Jesus. For him Jesus died because he was a prophet of Jewish restoration eschatology. This made people interpret him in such a way that it eventually led to his death. Because the movement that came into being after his death was eschatological, it is used by Sanders to strengthen his hypothesis.

The conclusions of why Jesus died and who were responsible, that Sanders came to, could be arrived at without the framework of eschatology.

Crossan (1991:124-206) sees the miracles and message of Jesus as theological banditry. Its parallel in the field of politics was banditry. The influence of the conduct of Jesus was that the prophetic rôle could easily turn into that of a leader of dissidents. The Jewish hierarchy was reacting to the religious banditry whilst the Romans crucified him as pretender to the throne.

It is clear that both the pictures above could be interpreted eschatologically. They could also be interpreted in another way. The death of Jesus does not prove eschatology, it could only be interpreted in an eschatological way.

10 EVALUATION

The thesis of Sanders rests on an interpretation of the subject matter at his disposal. He followed a clear methodological program as we have seen. His methodology came under close scrutiny (Schnell 1989:102), and those findings need not be worked out in fine detail, to assess the

image of Jesus that resulted from his work. A few remarks have to be made, though. Schnell pointed out the circularity of Sanders' method and the assumption that Jesus acted according to a premeditated plan. He also characterised Jesus' whole life as being governed by this scheme of restoration eschatology.

The work of Sanders emphasises the problem of the diverse images of Jesus. It is in this emphasis that we have to look for our answers. Despite the objections to his method, it has to be conceded that his work demonstrated the plausibility of Jesus as eschatological prophet.

We cannot deny that the temple act, some of Jesus' sayings about the Kingdom, the inclusion of sinners and his death could have been interpreted eschatologically. What Sanders demonstrates here, is that a Jew of the first century could have understood the actions and words of Jesus eschatologically, if he was inclined that way. Sanders did not prove that Jesus was an eschatological prophet, but very important, he proved without doubt that the life of Jesus could be interpreted eschatologically.

The question of this thesis still remains: What type of person could have been interpreted in an eschatological way, without being trapped in the narrow confines of restoration eschatology?

CHAPTER III
JESUS THE CYNIC SAGE

1 INTRODUCTION

The image of Cynic sage is a very important image in the recent debate on the historical Jesus. The case for this image is eloquently argued by its proponents in opposition to the eschatological image. The image is not new although it started with new impetus in the eighties. As early as 1905, Dill saw the Cynic influence on primitive Christianity as obvious, but after the work of Halliday in 1925 the Cynic image lost its appeal on scholars (Downing 1987:150).

There are two focal points in the description of this image. The first places Jesus within the group of Cynic philosophers that was common in first century Hellenism. The second expands the image of Jesus into the first century concepts of wisdom. Both these aspects are not new to the historical enquiry into the life of Jesus. They were advocated before the new quest but succumbed to the success of the eschatological image.

In this chapter I intend to analyze the image of Cynic sage. This will be done by investigating two recent proponents of this image, F.G. Downing and Burton Mack. Their arguments for this image will be examined critically and the results put into the broader spectrum of this thesis.

I wish to start off with a short introduction to the Cynics to orientate the further discussion. The question of Cynicism in Galilee will then be examined under the heading of Hellenism in Palestine. If Galilee had

been as Hellenised as the supporters of the Cynic image indicate, Cynicism could have been understood by Galileans.

2 THE CYNICS

The Cynics were seen as a minor Socratic school that started under Anthisthenes. It was mainly on account of Diogenes Laertius (*Vitae philosophorum*), who reported that Diogenes of Sinope learned under Anthisthenes. This view was contested by Dudley (1937:xi). Others still include Anthisthenes amongst the Cynics (Malherbe 1977:1;Rankin 1983:228). It is impossible to pinpoint the inception of Cynicism. The date of its inception could thus only be put broadly in the third century BC. Cynicism was very resilient and survived till AD 600 (Dudley 1937:209). There was no Cynic school of philosophy as for instance that of the Stoics or Epicureans. Cynicism was much more a way of life than a philosophy.

The Cynics were seen as missionaries with the message that life could be lived on any terms the age could impose (Dudley 1937:x). The Hellenistic society inflicted many real fears on its people. There were always fear of slavery and exile. Many Cynics were at one time sold in slavery for instance Bion and Menippus (Rankin 1983:240-241). Diogenes, the most important of the Cynics, was banished from Sinope and Dio Cocceianus (Chrisostomus) as well as Demetrius the Cynic was banished from Rome (Rankin 1983:230; 245; 247).

In these social circumstances Cynics used the standard of the minimum as rule of life. They lived at subsistence level by choice and in this way showed that the terrors of society could be surmounted.

Dudley (1937:xi-xii) described Cynicism as a phenomenon consisting of three aspects - a vagrant ascetic life, an assault on all established values and a body of literature well adapted to satire and popular philosophic propaganda. The work of the proponents of Jesus as Cynic, relies much on the literary aspect and one will have to correlate it with the other aspects to see how Cynic Jesus was.

The name "Cynic" is derived from *κυνικός* which means dog-like. In line with its assault on established values it regarded shame and reticence as artificial and it is here where its dog-like qualities came to the fore. It is reported in this regard that Crates, a follower of Diogenes, and Hipparchia, the woman who lived with him and a Cynic herself, had sexual intercourse in public (Rankin 1983:237). In a society where honour and shame were the main operatives, this must indeed have been a most offensive demonstration. Hipparchia was well versed in philosophy and was involved in philosophical arguments. We know of an argument with Theodorus that she won even after he had humiliated her by tearing her clothes. The conduct of Hipparchia in a society restrictive of women demonstrates the total disregard for public values in Cynicism. The Cynics were not bent on political or social reform, they criticised the status quo but were more interested in living despite the circumstances than changing them. This may explain why Vespasian did not kill Demetrius a Cynic that vehemently criticised him (Rankin 1983:246).

Cynicism was by no means a unitary system of thought (Malherbe 1977:2). This diversity is the result of the Cynic rejection of rules and

systems. It is therefore imperative not to generalise when one reads the Cynic texts to form an opinion about Jesus.

The Cynic message developed new literary genres to effectively carry it. Diogenes employed the diatribe, a genre that was used to stimulate and persuade. It could best be described as a philosophical sermon to impart the philosophy to its hearers. There is discussion on whether the diatribe is a separate genre or not (O'Neil 1977:ix). For our purposes it is important to know the form of writing and not so much whether it is a separate genre.

Another Cynic genre is the chreia. Chreiae are short powerful statements of a point of view. Another distinctive trait of Cynic style is the semi-jocular style that they employed (*σπουδογελοῖον*). These aspects of Cynic style will have to be examined in Jesus logia.

3 HELLENISM IN PALESTINE

The influence of Hellenism on Palestine is a hotly debated issue. There are extremes to both sides that either claim a fully Hellenised society, or an impeccable Judaic society speaking only Aramaic and reading Hebrew, untouched by events in the rest of the world. One of the key factors that came to the fore in this thesis is that there is no unanimity to be found in Palestine, neither in religious thought nor in political views. The society in first century Palestine was complex and diverse.

At the onset of the first century, Palestine was already subjected to three centuries of Hellenism. One could mistakenly give a very confined description of Hellenism pertaining only to religion, language or politics.

If only one of these categories is used, a one-sided image would result. Hellenism is used here in its broadest possible meaning encompassing the whole sphere of human life in the first century.

Hengel (1989:10) mentions numerous instances of recent discoveries of Greek inscriptions in Jerusalem. The architecture of Jerusalem also displays Hellenistic influence. There is evidence of a Greek gymnasium in Jerusalem under the protection of the high priest Jason (Hengel 1989:22). Herod the Great was a Hellenistic prince and exerted a Hellenistic influence over Palestine.

The Diaspora was also important for the position of Hellenism in Palestine. Many Diaspora Jews visited Jerusalem and must have had an influence on the sociological environment. The political influence of Hellenism is obvious. It was brought by invading forces and kept in place by force. It was commonplace for the victors to enforce their culture on their subjects.

The numerous revolts and uprisings are a negative assertion of the influence of Hellenism. There would not have been uprisings of this nature if the people had not felt threatened by Hellenism. The reasons for these uprisings were numerous and diverse but the Hellenistic connotation in all of them cannot be dismissed.

Jerusalem felt the presence of Hellenism. In Galilee the influence of Hellenism was also strong. The Galilean community comprised of many people who were forced into Judaism by the Maccabees. Sepphoris and Tiberias were big Hellenistic cities in Galilee. The region was densely populated. These factors contributed to the fact that seclusion from Hellenism was not that easy. We have to take into account the fact that

the Gallilean community was comprised of a diverse population with strictly demarcated social strata. If we take this into account the influence of Hellenism need not have been the same on all people.

3.1 The linguistic argument

The main critique levelled at the Cynic image regards the fact that it was a Hellenistic phenomenon. Sanders (1992:5) contests the notion that Galilee was an epitome of Hellenistic culture. His main argument is based on linguistics. He argues that although Nazareth was close to Sepphoris, its influence could not have been that prominent because the people were not able to travel that much. He uses the argument that not many people in modern Europe are able to speak English although the American culture is dominant.

When one takes up the linguistic argument the influence of Greek is apparent. The LXX is a most striking example of the Hellenistic influence on Judaism. The legend concerning the inception of the LXX in the Letter of Aristeas to facilitate its canonicity and its use despite strong opposition emphasises the need there was for a Greek translation (Orlinsky 1989:543-548). Hengel identifies instances where Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible were found at Qumran and Wadi Murabba'at. There were also numerous Greek legal documents found at Wadi Murabba'at and Nahal Hever. These finds do not propose that Palestine was Greek speaking, they merely accentuate the complexity of the situation and assert that Greek was widely used in Palestine. The multifarious relationship between what is seen as Jewish Hellenistic literature and Palestinian Jewish texts makes one-sided views dangerous.

The distinction between "Palestinian Jewish" and "Jewish Hellenistic" literature is, in the light of the above, untenable (Hengel 1989:27). We are not able to, either dismiss or over-accentuate the rôle of Greek in first century Palestine.

Barr (1989:83) explained the view of experts in the field that Middle Hebrew was a spoken language and that it was still spoken in the time of Jesus. Barr concludes that it is difficult to draw a linguistic map of Palestine in the first century. We could roughly, with the evidence we have, say that Hebrew was still spoken, mostly in Judea. Aramaic was more prevalent in the North. Greek was spoken mostly in the region on the Mediterranean shore and in the North but also in the main centres like Jerusalem. Greek was furthermore the language of learning, commerce and administration (Barr 1989:110-114). This evidently has important consequences for New Testament scholarship which will not be expounded here. What is important though, is that the prime source of loan words for Middle Hebrew was Greek (Barr 1989:86-87). Greek thus came to influence Hebrew in an expanding way from late Biblical Hebrew, where there was no influence of Greek, to Middle Hebrew that was to a much larger extent influenced by Greek.

From this we may conclude that the competence of any individual in the languages spoken in Palestine, varied according to circumstances and no general rules could be laid down. Linguistics demonstrates though, that Hellenism had an influence on society. The Greek loan words in middle Hebrew and the necessity of a translation of the Hebrew Bible serve to emphasise this point.

3.2 The extensive influence of Hellenism

The influence of Hellenism was much more comprehensive than just the Greek language. We could take up the argument of Sanders, that not many modern Europeans are able to speak English, mentioned above. Although not many people in modern Europe are able to speak English, they drink Coca Cola and wear blue jeans. These phenomena are also, if not more, signs of the dominance of American culture. The influence of a dominant culture is more than just linguistic.

3.2.1 Politics

The political influence of Hellenism is evident in the literary corpus of Palestine. Hanson (1989:532-533) demonstrated how the religious literature of Palestine could be divided between the hierocratic, that advocated continuity with the past, and the visionary, that was disillusioned with the past. This division came about through religio-political circumstances that were the direct results of the Hellenistic influence.

The visionary circles consisted of the disenfranchised that, as a result of their circumstances, expected a radical new beginning inaugurated by divine intervention. An example of such a group is the Qumran community with its writings. The numerous uprisings under visionary leaders could be included in this category (Crossan 1991:451-452).

The hierocratic circles were sponsored by the Hellenistic overlords. The rebuilding of the temple under Zerubbabel with the sponsorship of Cyrus set the program to be followed by most of the Hellenistic successors. The temple built by Herod the Great emphasises this

development. The power of the priestly group is reflected in the Sanhedrin that consisted mainly of Sadducees with a later dominance by Pharisees. The Sadducees and Pharisees were despite the differences between them, working on the basis of a continuum with the past temple structures.

This division is easily overlooked in casual observance, but once one is alerted to it, it emphasises the influence of Hellenism on the very fabric of religious life.

The various uprisings against the Hellenistic overlords emphasise the powerful influence of Hellenism. The nature of these uprisings were directly influenced by Hellenism that did not regard the religious sensibilities of Judaism.

In the confusing time before the Hasmonean revolt, pious Jews rebelled against the Hellenising High Priest Menelaus and his followers. The uprising was not directed against the reigning power but against the effects of Hellenism (Goldstein 1989:293). The Hasmonean revolt was a direct result of an aggressive Hellenisation attempt by Antiochus IV (Roth 1970:70-80). The series of uprisings since the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate which eventually led to the fall of Jerusalem was to a great extent a social revolution against the influence of Hellenism (Crossan 1991:214-218).

The various rebellions serve to accentuate the influence of Hellenism on the religio-political sphere. Although Judaism remained relatively intact under the Hellenistic onslaught, Hellenism influenced the course of the whole political history of Palestine.

3.2.2 Archaeology

The influence of Hellenism is also manifest in the archaeological evidence found throughout Palestine. The scope of these findings include architecture found in fortifications, dwellings and places of religion. The every-day tools and the type of pottery that were common to all the Hellenistic territories abound in archaeological finds throughout Palestine (Halpern-Zylberstein 1989:1).

The Palestinian system of defences met the same standards as in the rest of the Greek world. This is due to the military techniques that were prevalent in the whole Hellenistic world (Halpern-Zylberstein 1989:13).

The influence of Hellenism on dwelling places is marked by the ruins of houses found at Geser, Mareshah and Samaria. Numerous domestic installations such as grape and oil presses, dyeing installations, stores and pottery kilns, bear witness to the widespread Hellenistic influence on the domestic activities. The palaces in Jerusalem, Tiberias and Samaria are excellent examples of Hellenistic architecture.

The archaeological finds in Palestine depict the influence of Hellenism on the daily lives of the inhabitants. There was no wholesale take-over of the Greek ways but rather an adaptation under Hellenistic influence of the traditional (Halpern-Zylberstein 1989:34).

3.3 Summary

The Hellenistic influence on First Century Palestine cannot be described in terms of closed categories. A more open ended approach is needed to describe the subtleties of the influence of Hellenism.

We have seen that Hellenism had an influence on the total Palestinian environment, from its religion to its architecture. The people were aware of their life as part of a larger Hellenistic world. Even the political unrest serves to demonstrate the influence of Hellenism by the very fact of its perception of Hellenism as a danger to the traditional religion and way of life.

In saying this, we must take heed however, that the influence of Hellenism was varied. Some places were more subject to Hellenistic influence than others. In the same vein some people were more Hellenised than others. This depended on their personal circumstances, what type of work they did and to which social stratum they belonged. Some Hellenistic phenomena would thus be understood by only some of the people. Other phenomena would have been understood by the whole society.

The situation in Palestine was such that both Hellenism and Judaism played a significant rôle in the thought and experience of the people. Hellenism and Judaism did not exclude each other. We could thus expect that within Judaism Hellenism played a varying rôle depending on circumstances.

4 WISDOM AND JESUS

Wisdom had for a long time been neglected in the study of the New Testament in general (Suggs 1970:1-2), and in the study of the historical Jesus in particular. A reason for this may be the association between Wisdom and Gnosticism. Gnosticism was deemed a heretic view as opposed to orthodox views about Christianity. Since the seventies we

have become more aware that the categories of orthodox and heretic were insufficient to describe what happened in earliest Christianity (Robinson & Koester 1971:16). This made it possible to bring Wisdom out of its obscurity.

As soon as one investigates Wisdom in the New Testament it is surprising how many instances of it are to be found. The sage was a well-known figure in Judaism as well as Hellenism (Wilken 1975:xvi). There is an impression that Wisdom and eschatology are independent opposing phenomena. On closer examination there is a surprising connection between Wisdom and apocalyptic (Von Rad 1975:306-308).

Wilken (1975:xvi) noticed that Wisdom was held in high regard by early Christian thinkers from Alexandria which was a Hellenistic city. Origen singles out Wisdom as the most appropriate title for Jesus (Wilken 1975:xvii).

For the purposes of this study it is sufficient to demonstrate that Wisdom was prevalent in the time of Jesus and that Jesus was seen as a teacher of Wisdom.

4.1 Wisdom in Judaism

Wisdom as phenomenon in Jewish life, was divided into two categories by Von Rad (1975:418,441). The first he named wisdom from experience and the second theological wisdom.

4.1.1 Wisdom from experience

Wisdom from experience could be seen as the starting point of Wisdom. Wisdom of this kind was a phenomenon common to the

Oriental and Greek world (Müller 1992:113). It grew out of man's desire to have practical knowledge of the laws of life. It did not entail a system of thought, but rather gave a view of life with its opposing phenomena as it was experienced. It consisted of affirmatory maxims rather than reasoning conclusions on life. At its earliest stage the maxims of Wisdom served the art for living. It later developed into didactic to equip the officials for counselling in the royal court and as such grew to be associated with the upper classes.

Early Wisdom was not the subject of the cult, it did not stand in opposition to it either, but performed a function that was different to that of the cult. It did not function on the plain of theology but rather on living life to its full. It took its place within the total life of the Jew and in that sense religion played an important rôle in Wisdom. God was seen as the one behind the order of all things. He was the one that set the limitations to people (Von Rad 1975:418-441).

Wisdom gave rise to a large number of literary forms. We find twin formulae like *friend-foe, light-darkness, body-life, love-suffering.* There are proverbs that rely much on the paradoxical:

> *Many a man gives much, and yet becomes richer. Many a man is more niggard than he ought to be and yet becomes poorer.* (Prov 11:24).

Riddles are not as plentiful in the Old Testament, but we may think of the riddles of the queen of Sheba and a few found in Proverbs 25:114 and 26:11. Poetry is frequently used as a means to convey Wisdom. Stories of wise people such as Joseph, David, Solomon and Daniel abound. One of the oldest forms of Wisdom is onomastica, the lists

made of everything starting from the heavens through to every phenomenon that is encountered.

4.1.2 Theological Wisdom

A marked development took place within Wisdom in the post-exilic period. Wisdom came to be understood as the divine call to all men, the mediator of revelation (Von Rad 1975:441). Thus the entire theology of late Judaism came under the sway of Wisdom. Von Rad saw this in the marked difference between the first part and last part of the book of Proverbs. Proverbs ten to twenty nine is an example of the earlier Wisdom while chapter one to nine exemplifies the later development. A marked development is the personification of Wisdom that addresses her hearers in personal terms (Von Rad 1975:443). Wisdom was in this sense the form in which Jahweh's will and His salvation accompanied people. Wisdom was created by Jahweh before all creation. She was the witness of creation. She is portrayed as nourisher that invites people to her banquet where she nourishes them with gladness, length of days, peace and health (Sandelin 1986:44). This nourishment is directed to the individual that has to take it or let it pass him by.

Theological Wisdom is also related to apocalyptic. Von Rad (1975:306) saw the relationship between Wisdom and apocalyptic in their disinterest in the *Heilsgeschichte.* Furthermore Daniel and Enoch of the Apocalypse of Enoch, were depicted as wise men with mantic powers that they got through charismatic knowledge (Müller 1992:210). The connection between the two phenomena is thus to be found in the figure of the Apocalyptist as a (mantic) wise man. Although Wisdom

became bound to the theology of Israel, being Wisdom, it still had the intercultural and inter-ethnic stance of all Wisdom (Wilken 1975:xx).

4.1.3 The teachers of Wisdom

The figure of the wise teacher is important for our study. He came in various guises, in that of a father, or a courtier or a teacher. These figures were not necessarily bound to the cult (Burden 1986:106-107). The teacher of Wisdom is on occasion likened to a ruler or a king. The influence of Wisdom on the world of Midrash brings the Jewish Rabbi into the circle of wise men (Fischel 1975:87). The trend to make the prophets the emissaries of Wisdom developed later and from this development grew the gnostic as wise man (Robinson 1975:2-4).

4.2 Jesus and Wisdom

One has to remember that the relationship between Jesus and Wisdom is accessible only through the texts. We are aware of the problematic relationship between the historical Jesus and the texts. Of importance for this thesis is the fact that Wisdom played a significant rôle in the development of, and thought expressed in the texts about Jesus as we shall see below.

4.2.1 The words of Jesus in Wisdom collections

Since the commencement of the quest of the historical Jesus, the words of Jesus have been the primary point of concern for an image of Jesus (Sanders 1985:4). The reconstruction of Q is a collection of sayings. That such a text could possibly exist, was at first questioned.

The discovery of the Gospel of Thomas in the Nag Hammadi library, proved that such a text could exist. The text of the Gospel of Thomas was a collection of sayings of Jesus. Q itself is designated as a sapiential text (Robinson 1975:5; Kloppenborg 1987:29).

Robinson (1979:71-113) proposed a trajectory that starts of with collections of sayings that existed before Q. These collections were Wisdom related. This is supported by Piper (1989:193) that inferred from the double tradition in Matthew and Luke, that there was sapiential activity concerning aphoristic traditions. Some of these collections were later incorporated in Q. The sayings in Matthew and Luke are thus the result of sapiential thought. The five discourses in Matthew are collections of sayings that are designated as Wisdom. In Q Jesus is teacher and revealer of Sophia. In Matthew he is Wisdom and thus the embodiment of Torah (Suggs 1970:127). Mark used collections of sayings as well. Instances of aphoristic sayings are to be found in Jesus' defence against the Pharisees concerning fasting (Mk2:19-22) and the sayings following the interpretation of the parable of the sower (Mk 4:21-25). The parables in Mark four are part of a collection of sayings that could be designated as riddles or so called dark sayings (Robinson 1979:93). Mark's depiction of Jesus as teacher par excellence places the Gospel in the environment of Greco-Roman paideia (Botha 1989:92). This depiction of Jesus demonstrates that Wisdom was not only prevalent in certain Markan sayings but in his image of Jesus.

At the end of the trajectory we find the Gospel of Thomas as the most gnosticised collection of sayings.

The proposed trajectory of Robinson also emphasises the progressing identification of Jesus and Jewish personified Wisdom (Robinson 1979:103). This identification later developed into the gnostic redeemer myth where Jesus was understood as the bringer of secret redemptive gnosis (Robinson 1979:105).

Robinson explains why collections of sayings became progressively gnosticised. By their very nature sayings were associated with the "wise" (Robinson 1979:105-111). The wise as bearers of Wisdom led in its most extreme form to the wise as people who have secret insight as found in gnosticism. It is this development of Wisdom into gnosticism that led to the downplay of Wisdom and the emphasis on apocalyptic by the early orthodoxy.

The aphoristic Wisdom collections are not evenly spread throughout the tradition. This suggests that they may have originated in a small circle of the early church (Piper 1989:196).

The development within the Johannine community was not included in the trajectory proposed by Robinson. Brown (1979) proposed a trajectory of the development of the Johannine community. The Johannine theology developed in such a way that it was eventually accepted in gnostic circles (Brown 1979:147-148). It is accepted that the prologue of John is a Wisdom myth where the personified Wisdom is replaced by Jesus (Painter 1979:25). Dodd (1980:274-277) names numerous instances of correlations of Old Testament Wisdom and of Philo with the Gospel of John. The long dialogues in John fit the form of diatribe in many ways. Wisdom is used in John to deal with the Law in relation to Christian revelation. John used the term *Logos* to designate

this conception as we have seen in his prologue (Painter 1979:27). The "I am" statements of Jesus are used by John in the same way that personified Wisdom used it in earlier Judaism to call people to herself as the way of life (Painter 1979:49). In the Fourth Gospel Jesus is the summoning "I". John emphasises knowledge and has a tendency to dualistic thought found in Wisdom literature (Painter 1979:86). There are also indications of Wisdom in the structure of the gospel of John (Painter 1979:109).

One may be forgiven for thinking that all Wisdom sayings in early Christianity developed into gnosticism. *The Teachings of Silvanus* proves the vitality of early Christian Wisdom literature. Its strict monism linked with gnosticising elements suggests a milieu like that of third century Alexandrian Christianity (Schoedel 1975:171). It strengthens the case for a significant corpus of Wisdom literature in early Christianity. The evidence also suggests an Alexandrinian locus for these texts.

Though found in the gnostic Nag Hammadi library, Silvanus is not a gnostic text (Schoedel 1975:170). It is Christian Wisdom based on Jewish precursors. Sylvanus is influenced by classical Jewish Wisdom in theme as well as style (Schoedel 1975:174-183). Silvanus is not a collection of words of the wise, it is rather written in the same vein as the Wisdom of Solomon (Schoedel 1975:196). The Cynic diatribe as well as the Hellenistic hymn plays a large part in the form and style of Silvanus (Schoedel 1975:183-190).

4.3 Summary

Wisdom was not alien to Jewish thought. It developed from experiential Wisdom to theological Wisdom where Wisdom became personified. Wisdom and apocalyptic were bound together by the revalatory aspects and the ahistorical interests of both.

The Jesus tradition was strongly influenced by sapiential interests. The proponents of Wisdom formed a distinct circle in the early church. Q is a sapiential text and all the Gospels have been influenced by Wisdom in one way or the other. Matthew interprets Jesus as Wisdom personified. In Mark Jesus is depicted as teacher, and within Jewish circles this would certainly have had sapiential connotations. John used Wisdom imagery to describe the call of Jesus as the way of life.

There was a strong gnosticising tendency in the sapiential tradition. The Gospel of Thomas is an example of the end of the gnosticising process. It is most probably due to this process that Wisdom was played down in the orthodox strand of the church.

The trajectory of Robinson may have left the impression that all Wisdom became gnosticised. Wisdom was still prevalent though, in literature like the Teachings of Silvanus that could be dated in the third century. Thus not all Wisdom led to gnosticism. The relative late date of this document is important to this thesis. It demonstrates the ongoing importance of Wisdom in some circles and the fact that an interpretation of Jesus was made through the imagery of Wisdom.

5 THE CYNIC IMAGE OF MACK

The image of Cynic sage is propagated as a reaction against the prevailing image of Jesus as eschatological prophet. This could be seen in the work of both its main proponents, Mack (1987:4-11) and Downing (1988:xii). Mack bases his argument on a study of the Kingdom sayings in Mark.

The arguments of Mack are based on an assessment of Mark as an apocalyptic text that interpreted the Kingdom apocalyptically. The arguments above in chapter two regarding the Kingdom of God, indicated that it need not be interpreted in apocalyptic terms. Mack pursues the interpretation of the Kingdom of God along sapiential lines and uses it as basis for his image of Jesus as Cynic sage.

5.1 The method of Mack

Mack sets out by indicating that the eschatological image has an uncanny relation to the picture Mark paints of Jesus. He presents an alternative construction namely that of Cynic sage. He thirdly examines Mark's parable theory and in the fourth division examines the Kingdom sayings in Mark (Mack 1987:3).

The method that Mark employed to interpret the Kingdom materials at his disposal are investigated by Mack. It is then assessed whether Mark's version resembles closely what Jesus may have said about God's Kingdom.

5.2 The relationship between the eschatological image and the Gospel of Mark

Mack gives a brief description of the apocalyptic consensus among scholars that had been prevalent for the last century. We have looked into this phenomenon in detail in chapter two above.

He observes that scholars have known for a long time that the Gospel of Mark cannot be used to reconstruct a life of Jesus. The image of Jesus was never rationalised in terms of Mark, especially in the light of its apocalyptic end.

Despite this the beginning of Mark played a significant rôle in scholarship. Mark 1:14-15 was taken to be essentially in line with the words Jesus would have spoken himself and is used in numerous discussions concerning the Kingdom of God. This is taken for granted though it is professed that Mark could not be used to form an image of Jesus.

Mack (1987:6) observed that although the apocalyptic ending of Mark is rejected, the eschatological beginning is retained. According to him the whole gospel is an apocalypse from the beginning with John the Baptist to its end with the empty tomb. The reason for this is the fact that the gospel's plotted time does not exhaust its story time that begins with the precursors of John the Baptist, and will end only when the Kingdom comes with power. The whole theology of Mark has to be seen apocalyptically, any kerygmatic reading that ends in Jesus' eschatological significance, is not in line with what Mark meant. Mark saw the crucifixion as an apocalyptic moment within a larger apocalyptic

scenario. Although it appears that the man of power is overcome, the tables will be turned in the end (Mack 1987:7).

As soon as the story about Jesus that Mark relates, is taken as an apocalypse, the Kingdom in the gospel has to be seen as part of this story line. The power of the Kingdom is lodged in the figure of Jesus. In the beginning of the gospel Jesus exercises this power wondrously, in the end there will be no kingdom apart from Jesus' vindication. The destiny of Jesus is mythic and the Kingdom is imagined apocalyptically in the Gospel of Mark (Mack 1987:8).

If one accepts the apocalyptic projections of Mark as mythic it is impossible to retain the apocalyptic hypothesis regarding Christian origins. There needs to be a totally new approach to the historical Jesus and the language of the Kingdom (Mack 1987:11).

5.3 Wisdom and the Kingdom of God

Kingdom need not be a term that could only be understood in terms of apocalyptic. **Βασιλεία** was a common topic throughout Hellenistic culture (Mack 1987:11). It played a significant rôle in political discussions as well as in ethics. **Βασιλεία** also developed into a metaphor for the person of integrity who could rule his world imperiously (Mack 1987:12). In the language of the Stoics and the Cynics *βασιλεία* was also used to denote the sage. The Stoics had an apothegm that the sage was the only true king. Epictetus (*EpictDiss III 22,63,76,80*) referred to the Cynic's vocation as his *βασιλεία* (Mack 1987:12). Philo used *βασιλεία* in conjunction with sage to refer to the sovereignty of the sage.

The sapiential nature of Q, the aphoristic nature of the sayings material, the chreia quality of the pronouncement stories as well as the prominence of the parables in the Jesus traditions, are evidence that Jesus' Wisdom was aphoristic and not apocalyptic (Mack 1987:17). Aphoristic Wisdom is the type of Wisdom that is directed to the individual and not to a group (Crossan 1986:xv). Mack concludes that if the material that obviously stemmed from the early church is bracketed, the remainder contains no social program and no particular villain is targeted as responsible for the ills of society. Jesus' conduct could rather be seen as a form of παρρησία. This confidence to speak and act against the inequities and constraints of conventions that he thought not worthy of acceptance was a hallmark of the Cynic (Mack 1987:17). Within the picture of Hellenistic influence in Galilee the aphoristic Wisdom of Jesus would not have been out of place. Jesus could thus have had a close resemblance to the Cynics of his age.

5.4 From different interpretations to Jesus' own thought

Mack (1987:18) emphasises the diversity amongst the different Jesus movements in their different contexts. The Kingdom of God also meant different things in these contexts. Mack holds that Mark interpreted the Kingdom apocalyptically. In the Gospel of Thomas it refers to an order of knowledge about one's true identity. In Thomas as well as John the Kingdom is spoken about in terms of Wisdom. For Q it is not so much a domain to be entered as a power to be recognised (Mack 1987:18). Mack is of the opinion that Mark was much more of a candidate to think apocalyptically about the Kingdom than Jesus.

The problem that Mack has to solve is: Firstly how to chart these differences in textual and social histories. Secondly, to account for the different linguistic constructions and establish the priority of earlier usage. The third point is then to make a hypothesis of whether Jesus spoke about the Kingdom at all, and to find out what he would have meant by it.

The starting point is the texts where the sayings are now located. This gives the control of literary context. The second context is the social history of the texts. Mack endeavours to work back from the textual and social histories of the texts to the nuances shared by them or that might be imagined for the earliest stages of the Jesus movements, and then to the speech of Jesus himself.

The method of Mack keeps in mind that all words appropriated to Jesus were not spoken by him. He ascribed this phenomenon to the novelty of the first Christian communities where there was a lack of authorities, and they could only appeal to Jesus as authoritative figure. In this way each new group appealed to Jesus as originator of that particular group. The group, or the author of the text's understanding thus gave rise to the group's myth of origins. Changes inevitably take place when groups interpret founding events in current situations (Mack 1987:20).

In the Greco-Roman world people were remembered for what they said. Speeches were made to fit a character on a specific occasion. This was called "speech in character". Mack claims that most of the sayings of Jesus could be understood as speech in character to legitimise a particular group and their views.

The divergence of the earliest Christian communities could be ascribed to their different experience of social events. In this situation βασιλεία was a term that could bridge different views because of its own wide range of meaning.

Mack distinguishes four stages of social formation. Stage one is seen as the time of Jesus' own activity, stage two is the period of experimentation, the third stage was a time for testing, disillusionment and failure. This stage was also marked by conflicts that called for the movement's reassessment of its original vision. The last stage is the formation of the texts at our disposal. It features the marks of the recent conflicts and a rationalisation of these failures and conflicts into a mythic character (Mack 1987:22). Mack sees Mark as an example of the fourth stage.

5.5 Parables and the Kingdom of God

Mack starts off with the parables in Mark four to discuss the development of the Kingdom sayings in Mark. This discussion is employed to explain how a Cynic Jesus came to be interpreted apocalyptically.

The parables in Mark four contain three Kingdom sayings. These sayings have to be investigated to determine which of them are pre-Markan, which stem from Mark himself and which could be traced to the historical Jesus.

The structure, reason, setting and introduction of Mark four are taken to be of Marcan construction. The chapter reflects careful argumentation that fits the rhetorical pattern called *ergasia.*

Mack (1987:23) interprets chapter four to be about the fate of the Kingdom. The seed parables share the theme of eventual success in spite of initial unlikely circumstances. These parables are taken to have been formed when the "Christian mission" seemed to have failed. Mark then took these parables and escalated the tension between eventual success and present failure in the direction of an apocalyptic conclusion. The indications for an apocalyptic interpretation of Mark four were given by Kelber: **1** An emphasis on the harvest. **2** The disclosure of mystery. **3** The present secret of the mystery. **4** The knowledge of the insiders. **5** The assurance of success despite appearances. **6** The rôle of Satan (Mack 1987:23).

Mack correlated the apocalyptic traits of Mark four with the overall theme of Mark: **1** The secrecy motif. **2** The insider-outsider boundary. **3** The private audience with the disciples. **4** The misunderstanding of the disciples. **5** The switch in the latter part of the story where Jesus openly taught about the crucifixion and the apocalyptic manifestation of the Kingdom of the Son of Man (Mack 1987:23). This correlation does in the words of Mack, "require a bit of close interpretative reading".

5.6 The Kingdom sayings in Mark

Regarding the Kingdom sayings in Mark, Mack wishes to analyze how much Jesus might have said (1987:30). He concentrates on the sayings found on the lips of Jesus, but uses the sayings by others to form a context for Markan thought about the Kingdom as well. These latter sayings lead Mack to think that Mark thought about the Kingdom in a

spatial way and sought a place for the Kingdom of God amongst the other social institutions (1987:30).

The thirteen Markan sayings found on the lips of Jesus are: Mark **4:11; 4:26; 4:30; 9:47; 10:14; 10:23-25; 12:34; 1:15; 9:1; 14:25.**

Mack discusses each of these sayings and follows the recommendations of the Jesus Seminar to assess the authenticity of each saying (1987:30-44). He concludes that none of the Kingdom sayings in Mark is to be judged authentic (1987:44). Mack states that the data from Mark is not a sufficient basis for deciding the question of Jesus' use of the Kingdom of God.

6 ASSESSMENT

Mack views Jesus as Cynic sage. His depiction of Jesus in this way is supported by correlation of Jesus and Wisdom. He focuses on the possibility that *βασιλεία* could be interpreted in more ways than just the apocalyptic. Thought about *βασιλεία* was prevalent amongst Cynics as well. The Wisdom of Jesus could be seen as aphoristic, which puts it more in line with the image of Cynic sage.

Mack strengthens his image of Cynic sage by discrediting the eschatological image. He confirms that a reading of Mark will lead one to an apocalyptic understanding of Jesus. The illegitimacy of taking the reading of Mark to form an image of the historical Jesus, is obvious. Mack argues that the apocalyptic images of the historical Jesus are subject to the apocalyptic image of Mark that was taken up by Luke and Matthew and subsequently by present researchers.

His modus operandi is to emphasise the apocalyptic traits of Mark. This enables him to prove the conjunction of the eschatological image and the theology of Mark. The onus is upon Mack to prove that the apocalyptic of Mark is a Markan construction and was not handed to him through his sources. He does this by first indicating the apocalyptic content of the Kingdom sayings in Mark, and then by demonstrating that all the Kingdom sayings in Mark are unauthentic. Mack's work has to be assessed on these grounds.

6.1 Is Mark an apocalypse?

Mack emphasises the apocalyptic traits of Mark. He actually advocates that Mark has to be seen as an apocalypse (Mack 1987:7). Mack's description of Mark as an apocalypse is very concise. In his later work on the gospel according to Mark (1988), he gives a more detailed description of the genre of Mark. He describes it as a myth of origins to defend the community of Mark's right to exist independent of the synagogue (Mack 1988:318-324). The genre in which Mark decided to write this myth was apocalyptic (Mack 1988:325-331). Here Mack's main argument is based on Norman Petersen's use of "plotted time" and "story time" (1988:325). The plotted time of Mark runs from its beginning with John the Baptist to its end at the open grave. The story time of Mark is the larger sweep of history that reaches back to the prophets and ahead to the destruction of the temple and the coming of the Kingdom in power.

The problem with the view of Mack is that Mark as an apocalypse looks entirely different compared to the other Jewish apocalypses. Mack

does not ignore this problem but gets around it by stating that Mark depicted Jesus as the seer and that Jesus was himself the first casualty of the woes. This differs from other apocalypses because in them the seer was the writer. This "seer" was then fictitiously writing from the past and identified events in the time of the reader. The reader realised the truth of his "predictions" in the present. On account of this the reader accepted the truth of his predictions of God's intervention in the end.

The situation for the writing of an apocalypse was always times that were perceived as difficult. In the depiction of Mack, Mark was written at such a time and was prone to be written in apocalyptic terms (1987:11,21).

As Botha pointed out in his study (1989:10-15) the genre of Mark cannot be pinpointed that easily. Vorster (1981) discussed the genre of Mark, his observations made it clear that the term εὐαγγέλιον is not enough to depict it as a genre of literature. Another observation of Vorster in his discussion is the fact that there is a diversity of depictions of the genre of Mark. It was depicted as *memoir* literature or *vitae* as those of leaders and philosophers (1981:13). Further depictions included *Aretalogical biography* or *tragic comedy* (Vorster 1981:14). Important as well, is the fact that Mark was seen as apocalypse by Von Soden, (Vorster 1981:14) Kee and Perrin (Mack 1988:327).

It seems that the genre of Mark is once again, as in most other questions we have encountered, dependent on the point of departure of the one doing the investigation. If the apocalyptic traits of Mark are emphasised, the genre of Mark will inevitably be seen as apocalyptic.

Whichever traits are emphasised will have a bearing on the outcome of the investigation.

Mack's description of Mark as an apocalypse is therefore very problematic. In my mind it does not solve the problems we encounter in the study of the historical Jesus. It emphasises the problematic nature of the gospels as historical material once again.

Curiously enough, the picture of Mack reminds one of that posed by Schweitzer. Both emphasise the unintelligibility of the apocalyptic figure in our time. Schweitzer saw the apocalyptic Jesus of Mark as the historical Jesus where Mack saw Him as Marcan construction.

7 THE CYNIC IMAGE OF F G DOWNING

The basis of Downing's image of Jesus is formed by the correlations between the Cynic texts and the sayings of Jesus in the Christian texts (Downing 1988). The contents of his book,"Jesus and the threat of freedom" (1987), shows his concern for a Jesus that is comprehensible in our time. This concern distinguishes his method and the assumptions he makes. It is therefore understandable that he would take a stance against the otherworldly figure of the eschatological prophet and opt for a figure that is easier to portray as having some concrete answers for modern people. The result that Downing wishes to achieve is the direct opposite of the result that Schweitzer achieved in his study of the historical Jesus.

I intend to discuss the Cynic image proposed by Downing as was done with all the previous images. Special attention will be given to his proposals as to why the Cynic image is the most original image for

Jesus. His arguments on this are in direct conflict with the proposal I wish to make in chapter five.

7.1 The method of Downing

For Downing it is important to bridge the distance between the first and the twentieth century (1987:24). He thus emphasises what he believes to be the commonality between people of these communities so remote to one another. The common denominator he uses is the term "freedom" in the context of those phenomena that threatened it in the first century and still threaten it today.

Downing advocates the possibility to understand a great deal of first century life. He bases his argument on the common fact of understanding between contemporaries that communicate through writing and reading books. Downing claims that, as it is possible to understand a contemporary writing, it is likewise possible to understand an ancient writing (1987:9). He argues that one has to keep on checking one's interpretation in colloquy with others to see whether one is understanding correctly. Actions and attitudes are, according to him, more easily understood and acted upon than philosophical abstractions. If one is willing to become involved, understanding is possible (Downing 1987:10).

After this brief epistemological argument Downing sets out to give an outline of life in the first century. In the third chapter he discusses the correlation between Cynic and Christian radicalism. The fourth chapter is the most important for this study because it joins the Cynic traits found in early Christianity with the life of Jesus.

7.2 Christian and Cynic radicalism

This part of Downing's work is truly fascinating. All the correlations between Christian and Cynic thought, below, are documented in *The Christ and the Cynics* (Downing 1988). I could not possibly repeat all these cross references. I therefore chose to give a condensed review of the correlation Downing drew between Christians and Cynics without repeating the list of cross references.

Downing starts his discussion by emphasising the conjunctions in Christian and Cynic dress. The differences that exist, are less significant than the fact that Christians would have looked like some sort of Cynic (Downing 1987:52, 184 n2). John, Jesus' immediate predecessor wore a cloak of camel hair, Jesus' own cloak is mentioned in *Mark* (5:27) and he gives explicit orders to his followers as to their dress that would make them look like a severe sort of Cynic (Downing 1987:52). The dress of people could easily be seen as subversive if it did not conform to that of society.

Christians and Cynics alike, performed parables. They despised the accumulation of wealth. They despised the wealthy, so called benefactors. There is a large amount of subversiveness in the account of the banquet of Herod where John the Baptist is slain (Mk 6:21-28). This incident correlates with the pagan Cynics that rebuked Titus for his affair with the Jewish princess Bernike (Downing 1987:55).

Jesus and Epictetus both assert that those who are sons of the divine king, are indeed free. Both Christians and Cynics are willing to serve without being forced. For Christians and Cynics words and deeds have to correlate and they are more interested in a way of life than a teaching

or philosophy. An alternative lifestyle was deemed more a threat by the Roman authorities than mere words of critique.

Jesus is portrayed as teacher with disciples. This is in line with many Cynic teachers that were disciples at one stage (Jesus and John the Baptist), and became teachers. The mode of teaching of Jesus and his disciples correlated with that of the Cynics in most ways. Parresia, a frank mode of speech, was part of Christian and Cynic conduct. Both had the notion that God sent them with a special message. Trouble was expected by both. They believed in the freedom to love the unloving and hostile. They willingly shared their belongings. They believed that poverty made one free. Christians shared a great deal of their views on God with some cynics. Cynics and Christians held similar views on how the wrongs in society came about and some Cynics, along with Christians sought a renewal of the "Golden age". Their views of people and their freedom coincided.

7.3 Jesus as Cynic

Downing argues that the concurrence of the Christian lifestyle with that of the Cynics was intended by Christians. The lifestyle of both was socially and politically subversive and such a lifestyle would not have been taken up as a mere coincidence. According to him the Cynic way was too widespread that the similarities between Cynicism and Christianity would go unnoticed. Thus the similarities must have been intentional (Downing 1987:126,148).The problem we have to face is that Jesus is not depicted in the sources to address Greek crowds. Thus we have Cynic sounding material but the milieu is Jewish Palestine

(Downing 1987:128). Here Downing opposes the argument that I wish to make in the last chapter. The Cynic material could be the product of Cynic Christians that reinterpreted him along Cynic lines of thought. Downing firstly refutes the reasons for turning a non-Cynic Jesus into a Cynic. He argues that there could be no reason for interpreting Jesus as a Cynic because it would have no advantage for Cynics. On the other hand it would also not enhance the figure of Jesus if he was no Cynic but was interpreted as one (Downing 1987:130).

The fact that the Cynic material is widely spread throughout the entire corpus of Jesus material suggests that the Cynic influence must have been part of all strands of the Jesus tradition. This means that the Cynic material was part of the earliest tradition. If it were part of the earliest Jesus tradition, there would not be sufficient time for the Cynic strands and the non-Cynic strands of the tradition to simply drift together. There must have been an authoritative focus to introduce the Cynic strand into the Jesus tradition. For Downing only Jesus himself would have had this authority (1987:131,148-149).

One could also argue that the socio-economic and political circumstances in Palestine elicited the same reaction from Jesus as those of Cynics in other parts of the Roman empire. Jesus would thus not have meant to be a Cynic, but said things that could have been taken as Cynic. Downing (1987:131) opts for a situation where Jesus reflected on Cynic preaching in Galilee and made a decision to act as Cynic. He finds this option more acceptable than to have Jesus repeat Cynic thought repeatedly by coincidence.

7.4 External evidence

Downing's image of Jesus thus far, relied on arguments based on cause and effect. He goes further by giving external evidence for his conclusions. The main body of external evidence is the parallel readings between Christian and Cynic texts (Downing 1988). The striking resemblance between the synoptic texts and those of the Cynics is argued by Downing to stem from Jesus himself (Downing 1987:136).

According to Downing (1987:137) the closest analogy to the relationship between Jesus and his disciples is to be found among pagan Cynics and their masters. The Cynic style of a teacher that moves and simply teaches fits the life style of Jesus portrayed in the Synoptics. Downing argues that this modus operandi is easy to explain if Jesus wilfully adopted a Cynic life style. It would be very difficult to explain this description of Jesus if it were a construction of his followers. Why would they so thoroughly and consistently change this aspect of his life and leave the rest to be Jewish (Downing 1987:138)?
If Jesus had chosen this way of life it would most certainly have been interpreted as subversive by his contemporaries.

The contemptuous dismissal of those who exercise authority (Mk 10:24; Lk 22:25) also points to a Cynic outlook. Jesus' use of parables, that invite the hearers to rethink their attitudes, reminds one more of the Cynic than the Jewish (Downing 1987:140). Jesus' attitude towards the "consumer society" of the first century closely resembles that of the Cynics. While Jesus rejected the things that were important for society, he was no ascetic, this also coincides with the Cynic attitude. Jesus also

opens the possibility for his followers as the Cynics did, to live fully now.

The way of life of both the Cynics and Jesus, inevitably led to persecution. In these circumstances they taught their followers to display generous love (Downing 1987:145). Furthermore they urged their followers to forgive people without them being repentant. This point was previously made by Sanders as well (Sanders 1985:206-208).

Jesus referred to God as his father. This personal address to God was not totally alien in Palestine though it was used only by certain Rabbis and then very infrequently (Downing 1987:146). Downing argues that the way Jesus addressed God finds its most frequent analogy in the Cynic use.

7.5 Assessment

The work of Downing opens up a huge treasure of comparative material. This comparative material opens up a surprising world in which the words of Jesus do not look as unique as one may have thought previously. In comparing Jesus with the Cynics it is evident that there is a bigger resemblance between this material than between Jesus and other material used to establish other images. The Cynic material could thus never be merely discarded.

Downing lamented the fact that the Cynic material had been disregarded for a long time. This correlates with the same point that Vermes made about the Jewish material. It is precisely this that highlights the problem of diversity addressed in this study. As an example of this problem in the arguments of Downing, I wish to

examine his views on forgiveness. He clearly states that to ask in prayer to be forgiven as one forgives those who transgress against one, is a Cynic trait (1987:145). He then concedes that the rest of the prayer is to be understood in the Jewish context. This means that there are Cynic traits in the tradition as well as Jewish traits. The Cynic material is thus insufficient to interpret the total image of Jesus. It is true that Downing argues his way out of this dilemma by depicting Jesus as a Jewish Cynic. By doing this he reduces Jesus' Jewishness to a mere backdrop, something Robinson (Robinson & Koester 1971:8-19) and Vermes (1983:16) rightly point out as a problem in Jesus research.

The fact that the Cynic material is found dispersed through the whole tradition from its beginning does not prove a Cynic Jesus. The argument could be used to justify any image of Jesus. The exorcisms, for instance, are also part of the earliest tradition and are widely dispersed throughout the tradition. One could thus in the same vein argue that Jesus was a magician. The problem is that Cynic and magician are mutually exclusive images.

This leaves us with the fact that Cynic material plays an important part in the reconstruction of the historical Jesus. The problem is, once again, the fact that there is other material that cannot be discarded.

8 CONCLUSION

The Cynic image as presented by Mack and Downing has to be kept in mind in constructing an image of the historical Jesus. It is interesting to note how their widely different approaches yield the same results.

Mack concentrated on the Kingdom of God as sapiential entity that was later interpreted along apocalyptic lines. By thus categorising the Gospel of Mark as an apocalypse and by showing how it became one by reinterpretation of sapiential thought, Mack established Jesus as Cynic.

Downing's strength lies in the self-evident correlations between the Cynic and the Christian texts. He perceives a Cynic strand that runs through the entire tradition and argued that this strand had its origin in Jesus.

Sanders (1992) levelled critique against both Mack and Downing. The Cynic hypothesis rests on the assumption that Hellenism had a large influence in Galilee. Sanders attacked this assumption and maintained that the influence of Hellenism was not that widespread in Galilee. This meant that Jesus would not have chosen a Hellenistic model for his work (Sanders 1992:6). He also took Downing to task on his assumption that the early followers of Jesus were wandering Cynics. Sanders argues that the Jerusalem community did not fit into this pattern. He understandably gives an eschatological explanation for the poverty and social conduct of the first Christians (Sanders 1992:6).

Tuckett (1989:349-376) also criticised both Mack and Downing. He concentrated on the genre of Q and differed from the assumption that Q was a Cynic writing. His main thrust was directed against the parallels between Q and the Cynics that Downing cited. He raised objections against some of the authors that Downing defined as Cynics (Tuckett 1989:351). Firstly he cautioned on the use of writers such as Musonius Rufus, Seneca and Epictetus outside 3.12, that were Stoics. He likewise

questioned the use of Dio on the grounds that he returned from exile and ceased being a wandering philosopher.

Further problems with the Cynic material are caused by the dating. Tuckett (1989:355) accepts that the Cynic epistles could be dated at roughly the same time as the onset of the Christian movement. They could thus prove valuable. Much of the other sources are from a later stage. Diogenes Laertius' *Lives* is usually dated in the third century though he presumably used earlier material. Even Dio, (82 AD) and Epictetus (55-135 AD) pose problems as to the legitimacy of using them to illuminate the early or middle 1st century.

The assumptions of Sanders and Tuckett as well as Mack and Downing boil down to an either or situation. Both have to prove that Jesus' followers continued his lifestyle and views exactly. But as we have seen, their views on this lifestyle differed because they took one strand of interpretation of Jesus to be the only one. What if Jesus' followers from different backgrounds highlighted different aspects of the life of Jesus, reinterpreted them in their own ways, and so gave rise to different strands of Christianity? (Vid Robinson & Koester 1979).

I wish to propose a hypothesis that is just as plausible as that of Downing: For the Gospels to be written in Greek there must have been a large Hellenistic influence in the places of their inception. One could for the same reason also argue that their recipients were largely Hellenised. We thus have a Hellenistic Jewish Jesus interpreted by Hellenists. These people would have known the Cynics. They had a tradition that came from Palestine and was about a Jew. It could be possible for these people to interpret a figure that resembled a Cynic

teacher in many ways, as a Cynic. The work of Van den Heever (1993) points out that each place had its own holy men. They were known by different names and were not precise replicas of one another, but they made the same impact on the people in their communities. In this way a Jewish Hasid could easily be interpreted by Hellenists as a Cynic sage. This was not an intentional change of Jesus to fit their own views, but a natural result of people interpreting the life of another person in terms that they could understand.

This hypothesis is just as plausible as that of Downing. It has the advantage though, of seeing Jesus as part of his environment. It further opens up the possibility to understand why there were so many different views of who Jesus was.

CHAPTER IV
JESUS THE GALILEAN HASID

1 INTRODUCTION

The image of Jesus as a Galilean Hasid is not as popular as that of eschatological prophet or cynic sage. What makes it of crucial importance though, is that it is firmly rooted in Jewish society, as our investigation below will indicate.

We have seen in the previous chapter that the image of restoration eschatology is very limited in scope and does not enable us to explain all the interpretations of Jesus that we have in the writings about him. If we try to broaden the scope of the eschatological image by not narrowly defining it as restoration eschatology, it does not help us either, because then we have said so little that the observation is of no consequence. The image of Jesus as Hasid has the possibility of giving a view of Jesus that may enable us to explain the divergent views about him.

1.1 Geza Vermes as proponent of Jesus as Galilean Hasid

The work of Vermes is of special interest to this study because he writes about Jesus from a Jewish context. He finds his Jewishness an attribute to enable him to know "Jesus' essential Jewishness", as Martin Buber said, only a Jew could (Vermes 1983b:8).

Jesus came from within Judaism and is the reason for the existence of Christianity. Quite curiously not much had been made of the Jewishness of Jesus in New Testament scholarship for a long time. We

are all aware of the animosity between Judaism and Christianity. The contact for most of the times consisted of polemics and apology. Vermes notes correctly, that in recent times it became highly unfashionable to be anti-Semitic (Vermes 1983b:64). This led to a revaluation of the significance of the Jewish material for the study of the Historical Jesus that was furthered by the discovery of the Qumran Scrolls (Vermes 1983b:68).

In this situation Vermes is of value because he is conversant with the Jewish material and went a long way to establish a methodology to use the Jewish material in New Testament studies (Vermes 1983b). He objects to the use of the Semitic material merely as a backdrop to the New Testament in the solving of New Testament questions (Vermes 1983b:70). As a historian he sees the New Testament as part of the literary legacy of first century Judaism (Vermes 1983b:70). This enables him to study the New Testament in conjunction with the other material of first century Judaism.

The scope of this thesis does not lend itself for an in-depth discussion of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. It is nevertheless important to take note, according to the observations in chapter one, that the attitudes of Jews and Christians towards the Jesus material will differ. This will have to be kept in mind when we study the work of Vermes.

It is a pity that the work of Vermes did not lead to much further study and that he stands alone in his depiction of Jesus as Hasid. The reason for this may be the fact that in some instances his assumptions, when he uses the New Testament texts, seem rather superfluous. In the

investigation this will be pointed out. The critique against the work of Vermes, although valid in many instances, should not detract from the importance of his work on the Historical Jesus.

1.2 The method of Vermes

Vermes' point of departure is that the Christian writings about Jesus are part of the literary legacy of Judaism. To understand the original meaning of these writings he uses the literary corpus of Palestinian and Diaspora Jews from 200 BC to the first few centuries of the Christian era. It is done in such a way that they are taken as independent spokesmen, capable in some instances of guiding the enquiry (Vermes 1983b:16). The writings he uses are: The Apocrypha, the pseudepigrapha, Philo, Josephus and Jewish inscriptions, the manuscript discoveries from the Judean desert and early rabbinic writings.

Vermes holds the view that he should be able to read the gospels without any prejudice (1983b:19). This view of his has been challenged and in the light of chapter one it is clear that there is no such thing as a mind devoid of prejudice. If an author implies that his work is without prejudice, it leaves his readers the tedious task of being on the lookout for his undeclared prejudice. His method entails the analysis of the Gospel reports concerning Jesus' person and work, the removal of secondary traits and the insertion of the essential features into the context of contemporary political and religious history (1983b:83).

Vermes says that he does not want to give an authentic image of Jesus but rather how the writers of the gospels wanted him to be known (1983b:19). We have to note however, that in the end Vermes views the

way the writers of the gospels wanted him to be known as the authentic image of Jesus and that this image corresponds to that of a Galilean hasid (1983b:83).

The titles of Jesus play an important rôle in the work of Vermes. He reinterprets the titles in the light of the other writings and the Hebrew and Aramaic languages. This indicates that the titles could have an entirely different meaning to the traditional meaning Christians ascribe to them. His analysis of the titles in the end serves his image of Jesus as hasid.

1.3 Objective

The objective of this chapter is to investigate the image of Jesus as Galilean Hasid. The image of Hasid is not without problems of its own and these have to be taken into account. The first question that arises is: What is meant by the term Hasid? There is not consensus about the meaning of the term Hasid and this has to be cleared.

The rôle of Galilee in this image of Jesus is also an important point of investigation: What is the significance of calling Jesus a Galilean? There was a marked difference between people from Galilee and those from Judea. Did this play a rôle in the life of Jesus?

Vermes' understanding of the term Hasid places Jesus within charismatic Judaism. It will thus be essential to broaden our understanding of charismatic Judaism.

In this chapter the Judaic material will also play an important rôle. This material is essential in the method of Vermes but more so in establishing the image of Jesus in a Judaic environment. Vermes

(1983b:224-225) reinterprets the traditional titles given to Jesus from a Judaic point of view and concludes that Christianity made too much of Jesus on the basis of dogma and Judaism too little for the same reason.

The most important question though, still concerns the legitimacy of the image of Vermes.

2 THE MEANING OF THE TERM HASID

There is a lack of consensus about the meaning of the term Hasid. Did the term denote a holy man (Vermes) or a diligently zealous observer of the law (Crossan and Freyne)?

2.1 The origin of the term Hasid

The term Hasid is a transliteration of the Hebrew word חָסִיד which literally means "one who practices loyalty" or the "pious one" (Koehler/ Baumgartner). It is used in this sense in numerous Psalms such as:

16:10, **..because you protect me from the power of death, and the one you love(חָסִיד) you will not abandon to the world of the dead.**

18:26, **You are pure to those who are pure (חֲסִידִים).**

149:1, **...praise him in the assembly of his faithful people (חֲסִידִים)!**

The term could thus have a general meaning that denotes somebody or persons that have an exceptional relationship with God.

2.2 The use of Hasideans as a proper name

In the books of *I Maccabees and II Maccabees* חֲסִידִים is transliterated into the Greek as *ἀσιδαίοι*. Kampen (1985:66) suggests that although the meaning of the word is rooted in its use in the Old

Testament, the translator of *I Maccabees* and the author of *II Maccabees* understood it as a proper name. He thus meant a group of people that were known by the name of Hasideans.

This group of people was known for their loyalty to the Torah. Some of them resisted the Seleucid rulers with the priest Matthias and his sons. Even before this they were a recognisable group at the time of the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes (Redditt 1992). There is no trace of such a group in later sources where we only find the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes as significant groups within Judaism. There is uncertainty which of these groups descended from the Hasideans (Redditt 1992). Although Crossan does not state where Hasid is used for an ultra strict observer of the law, I assume that he infers it from the views we know the Hasideans have held.

There is, however, also the singular use of חָסִיד that did not denote a person as one of the group in the same way that Pharisee denotes somebody from the group of the Pharisees. The singular was also used for a certain type of person that fitted into the same category as Hanina ben Dosa and Honi the circle drawer (Kampen 1985:127; Vermes 1983b:69). This would bring the term to mean "holy man". To call someone a holy man is in itself not sufficient because the content of the term has to be elucidated.

2.3 Hasid: Observer of the law, or Charismatic?

The way in which Vermes used the term, was criticised by Freyne (1980:223) and Crossan (1991:148). They agree with Vermes that Hanina and Honi were called חֲסִידִים. They differ from him in the

meaning of the term. For Vermes the meaning of Hasid is to be sought in charismatic Judaism (1985b:80). Crossan, on the other hand, sees the Hasid as somebody that observes the law in an ultra-strict way (Crossan 1991:157).

Hanina and Honi were both described as Hasid in the literature that both Crossan and Vermes use. They interpreted the literature in different ways which resulted in the difference in their views on the meaning of Hasid and whether Honi and Hanina could be called Hasidim.

The argument of Crossan is that Hanina and Honi were both called Hasidim in the process of Rabbinisation. The Rabbis did not take kindly to charismatics and thus we are able to observe a process in which important charismatics were rabbinised. Freyne (1980:224-225) alerts us to the fact that there was a tendency in the Graeco-Roman religious circles of late antiquity to identify rôles that were originally apart. This could also be held true for Hellenistic Judaism (Freyne 1980:252 n15). We thus have to keep in mind that the term Hasid for Hanina, could have been the result of this tendency.

Crossan (1991:157) argues that Elijah and Elisha were taken into the Southern literary corpus by a process of Rabbinisation. They were charismatics that did magic, and because of their importance to the religion of the ordinary people, were made respectable for the literary work of the Temple establishment. The way in which this happened was that the charismatic figure was depicted as a holy man whose power lies in prayer and not in magic rituals. From there it was easier to have him respected as a Rabbi (Crossan 1991:142-156). To call Hanina and Honi Hasidim because the *Talmud* does, would according to Crossan, not be

taking the process of Rabbinisation that is present in the *Talmud* into account.

Crossan does not disagree with Vermes that Hanina and Honi were known to be charismatics and were at some time called Hasid. But for him this happened in the process of Rabbinisation. Crossan (1991:145) would have preferred to call the charismatics magicians or men of deed, which in fact Vermes does as well (1983b:79). Freyne (1980:226 & 251 n12) takes up the contention of Berman that the Hasid was not a miracle worker. To tone down the miracle working of Hanina he was called a Hasid.

Freyne's argument (1980: 226) is that the texts are not biographical and that one has to keep in mind what the writers wanted to achieve. He thus separated the texts referring to Hanina as Hasid and those that emphasise his miracles. He concludes that there is a tendency in the Palestinian Talmud to tone down the miracle working activity of Hanina. The Babilonian Talmud, however, does not have these scruples (Freyne 1980:228-231).

Freyne (1980:244) chose to see Hanina as a man of deed because, during his life the Hasid was not a prominent figure. The image of man of deed was then merged with that of Hasid at an early stage. It is important to see that there was a process in which the figure of Hanina was used in the earlier texts to counter an independence from the rabbinic orthodoxy (Freyne 1980:246). Later when the Babylonian Talmud was written this necessity no longer existed.

There is a reference to Honi in the *Mishnah* that implies that his conduct in the making of rain was such that he could have been cut off

from the assembly of the righteous (MTaan 3:8b):**Simeon b. Shatah said to him."If you were not Honi, I should decree a ban of excommunication against you. But what am I going to do to you? For you importune before the Omnipresent, so he does what you want, like a son who importunes his father, so he does what he wants."**(Transl. Neusner 1988:313). In his commentary on this part Correns (1989:91) notes that Simeon b. Shatah's remark could have stemmed from the magical connotations of Honi's conduct. The *Mishna* thus does not hide the fact that the conduct of Honi was not in strict accordance to the law.

Hanina is also depicted as not complying to the rabbinical rule not to go out at night (BPes 112b):**"And do not go out alone at night, for it was taught: one should not go out alone at night, i.e. on the nights of neither Wednesday nor Sabbaths, because Igrath the daughter of Mahalath, she and 180,000 destroying angels go forth, and each has permission to wreak destruction independently. Originally they were about all day. On one occasion she met R. Hanina ben Dosa [and] said to him. Had they not made an announcement concerning you in Heaven," Take heed of Hanina and his learning" I would have put you in danger. "If I am of account in Heaven," replied he,"I order you never to pass through settled regions." I beg you, she pleaded,"leave me a little room" So he left her the nights of Sabbaths and the nights of Wednesdays.** (Transl. Freedman 1967). The allusion to the learning of Hanina may underline the process of rabbinisation that Crossan argues for. Despite this, the conduct of Hanina is still depicted as not in ultra-strict accordance to the law.

The contents of the texts seems to subscribe to the fact that Honi and Hanina did not observe the law in an ultra strict way. Simeon b. Shatah seems to confirm that Honi was regarded highly by his orthodox contemporaries despite his behaviour. In the same sense Raba said concerning Hanina:**"The world was created only for Ahab son of Omri, and R.**

Hanina b. Dosa, this world for Ahab son of Omri, and the world to come for R. Hanina b. Dosa." (BBer 61b Transl Neusner 1984:413).

In conclusion we must appreciate the fact that the texts about Honi and Hanina in particular are posing difficulties as to its interpretation. This is caused by the process of rabbinisation that was taking place in these texts and the later absence of it being necessary. We have to be well aware that these texts are not biographical. We may be certain at most that Hanina was reported to be a miracle worker and that in some texts he was likened to a Hasid. The underlying motives in the texts are difficult to detect. If we call to question whether Hasid in the singular denoted the same type as Hasideans in the plural, it may be used as a synonym for man of deed. This we are able to detect in the texts. Therefore it is possible to call Honi and Hanina Hasid, as long as one remembers in which sense it is done. In the end there is little difference between the figure that Vermes calls a Hasid, and that Crossan calls a man of deed. They both agree that the figure of both Hanina and Honi was that of a charismatic that did miracles and was not closely related to the cult.

3 JESUS AND CHARISMATIC JUDAISM

The canonical gospels describe Jesus as one who exorcises and heals the sick. This image of Jesus seems to be the most persistent of all. We find allusions to his remarkable deeds in the *Testimonium Flavianum*: "...ἦν γὰρ παραδόξων ἔργων ποιητής,..."(Ant XVIII.63). The question whether this part was a Christian interpolation into Josephus need not be clarified in order to understand from it that Jesus was known as someone

who did extraordinary deeds. Sanders concluded that the miracles were not enough evidence to help us depict the religious type of Jesus (Sanders 1985:172). Although this may be true, the miracles and exorcisms are enough reason to place the religious type of Jesus within charismatic Judaism.

3.1 What is meant by Charismatic Judaism?

Vermes uses the term "Charismatic Judaism" to describe healers, exorcists and holy men that operated amongst the Jewish people (Vermes 1983b:58-69). According to Crossan (1991:137) the people described as charismatics were not bound to the prescribed way of relating to God . They could be seen as competition to the established religion bound to the Temple and the law. Their way of doing did not meet the approval of the Pharisees or the priests as we have seen above.

3.1.1 Charismatics and the lower classes of society

The charismatic phenomenon in itself was by nature part of the lower classes (Theissen 1978:352). It is hard to substantiate the relationship of charismatic figures with the lower classes because we work with literature that was produced by the higher literate classes. The literature thus only gives us the views of a certain part of society that did not feel very well disposed towards the charismatic phenomenon. Josephus, for instance, made brief mention of charismatics, but they always feature in such a way that their activities are not significant in itself, but only as part of a larger narrative. This means that all instances

of charismatic activity are not at our disposal and those that are, are very one sided.

We may assume that the charismatic phenomenon had its largest following among the peasantry because the charismatic figures we know about were mostly from the peasantry (Horsley 1985:453-454). Elijah and Elisha were peasants (1Ki 17:1; 19:19). Jesus ben Hananiah, who will be discussed later, was a plebian (Jos *BJ* 6.5.3 § 300).

Jesus is depicted as an artisan (*τέκτων* Mk 6:3), this made him part of the lower classes as well. He spent most of his time in the company of people from the lower classes.

The way some of the charismatic figures acted was also a threat to the establishment. Many figures such as John the Baptist and Bannus (Jos *Vit* 2) withdrew into the wilderness and lived off the land. These acts of seclusion were in no uncertain terms directed as critique against the society. In the Old Testament we find numerous instances of direct oracular critique against the leaders of the people. Josephus relates the case of Jesus ben Hananiah. In the time before the fall of Jerusalem he announced judgement against the city and the temple. This enraged the upper classes to such an extent that they tried to silence him by severe physical punishment. He kept up his condemnations for seven years and five months before he was killed in the siege of the city (Jos *BJ* 6.5.3 § 300-309).

Luke depicts Jesus as somebody who is very critical of the rich (Lk 6:24-25). This view is also to be found in the other canonical gospels. The Jesus movement as a whole could be seen as a charismatic critique against the prevailing values of the society (Theissen 1978:343-360).

3.2 Prophet and charismatic

The prime Old Testamentic examples of Charismatics are generally taken to be Elijah and Elisha (Hengel 1981:16). Figures nearer in time to Jesus like Honi, Hanina and John the Baptist, were all compared to Elijah in one way or the other.

Charismatic figures came in different guises. In most instances they were called prophets in the Palestinian environment. Charismatic figures that behaved in the same way in general as those in Palestine, were to be found in many civilisations and religions. The Greek philosophers could be seen as charismatic figures in Hellenistic society. Hengel (1981:25) links the Greek philosophers to the Indo-Germanic Shamans whose conduct were close to that of people like Honi and Hanina. When we discuss the charismatic phenomenon we must keep in mind that Hellenism was the predominant culture and that the different charismatic figures could have influenced one another in the societies dominated by Hellenism. The term "charismatic" could thus not be coupled to only one type of person such as Hasid, prophet or philosopher.

Horsley (1985:435-463) narrowed down the different types of popular prophets in Palestine to two. The first could be described as oracular prophets who interpreted the social-political situation in much the same way as the prophets in the Old Testament. Secondly there were prophets who led sizeable movements. They did not merely announce the judgement of God but led actions of deliverance. These actions typologically corresponded with the great acts of deliverance by Moses and Joshua. There are a few action type prophets that we know by

name. According to Josephus there were quite a large number of these people (Jos Ant 20.167b-168).

The first action type of prophet we know by name was Theudas that gathered a group of people around him: " **A certain impostor named Theudas persuaded the majority of the masses to take up their possessions and to follow him to the river Jordan. He stated that he was a prophet and that at his command the river would be parted and would provide them an easy passage. With this talk he deceived many**".(Jos *Ant* 20.97)

Here we find the clear typological action that exhibits the parting of the Jordan under Joshua.

A second incident of nearly the same type of event took place under the Egyptian:"**At this time there came to Jerusalem from Egypt a man who declared that he was a prophet and advised the masses of the common people to go out with him to the mountain called the mount of Olives, which lies opposite the city at a distance of five furlongs. For he asserted that he wished to demonstrate from there that at his command Jerusalem's walls would fall down, through which he promised to provide them an entrance into the city.**"(Jos *Ant* 20.169-170).

The Egyptian's exploit typologised the fall of the walls of Jericho under Joshua. The action type prophets evoked apocalyptic expectations with their typological actions (Horsley 1985:461).

From the description of Horsley it is clear that Jesus' actions fitted those of the oracular prophets. He did not lead a sizeable group of followers but a relatively small group of disciples. Although his words and deeds had religious-political implications, his conduct was not the same as that of Theudas and the Egyptian.

Horsley(1985:435) made it clear that Jesus was seen as a prophet by the people. Did Jesus see himself as prophet? In *The Gospel of Thomas*

31 Jesus says: **"No prophet is accepted in his own village; no physician heals those who know him"** (Crossan 1986:71). This aphorism is attested independently from the first stratum to the fourth (Mk 6:4b; Mt 13:57b; Lk 4:23-24; Jn 4:44b; POxy 31). This is secure evidence that Jesus could most likely have called himself a prophet. Vermes (1983b:88) used these texts as well, to make the same point, but he made no attempt to authenticate the sayings.

Vermes (1983b:90) contended that the miracle-working Hasid either modelled himself on Elijah or was at least seen as another Elijah by his generation. R.J. Miller (1988) made a survey of the relationship between John the Baptist, Elijah and Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. From his work it became clear that John the Baptist was seen as Elijah. Jesus was compared to Elijah which meant that he was contrasted with Elijah in some instances, and seen in line with him in other (1988:620). Although the survey only covered Luke the results are very valuable. The fact that Jesus is compared to Elijah shows that he was seen as a type of Elijah even in contrast. The oracular prophet and the Hasid/man of deed both fit the person of Elijah as it is depicted in the literature at our disposal. This enables us to link the images of Hasid and the oracular prophet.

3.2.1 Prophet and apocalypticism

In contrast to the miracle working Hasid, the action type of prophets evoked apocalyptic reactions from the people, as we have seen above. The reason for this was the fact that their conduct was typological of that of the ancient deliverers of Israel. The people yearned

for deliverance once more and these prophets promised it. Their acceptance by the people was solicited by their apocalyptic claims.

The Hasid was not an action type of prophet. From Elijah to Hanina, the Hasid did not evoke apocalyptic reactions from the people. Only after his own life did Elijah, for instance, become part of apocalyptic lore.

The actions of the Hasidim were commanded by their situation at that time. They did not predict future apocalyptic events and did not see themselves as apocalyptic agents. We have no grounds to link an apocalyptic world view to Hasid. The use of prophet in an apocalyptic context does not imply that all prophets were apocalyptic visionaries.

3.3 Assessment

Vermes depicted Jesus as part of Charismatic Judaism. This image is substantiated by the sociological and religious-political circumstances in the time of Jesus. He further found the conduct of Jesus in line with that of a Hasid. Hasidim that serve as prototypes of Jesus were Elijah, Honi and Hanina.

Our investigation shows that we have no instances in the available literature of Jesus being called a Hasid. We have instances of him being called a prophet. From the work of Horsley we may deduct that generally in the mind of the people, prophet denoted a charismatic figure. The description of Horsley places Jesus nearer to the oracular prophets than to the leaders that enacted deliverance.

Jesus' miracles made him more than just an oracular prophet, it made him a type of Elijah. The fact that there was no exact delineation

between the different types of charismatics makes it possible to choose the more neutral term "Hasid". This term could then be defined by the charismatic traits of Jesus.

In this way Hasid as applied to Jesus does not mean that Jesus is a replica of Elijah, Elisha, Honi or Hanina. It does not demonstrate that the people expected an eschatological prophet modelled on Elijah, but rather that there were prophets that were types of Elijah and that the people accepted it. It merely defines the type where the identity of Jesus is to be sought. To call Jesus a Hasid would then mean that Jesus was a charismatic figure that addressed the needs and sensibilities of the lower classes by his words and deeds.

4 GALILEE AS HOME OF JESUS

To construct a historical image of Jesus, note has to be taken of his Galilean descent. Most of the historical data on Jesus place him in a Galilean setting. The Galilean setting opens up a view on Jesus' conduct and speech, as well as the reaction of people to him.

Palestine was not a unitary territory with people of unitary socio-economical and religio-political standing. There were clear differences between people from Galilee and Judea. The Galileans had never been under direct Roman rule since the invasion of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 BC. It was only ruled as part of Judea during the reign of Herod the Great (37BC-4AD). This led to distinct political views in Galilee as well as a spirit of freedom that gave rise to political uprisings against the Romans and the rulers under their protection (Vermes 1983b:46-48).

Galilee was a centre of commerce and the villages, towns and cities were linked by an extensive network of roads. The region was densely populated and one was never far from a town or city. Josephus mentions that there were two hundred and four villages in Galilee (Vit 45:235).

The Gospels do not mention any activity of Jesus in the cities. We know, however, that the towns and villages that Jesus visited, were all within walking distance of cities (Aharoni & Avi-Yonah 1979:144). The proximity of the cities and their influence as centres of trade and of the Roman administration must have influenced all inhabitants of Galilee.

The most important city in Galilee, Sepphoris, was approximately seven kilometres from Nazareth. We may assume then, that Jesus knew life in the city, and was well aware of the politics and social questions of his environment. This assumption is strengthened by the imagery that Jesus used. He referred to landlords, the courts, the marketplace, labourers and investment. Jesus and his followers were most probably well-informed urbanised people.

4.1 Galileans under religious suspicion

Galilee was surrounded by gentile territories that geographically separated it from Jerusalem and the temple (Aharoni,Y & Avi-Yonah 1979:145). This eventually led to a situation of mutual distrust concerning religious matters between the Judeans and the Galileans. A point in argument is the comment of R. Judah in the *Mishnah* (MNed 2:4) concerning heave offering:

> **"A statement referring without specification to heave offering made in Judah is binding. But in Galilee, it is not binding.**

"For the men of Galilee are not familiar with heave offering belonging to the chamber"

"Statements that something is devoted, without further specification, in Judah are not binding, and in Galilee they are binding.

"For the Galileans are not familiar with things devoted to the priests. (Transl. Neusner 1988:408-409).

Here we find a distinction between people from Judea and those from Galilee. It is made on the grounds that Galileans are not as knowledgeable concerning religious matters. They therefore have to specify the heave offering to make sure that it is according to the law. In the same sense devotion to the priests are binding in Galilee without specification, because they do not have the knowledge of devotion to the priests and would thus not have been able to specify the devotion. This view of Galileans demonstrates that their religious knowledge was suspect.

The religious suspicion was furthered by the careless way in which the people from Galilee spoke (Vermes 1983b:52). When Peter is recognised as one of Jesus' followers, it is because of his Galilean accent (Mt26:73). Vermes relates that people from certain parts of Galilee were not asked to read from the scriptures outside the territory in which they lived because their pronunciation were so unintelligible (Vermes 1983b:53).

Another indication of the religious deviation in Galilee was the numerous prophets, magicians and other charismatic figures that operated in the region from time to time. We have encountered persons like Honi and Hanina when the term Hasid was discussed above. Hanina can be linked to Galilee and Honi was definitely a Galilean.

It has to be borne in mind, however, that by and large the Galileans were loyal to the temple in Jerusalem despite the indifference of the Priestly aristocracy (Freyne 1987:607)

4.2 Galileans under political suspicion

The fact that Galilee was not under direct Roman rule in the time of Jesus did not keep the Galileans from seeking total freedom from the Roman yoke. The political situation was aggravated by the economical situation in Galilee. In antiquity capital was formed by taking it as booty from war, or as taxes squeezed from the peasant population (Crossan 1991:51). This was also true for Galilee where the double burden of taxes for their own ruler and taxes towards Rome impoverished the ordinary people. The lower classes of Galilean society were caught in the grips of poverty and a lack of employment. Jesus did most of his work among the peasantry and his parables, for the largest part, used their lifestyle and milieu as material.

The political and economical situation was closely connected. From the works of Josephus we get the impression that Galilee played a very significant rôle in insurrections against those governing Palestine. In *Antiquities* 14. 59 Josephus mentioned the capture of Ezekias, a Galilean bandit, by Herod in 47 BC. We also read about Judas the Gaulanite (Γαυλανίτης). He came from a city called Gamala. With the help of Saddok , a Pharisee, he rebelled against the assessment of the property of the Jews by Quirinius (Jos *Ant* 18.4). Gamala was in Galilee and Judas is also called "the Galilean"(Γαλιλαῖος) in *Antiquities* 18.23 and *Wars of the Jews* 2.118.

In both of the instances above, the economical situation played a large rôle. The socio-economic situation led to banditry as we find with Ezekias (Crossan 1991:174). Josephus identifies the reasons for the rebellion under Judas the Galilean as economical.

Jacob and Simon, two sons of Judas the Galilean were crucified by Tiberius Julius Alexander the procurator of Judea (Jos *Ant* 20.102). Menahem another son of Judas captured Massada from the Romans and his nephew Eleazar defended Massada for four years after the fall of Jerusalem (Vermes 1983b:47). John of Gischala in Galilee was one of the bloodiest leaders of the Jewish war (Vermes 1983b:47). Vermes notes that the rôle played by Judas the Galilean and his family, made Galileans in general, politically suspect.

The fact that Jesus was a Galilean must have had an influence on the way people saw him and understood his actions. We have seen that the feeling towards Galileans was in general negative concerning religious and political matters. From this we are able to understand why Jesus was perceived in such a negative way by some of the people of Palestine and the authorities. His death on the cross as a bandit, would not have occurred if his conduct had not been understood along political lines adversely affected by his Galilean descent (Freyne 1987:608).

5 THE TITLES OF JESUS

For the purposes of this study it is imperative to delineate the discussion on the titles. It is possible to get bogged down in a matter such as the titles of Jesus, that in itself would merit a number of theses. Although the debate on the titles is important, it is necessary to keep in

mind that Vermes discussed the titles to enhance his image of Jesus as Galilean Hasid. The discussion below will thus concentrate on this aspect and not endeavour to give an exhaustive analysis of the problem.

The discussion of the titles of Jesus in Historical Jesus scholarship mostly revolved around Son of God and Son of Man. Vermes discussed the titles of Jesus under the following headings: Jesus the prophet, Jesus the lord, Jesus the messiah, Jesus Son of Man and Jesus son of God. The Son of Man debate was discussed extensively in chapter II and Jesus as prophet was discussed above. I will thus concentrate here only on Jesus the lord, Jesus the messiah and Jesus son of God.

5.1 Jesus the lord

Vermes (1983b:103) rightly indicates that Jesus as lord (*κύριος*) received little attention in Historical Jesus scholarship. The title was mostly seen as a post easter phenomenon and therefore not taken seriously.

Vermes distinguishes three views on Jesus the lord namely, the conservative view, the radical view and compromises. In the conservative view, lord is seen as indication of Jesus' divinity (Vermes 1983b:105). The radical view disregards the term as for them it has nothing in common with the Palestinian community (Vermes 1983b:106). The compromises emphasised the development of the term from the Aramaic מרא to the Greek *κύριος*. It asserts that the use of מרא postdates the Historical Jesus and that *κύριος* as acknowledgement of divinity arises from the Hellenistic milieu (Vermes 1983b:111). Vermes (1983b:111) wants to consider the nature of Aramaic and Greek speech

of Jews in New Testament times, to see whether this would help us understand the use of lord.

5.1.1 Lord as designation for God

Vermes investigated the use of lord from plus minus 200 BC to AD 300. He starts his investigation with the *Genesis Apocryphon* from Qumran cave 1. This document is extremely important because it is the first inter- Testamental witness that bears comparable subject-matter (Vermes 1983b:112). He found that of the twenty-six titles used for God, twelve include lord. It figures mostly in composite titles that is an Aramaic trait (Vermes 1983b:112). Vermes names a few instances in the Genesis Apocryphon of this particular use (1QapGn 20:12-13; 20:15-16; 22:32). One of the many instances is found where Abram prays to God after the Pharaoh took Sarai to be one of his concubines:

> **"Blessed art Thou O Most High God, Lord (מרא) of all the worlds, Thou who art Lord (מרא) and King of all things.....I cry now before Thee, my Lord** (מרא)... (1QapGn 20:12-18 transl Vermes 1975:218).

We may deduce from these texts that Lord was used for God in Aramaic literature not very far removed in time from the Gospels. Vermes (1983b:113) concluded from this that in the inter-Testamental period a worshipper " thought of God almost instinctively as Lord".

In the *LXX* it is commonplace to use κύριος for God. It has a very high incidence in the Psalms and it is used in composition with Θεός in numerous occasions.

5.1.2 Lord as used for humans

The use of lord to denote a human is just as well attested in the Qumran *Genesis apocryphon*. Lamech the father of Noah suspects that his wife has consorted with one of the angels. In her answer she addresses him as lord:

> **"Then Bathenosh my wife spoke to me with much heat [and]....said, 'O my brother, O, my lord...**

The king of Sodom uses Lord in submission to Abram:

> "....**My lord Abram,..**"(1QapGn 22 transl Vermes 1975:222).

Lord was in these instances used by somebody that is, or feels inferior towards another person. The Aramaic (מרא) was also translated with (κύριος) in the instances that it was used to denote a human being (Vermes 1983b:114).

The evidence by Vermes makes it possible to deduct that Jesus could most probably have been addressed as lord. This is in opposition to the notion that Lord was a post easter addition to the titles of Jesus. That Lord was used for God as well as humans does not solve the problem of what it meant when it was applied to Jesus.

5.1.3 Lord in the Gospels

The use of κύριος differs from one Gospel to another. Vermes investigated its use in each Gospel. In *Mark* and *Matthew* the term is used mostly in the context of miracles (Vermes 1983b:124). In *Luke* it implies teacher or that Jesus was master of a circle of disciples. The Lukan use is seen as a development away from the context of miracles towards the context of teacher that started in Matthew (Vermes

1983b:126). The Johannine use links κύριος to son of God (Jn 11:27) and to God (Jn 20:28) (Vermes 1983b:126). Vermes concludes that its use in the Gospels is linked primarily to the dual rôles of Jesus as Hasid and teacher.

To come to these conclusions Vermes took the variant readings of the text of Mark 1:40 and 9:22 to be authentic. The variant readings include the term κύριος (Vermes 1983b:126).

5.1.4 Assessment

Vermes set out to prove that the notion that κύριος was a post-easter title for Jesus, was incorrect. He showed that κύριος was used to indicate divinity as well as an indication of respect towards a human. He also indicated that the term developed through the Gospels from the respectful address for a Hasid to the respectful address for a teacher to an indication of son of God and an equalisation with God.

The philological background to the terms מרא and κύριος demonstrated that these words were in use in the inter-testamental period. They were used to indicate divinity and to address a human. The statement that a worshipper in that period would automatically think of God as Lord, cannot be proven philologically. The most that could be inferred from this line of thought, is that the Qumran community used it in such a way, at least. At most, we could infer that some people used these terms in the way described.

As an address for a human, it is significant that Lord is always used by people who perceive themselves to be inferior to the person addressed. Lord is then an indication of relationship more than a title.

When Lamech is spoken to by his wife, she calls him Lord. When he speaks to his father, Lamech addresses him as Lord (1QapGn 2). A person was called Lord only when addressed by someone his inferior.

The uses we find for the term Lord, in the New Testament display only that it was used in its whole range of nuances by the New Testament writers. It also displays that each writer had a different perception of how Jesus should be described.

That the term "Lord" is found in the context of miracles proves that Jesus was respected as charismatic figure. It stresses the relationship between Jesus and those in need of his wonders. It does not disprove Jesus' image as Hasid, but on the whole it does not strengthen the image that much, either.

We have to note here that the content of the word must have changed after the post-easter experience of those that believed in Jesus. The pre-easter use of the term that denoted the relationship of inferiority felt towards Jesus, developed through belief in him after the easter event, to indicate that Jesus was God. This development is acceptable if one bears in mind that it is emphasised by the research of both the "conservatives" and "liberals".

5.2 Jesus the Messiah

At the onset of his argument about Jesus the Messiah Vermes (1983b:130) wants to distinguish between the messianic expectation of Palestinian Jewry and the messianic speculations of minority groups. He then compares it with the Gospel material.

We will follow his arguments while noting the difficulties and keeping his main objective, to strengthen the image of hasid, in mind.

5.2.1 Messianic expectation

The main sources for the messianic expectation of the people in general are taken by Vermes to be the *Psalms of Solomon* and the *Tefillah*. Crossan also subscribes to the importance of the *Psalms of Solomon* (Crossan 1991:284). Vermes (1983b:130) finds these sources the least academic and the most normative because they are both prayers.

The image of the anointed in the *Psalms of Solomon* 17 and 18 in conjunction with *Isaiah* 11 links the anointed to the son of David:

> **The Kingdom of our God is forever over the nations in judgment.**
> **Lord, you chose David to be king over Israel, and swore to him about his descendants forever that his Kingdom should not fail before you...**
> **See, Lord, and raise up for them their King, the son of David, to rule over your servant Israel in the time known to you, O God...and their king shall be the Lord Messiah.(Anointed (of) the Lord transl Vermes)** (PsSol 17:3-4, 21, 32; Transl Crossan 1991:285).

This leads Vermes to conclude that the writer of the *Psalms of Solomon* thought about the Messiah as a king of David's lineage. He does not exclude either, that an ordinary person could have had a triumphant king in mind when praying this prayer. One has to take note here, that there is a controversy about whether the text of PsSol 17:32 should read the Lord Messiah (*χριστός κύριος*) or the Lord's Messiah (*χριστός κύριου*). Since Wellhausen there had been consensus that it should be read as *χριστός κύριου* . As we have seen Crossan translated it from *χριστός*

κύριος. Hahn (1985) demonstrated that the most acceptable reading of the text is χριστός κύριος.

The *Tefillah* has two recensions, the Palestinian and the Babylonian. These texts are generally dated not later than the First century AD. The Palestinian recension has the following lines concerning the Messiah:

> **Be gracious, O Lord, our God, according to thy great mercies.....**
> **And to the Kingdom of the house of David, thy righteous Messiah.**
> **Blessed art thou, O Lord, God of David, Builder of Jerusalem** (Vermes 1983b:132).

Likewise, the Babylonian recension depicts a Messiah of Davidic descent:

> **Make the branch of David soon spring forth,**
> **And let his horn be exalted by thy salvation,**

(Vermes 1983b:132).

Despite the problems posed by the dating of the Palestinian and the Babylonian recensions of the *Tefillah*, and the problem posed by whether "..thy righteous Messiah..", pertains to the historical David or to his heir, Vermes is still able to conclude that the most important aspect is that the Messiah is defined in terms of royalty. He finds confirmation for this view in four disparate examples in the *Dead Sea scrolls,* the *Palestinian Talmud* and from *Philo*. In these texts the Messiah is seen as a royal figure as well. The disparity of the texts confirms, for Vermes, that the prevailing view in first century Jewish thought concerning the Messiah was that he was a Davidic redeemer with the talents of military prowess, righteousness and holiness (Vermes 1983b:134).

5.2.2 Messianic speculation

Vermes distinguishes messianic expectation from messianic speculation. The latter pertains to the thought of minority groups, while the former is the general view of the majority of the Jewish people. Vermes perceives the rise of messianic speculation as a product of the turbulent times between the Maccabees and the bar Kochba war (Vermes 1983b:134).

Messianic speculation included notions of a priestly and a prophetic Messiah. In some instances these figures were combined. There were furthermore, allusions to a hidden and revealed Messiah and to a slain Messiah as well.

Each of these views could have a number of reasons for its inception. The priestly Messiah could have been influenced by the Hasmoneans who were of priestly lineage. Likewise the prophetic Messiah came about under speculations concerning Elijah. The sociological impact of the destruction of the Temple could have given rise to the notion of a Messiah hidden on earth. There were also beliefs relating to a Messiah concealed in heaven, bidding his time to save his people. The figure of the slain Messiah is connected with *Zachariah* 12:10-12 which is interpreted by the Rabbis as the weeping over the death of the Messiah.

One may be tempted to draw lines from these figures to Jesus. But we have to take heed of Jewish thought in which the celestial pre-existence of the Messiah does not affect his humanity.

5.2.3 Messiah in the New Testament

The evidence of the Gospels concerning Jesus' use of Messiah for himself led Vermes to conclude that Messianism was not particularly prominent in the teaching of Jesus (Vermes 1983b:143). An important logion in this regard is the interpretation of *Psalm* 110:10 which is found in double independent attestation in the second stratum (Mk 12:35-37 and parr; Barn 12:10-11). In this logion Jesus denies that the Messiah is the son of David, but asserts that the Messiah is the κύριος. The authenticity of the logion could also be seriously questioned. It is furthermore problematic to conclude from such evidence what Jesus' own view was.

His opponents call him the Messiah to denounce Jesus at his trial in Jerusalem. They did it to discredit him, in the light of the negative attitude to the many people that claimed to be the Messiah and met their death in Jerusalem (Vermes 1983b:144).

In contrast the writers of the Gospels express their belief in Jesus as son of David and Messiah in no uncertain terms. This is to be seen at the beginning of the Synoptics where each emphasises it in his own way. Vermes detects a messianic expectation in the question of the sons of Zebedee or their mother, regarding their position in the Kingdom (Mk 10:37; Mt20:21). The question whether Jesus will restore the Kingdom of Israel, also points towards the messianic expectation of the disciples (Ac 1:6). Lastly the confession of Peter that Jesus is the Messiah (Mk 8:29 and parr) seems to underscore the messianic interpretation of Jesus by his followers.

Vermes also gives attention to the cases where Jesus is forced by circumstances to answer directly to people that declared him to be the Messiah, or asked him whether he was the Messiah. Notably these occasions were found where he exorcised demons and bade them to be silent (Mk 1:21-25). Another instance is his ambiguous reaction to the confession of Peter where he did not deny it but gave the disciples strict orders not to tell anyone. Vermes interprets Jesus' conduct in the Marcan context as a dissociation from Peter's view. When Jesus is confronted with the question of his messiahship during the passion, he also answers ambiguously. These instances brought Vermes to the conclusion that Jesus did not think of himself as Messiah. He finds it perplexing that we find a strong conviction that Jesus was the Messiah amongst early Christians, but hesitation amongst the Synoptics to ascribe to him any unambiguous claim to be the Messiah (Vermes 1983b:152).

5.2.4 Messiah in the New Testament and Judaism

According to Vermes we do not have any conclusive evidence on the messiahship of Jesus from the New Testament. He wishes to supplement the gospel evidence with contemporary Jewish ideas (Vermes 1983b:153).

Vermes uses his conclusion that the conventional messianic view was that of the Davidic king Messiah. If Jesus had employed any messianic image it would have been that of Davidic king Messiah to enable him to get his message through. As we have seen the Synoptics do not describe Jesus as having the aspirations to Davidic kingship or the inclination to usurp the Roman rule. His answer to Peter is a denial of Messiahship.

Given this, Vermes asks the obvious question as to why did the messianic title stick to Jesus despite his denial and the reluctance of the Synoptics to ascribe to him any messianic consciousness.

Vermes outlines what he calls a few tentative suggestions as to why the messianic title stayed attached to Jesus. In the first place Jesus' denial of messiahship could have been rejected by his followers. It is conceivable given the apocalyptic ferment in the society at that time. Secondly a two-stage Messianic doctrine evolved that moved the messianic event to the post-Easter interval. It was thus no longer a political event in history, but the taking up of Jesus to sit at the right hand of the Father. Thus the suffering and death of Jesus could easily be accommodated. This doctrine was not attractive to most Jews although it satisfied the early Christians.

An astonishing situation resulted where the Jewish messianism was taken up by a Gentile church to which it was totally alien. Vermes contends that this was done for polemical purposes to explain why the Jews rejected Jesus. It is then explained that it was by their own hardness of heart that the Jews rejected the promises of scripture and could not perceive Jesus as the Messiah. This sentiment is echoed by Stephen's speech in Acts, Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians and in Jesus' speech in John eight.

5.2.5 Hasid and Messiah

This depiction of events serves Vermes' image of Jesus as Hasid. It removes the Christian view of Jesus as Messiah from Jesus himself to the conjectures of the first believers in him. Vermes thus links this to his

statement that the Christians made Jesus to be more than he himself cared to (Vermes 1983b:17).

In an appendix Vermes (1983b:158) demonstrates that the term "anointed" is compatible with the image of Hasid. He indicates instances where anointed is used to mean appointed in the *Targums*. He argues that as a charismatic, Jesus must have been aware of his divine vocation, and therefore need not have objected to the title. It must be noted though, that Vermes entertains this as merely a linguistic possibility that is not supported on the historico-literary level by the Greek New Testament.

5.2.6 Overview

The confession that Jesus is the Messiah is one of the main points of contention between Jews and Christians (Grollenberg 1988:vii). It is here that we have to bear in mind the Jewishness of Vermes himself. I do not wish to enter into a Christian Jewish polemic myself. But in the light of Vermes' approach to the New Testament it has to be noted that the New Testament writers were Christians and that they wrote from a Christian perspective. This perspective included the confession of Jesus Christ (De Jonge 1986:333). In the light of this we will have to note the rôle of πίστις concerning the messiahship of Jesus (De Jonge 1986:322). Πίστις is a word that denotes a certain relationship, its use in connection with son of David and Christ emphasises that for people who believed in him Jesus was the Messiah. If Mark, for instance, writes about Jesus, he writes as a believer in Jesus Christ. His use of the passages concerning Jesus as Messiah or as son of David has to be seen in the perspective of

his faith. He did not merely write a history of Jesus but as he stated himself, an εὐαγγέλιον (Dormeyer 1987:452-468). Mark's personal view of Jesus is explicitly stated by himself in 1:1 where he talks about "Jesus Christ son of God". Christ is used in an absolute way by Mark to denote Jesus (Botha 1989:83). We can furthermore, on literary grounds, be certain that wherever Mark uses Christ it is filled with all the post-Easter connotations that it had for a Christian. Thus the logion in Mark 12:35-37 was used by Mark for his own theological purposes. He wished to stress the point that Jesus could only be known as Messiah after the crucifixion (Gnilka 1978:172). Only after Easter could Jesus be known as Mark and his readers knew him. The theological aims and the faith of the New Testament authors make it much more difficult to come to Jesus' self-awareness.

According to *Mark* Jesus actually did not deny being the anointed (Botha 1989:83). His deeds portrayed that he had a vocation from God. The conclusion of Vermes concerning the anointed is thus highly probable.

The outline of Vermes concerning the historical course of events leading to the acceptance of the messiahship of Jesus is probable. There could be other possibilities that fit the situation as well. De Jonge (1986) explained that David was seen as one endowed with the Holy Spirit. In some circles he was perceived as an exorcist and prophet (De Jonge 1986:335). These functions could have, understandably, been attributed to the expected Davidic king. Thus the Hasidic activities of Jesus could have been subsumed under the heading "Christ, son of David".

In the light of these observations one could then have the following course of events that strengthens the image of Hasid. Jesus did the deeds of the anointed. His followers saw his deeds and believed in him as Messiah. After the easter event they filled the basic belief in Christ that did not work out as they expected, with a deeper theological content. It is once more a case of the person of Jesus that was interpreted in such a way, by those who had faith in him, that he could in an absolute way be called Christ.

5.3 Jesus son of God

Vermes starts his discussion of Jesus son of God with the views of some prominent New Testament scholars. He asserts that none of these interpret the New Testament in such a way that son of God means that Jesus is divine. Where it is understood as alluding to Jesus' divinity, "the Son" is substituted by "son of God" which is the last stage of development of the title (Vermes 1983b:193). The evolution of the son of God concept is seen in two stages. First there is the Palestinian view that understands sonship of God via the royal adoption formula. In this way Jesus is son of God through his office as the king Messiah. The second stage is Hellenistic where divine sonship was interpreted as pertaining to Jesus' nature and not his office (Vermes 1983b:193).

5.3.1 Son of God in the inter-testamental world

Vermes discussed the concept "son of God" in the inter-testamental world under the following headings: 1 The Old Testament heritage. 2 Post-biblical Judaism. 3 The Hellenistic world.

Three types of sons of God could be discerned in the Old Testament. Heavenly or angelic beings, the Israelite people as such and the kings of Israel. It is clear that the first two types do not concern the use of son of God for Jesus. Discussion is thus to be limited to the term as used for David or the ruler. The most central and decisive part in this regard was played by *Psalm* two:

I will tell of the decree of the Lord:

He said to me, "You are my son, today I have begotten you."

(Ps 2:7)

This passage played a decisive rôle in the development of Jewish messianic thought.

In post-biblical Judaism there was the tendency to ascribe the title to the just man and in a special sense to the Davidic Messiah. Vermes quotes admonitions by *Jesus ben Sira*, the *Psalms of Solomon*, *Wisdom of Solomon* and *Jubilees* to this effect. He warns though, that the term was not commonly used (Vermes 1983b:197). It is noteworthy that the term is used with strong moralising tones. This must not be interpreted, as if flawless obedience could bring about divine sonship.

In the Hellenistic world son of God has two noteworthy usages for the New Testament discussion of the concept. The first is related to the use of son of God for the Ptolemaic king of Egypt and the emperor of Rome from Augustus onwards. The second use is connected to the "divine man" concept. Vermes perceives both instances as awkward from a Jewish point of view.

From this discussion Vermes concludes that a Jew would have understood "son of God" firstly to denote an angelic being and secondly

a saintly man. Only in a Hellenistic milieu would it have been used to denote a miracle-worker (Vermes 1983b:200).

5.3.2 Son of God in the New Testament

Vermes distinguishes two types of occurrences of the term. Firstly as used by Jesus as self-identification and secondly as a description or address.

Vermes pays attention to two logia where Jesus designates himself as son of God namely *Mark* 13:32 and *Matthew* 11:27 and parr:

> **About that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son; only the Father.** (Mk 13:32 and par)
>
> **All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows the son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the son and any one to whom the son chooses to reveal him.** (Mt 11:27 and par)

Vermes argues that one could not be sure of the authenticity of the logion in *Mark*. If one takes it to be authentic on the grounds of the admission that Jesus does not know the time of the parousia, it could be argued that the term "son" is used to counterbalance the statement (Vermes 1983b:201). The logion in *Matthew* could also be seen rather on the lips of the primitive church than on the lips of Jesus. Vermes quotes C.K. Barrett in this instance to disprove authenticity. He concludes that there are no hard facts to prove that Jesus used the term as a self-designation.

Where Jesus was called son of God in conjunction with the term Messiah (Mt 16:16; 14:61 and 26:63), Vermes disregards it on the grounds that he stated above for disregarding the term Messiah.

The largest collection of son of God sayings regards Jesus as miracle-worker. The superhuman powers of Jesus are recognised by demons, men and the heavenly voice.

Son of God used by demons is found in two contexts namely the stories of exorcism and the dialogue between Jesus and Satan in the temptation episode. For Vermes these texts reveal an association between son of God and the charismatic exorcist (Vermes 1983b:203).

The use of son of God by humans is ignored by the disciples of Jesus except for *Matthew* 14:33 after Jesus had walked on the water. Vermes names only one other instance where it was used as a compliment. At the crucifixion the centurion exclaimed that Jesus was the son of God (Mk 15:39; Mt 27:54). He counters the argument that this exclamation was proof of a Hellenistic view that was only meaningful to non-Jews. He relates the execution of Honi where the Hebrew sources refer to him as "son of the house of God" and Josephus writing in Greek uses "a just man dear to God". This means that son of God has strong Semitic associations (Vermes 1983b:204).

The further use of son of God by humans is by Jesus' enemies namely the crowd and the chief priests and elders during the crucifixion.

The proclamation by the heavenly voice is found at the narratives of the baptism and transfiguration. In Jewish circles the heavenly voice is an important witness that takes the place of prophecy (Vermes 1983b:207), these descriptions were thus very important for Jewish readers of the Gospels. These instances counter the general academic opinion that son of God was associated with the Messiah in Jewish

circles and that the association with a miracle worker was a later Hellenistic development.

5.3.3 Supplementary evidence

Vermes cites further evidence for his view that son of God was used for a charismatic in the Jewish environment. The prime example is once again Hanina ben Dosa that is called "my son" by the heavenly voice (bTaan 224b). Concerning Hanina the citation above that relates his encounter with Agrath also reminds one of Jesus' confrontation with Satan in which Hanina and Jesus both came out victorious. This correlation leads Vermes to conclude that the New Testament evidence concerning the divine sonship of Jesus correlates with the image of the Galilean miracle working Hasid (Vermes 1983b:209). Vermes is also positive that in this sense Jesus could have seen himself as son of God. This is made evident in the many instances where Jesus called God his father (Mk 14:36 and parr). The Hasidim also displayed the same intimacy with God (bTaan 23b).

5.4 Assessment

The title "son of God" is a crucial part of Christian faith as Vermes noted himself (Vermes 1983b:192). He set out to prove that this concept was known to the Jews and cannot be made out to be a Hellenistic trait in the Gospels. He further pointed out that the milieu for the understanding of the concept was not so much pagan Hellenistic thought but the environment of the miracle working Galilean Hasid.

He ascribes the confessions of Christianity to the misunderstanding of Gentile Christians from the pagan Hellenistic society. These interpretations gave rise to the type of interpretation in the Nicene Creed:

> **God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, consubstantial with the Father**

It is the process that Vermes described here that has to open our eyes to how the person of Jesus was interpreted by different people in different situations. The title Son of God led people to understand Jesus not merely in degrees of difference but in totally opposing mutually exclusive ways.

6 CONCLUSION

The image of Jesus as Hasid as proposed by Vermes deserves serious consideration. There is criticism that could be levelled against many aspects of the work by Vermes. Many of these criticisms came to the fore in the discussion above and there could be much more. The positive aspects of this image have to be noted and explored further.

6.1 Critique

The main critique that could be levelled against the work of Vermes concerns his use of the available material, his discussion of the Christological titles and his epistemological presuppositions.

6.1.1 The presuppositions of Vermes

Vermes set out with a conviction that could only be described as positivistic. The fact that he thought himself able to write an objective historical account was pounced upon by numerous critics. This remark had the effect that his work was not taken as serious as it should have been. Many of the valuable contributions that the work could have made were lost in this way. An additional negative result was the fact that the reader became uneasy because Vermes did not spell out his presuppositions. One had to read with the conscious questioning of every conclusion he made.

6.1.2 The use of the New Testament

The way that Vermes used the available material is also questionable in some instances. At the beginning he described his method as an even handed approach to the available Jewish texts. He perceived the New Testament as part of the Jewish literary corpus. This in itself is a positive way of looking at the texts. The problem is that this approach did not leave much room for the understanding that the people who wrote these texts were writing out of a position of faith in Jesus. At the onset Vermes(1983b:19) already laid bare the supposition that the writers of the Gospels were echoeing primitive tradition. In his own work he actually showed this to be incorrect. There are many instances where he questions authenticity of logia. As soon as one questions authenticity one concedes that the writers of the Gospels were more than mere echoes of the primitive tradition.

6.1.3 The discussion of the titles

Vermes explained the necessity of the discussion of the titles as an enquiry into the metamorphosis of Jesus of Galilee into the Christ of Christianity (Vermes 1983b:84). It has to be seen in the light of the reason he stated for his research namely, to find out how the writers of the Gospels wished Jesus to be known (Vermes 1983b:19). This reveals the weakness of not taking into account the faith of the Evangelists, once more. To find out how they would have wanted Jesus to be known their faith has to be accounted for. Vermes does not do this. The way in which he illuminates the questions concerning the titles demonstrates unintentionally, how it was possible by faith to interpret Jesus in different ways. The way in which each Evangelist wanted Jesus to be known was not as the historical Hasid, but as the one they believed in.

6.2 The historical image of the Hasid

The biggest contribution of this work of Vermes is that he gave Jesus a face and a voice in first century Palestine. The image that is proposed here is more than mere abstractions and vague outlines based on theological constructions. The problem of uniqueness that so many images suffer is overcome by the analogous historical figures of Honi and Hanina. Jesus is firmly placed within Jewish society. The influence of his immediate environment, Galilee, was comprehensively recounted. He was also given a niche in a particular Jewish sociological stratum, that of Charismatic Judaism.

The critique against the term Hasid was comprehensively handled above. The image does not fall apart if it is defined by another name

because the type of figure is rooted in history. He may be called a shaman or a holy man, or even son of God or Messiah as long as one understands him to be a charismatic in the Jewish society.

CHAPTER V
WHO WAS JESUS?

1 INTRODUCTION

The problem addressed in this thesis focused on the diversity of Jesus images. This diversity was seen to be a phenomenon that has been part of Historical Jesus research since its inception. The reasons for this diversity were thought to be in the texts or in the research that highlighted different aspects of Jesus' life. In the discussion of the images of Jesus it became apparent that the problem of diversity of Jesus images had much more to do with the way in which the first people who saw him interpreted him. This influenced the interpretations that are currently made.

In an important way the present interpretations represent what was happening to Jesus all along. He was always interpreted in diverse ways. The diversity we have in modern research is a continuation of a diversity that has always been there. It is true that the present diversity is not a repetition of earlier diversity. The present situation gave rise to the present diversity just as the previous circumstances gave rise to the previous diversity.

The images we have studied above were represented to be comprehensive and thus to the exclusion of all other images. All the presentations were proving their point by disproving the points made, or suppositions of the other.

In the research above, certain points of critique were made on the methodology and suppositions of all the presentations. More important

though, is that all of these images were found to be plausible in spite of obvious critique.

This leaves one with the option to unify these images into an image that encompasses all. The result will then have to be somebody like a Jewish Cynic sage that was totally taken up by an apocalyptic fervour and was subsequently put to death for it. Such a combination is historically speaking impossible to justify. Furthermore, in the wake of the prevailing diversity, another image that endeavours to include all other images, would only perpetuate the problem of diverse images.

If an image of Jesus is to be found, its main quality will have to be that of clarification. It will have to clarify the diversity of images of Jesus. It would thus not be a conglomerate of images that endeavours to encompass all the others. The object is not to abolish diversity, but to get to an image of Jesus that would explain it.

2 METHOD

I wish to attempt a proposal for a solution to the problem. What needs to be done, is to demonstrate that Jesus was interpreted in different ways from the onset. Secondly, that these different interpretations of Jesus found their way into the written texts about Jesus. Thirdly, the point from where these images started to diverge would bring us nearer to the Historical Jesus. We thus have to answer which type of person could give rise to such variegated interpretations.

In the previous chapters I have examined three images of the Historical Jesus. Two of these images, the eschatological prophet and the Cynic sage, were directly opposed and mutually exclusive. The third

image, that of Galilean Hasid, has the possibilities to form the basis from where the different interpretations developed. It is this possibility that I wish to investigate and propose in this chapter.

3 THE EXTENT OF DIVERSITY

The texts we have at our disposal are witnesses to a diversity that must have been present since an early stage of Christianity. Koester (Robinson & Koester 1971:120) identifies three incidences of conflict in the primitive church that are witness to diversity: **1** The circumstances of Stephen's death. **2** The apostle's council in Jerusalem. **3** The incident in Antioch. These conflicts must have been the result of a process that started much earlier. This can be deduced from the impression left by the sources that it was not mere personal differences, but that groups of people were involved in all these instances. The fact that companions of Jesus like Peter were involved, emphasises that this diversity must have started where the words and deeds of Jesus were reflected on, even during his own lifetime, by those who followed him. *Mark* has two instances that repeat the question of who the people thought Jesus was (Mk 6:14-16; 8:27-30). This indicates that Mark at least, had a preoccupation about who people thought Jesus was. In a sense *Mark* is motivated to give a description of Jesus because there were so many interpretations of who he was. The diversity goes even further. Dunn (1977:30) names instances of differences and disagreement by the authors of the New Testament. He classified it as disagreement over eschatology, the significance of Jesus' earthly ministry and death, and the relevance of the law.

The core of what Jesus said and did, cannot be found in one of the New Testament writings. It has to be constructed from the totality of the writings at our disposal (Dunn 1977:30). This brings us to what we have observed in chapter one, namely that the same logion was interpreted differently by the various authors of the ancient texts.

In chapter two above, we have seen that the temple event was interpreted in different ways by the writers of the Gospels. Differences in the meaning of the term "Kingdom" were also extensively argued. Larger blocks in the Gospels like the "Sermon on the mount (Mt) or "Sermon on the plain" (Lk), clearly indicate that they are different constructions of the same basic material.

Very important instances of divergence are to be found within the texts themselves. This phenomenon was brought to the surface by redaction criticism. Most of the texts at our disposal display the "seams" where different traditions are joined together. We are able to identify the rôle of different traditions even in *Q* (Mack 1993:46-49).

The question that has to be answered next is whether these differences could lead us to a phase in history where the divergence occurred. It is my belief that this point of divergence would serve us with material to reconstruct a historically acceptable image of Jesus.

4 THE POINT OF DIVERGENCE

Whilst seeking a point where the images of Eschatological Prophet and Cynic sage diverge, I wish to clarify that other images may be treated in the same way and that these images have to be tested in the same manner to see whether they support this proposal. It would in

theory thus be possible to retrieve the emergence of Jesus as magician, Rabbi or political rebel in the same way.

We do not have the point of divergence of views about Jesus in the literature at our disposal. This literature is already the product of diverse images. It would therefore be impossible to find the point of divergence in the literature. Researchers point to the fact that we have the views of the writers in the literature. This was the point made by Mack (1988) in his handling of *Mark*. What is true for *Mark*, is true for the other literature as well. The problem is that we get so taken up with the image given by the ancient texts that we tend to forget, that the texts cannot give us the true Jesus, but only an image of him. We shall see below that it is a point of critique that could be levelled against Mack in his work on *Q*.

This means that the point of divergence is not hidden in a text somewhere to be found, it is a construction to be made with the skills of historiography. Being a construction it will never be final, it must always be subjected to questioning as to its explanatory possibilities.

4.1 The point of divergence in Q

In his work *The lost Gospel*, Mack constructed such a point of divergence. He observed that the different layers in *Q* are layers of development from a Cynic view in Q1 to an almost apocalyptic view in Q3. These developments were put into a socio-historical construction of what might have caused them.

Mack is convinced that Jesus could best be described as a Cynic sage, as we have seen in chapter four above. He also finds Cynic roots

in the first stage of the construction of *Q* (Mack 1993:114-123). The community that was responsible for Q1 is described as Jesus people rather than Christians (1993:48). According to him they followed the lifestyle advocated by Jesus and used his sayings as personal guidelines for this lifestyle (1993:120). Their way of life was a social experiment for survival in a dangerous and dehumanised environment. The Q community was understood, not as a religious group, but as a Hellenistic fellowship. Such a fellowship consisted of people who sought support in the pursuit of common goals. Their meetings were at regular intervals and usually took place around a common meal(Mack 1993:67-68).

The first divergence, that of Q2, was the result of a change in circumstances of the community. There seemed to be a shift in loyalty that turned some of the members to attack the Jews and change from accentuation of the teachings of Jesus, to him as teacher (1993:131-143).

The second divergence is to be found in the material identified as Q3. This was brought about by the sudden changes after the Jewish war (Mack 1993:171-173). The Q document was, because of this, further expanded with new material that could be classified under the themes of :**1** The mythology of Jesus as the son of God, **2** The relationship of Jesus to the Temple, and **3** the authority of the scriptures (1993:173).

4.2 Assessment

The observations on *Q* made by Mack, are very intriguing. By identifying three strands of development in the document, it became less difficult to account for the differences in the mood and style found within the document. The divisions made by Mack are not the only

possibility. Schulz (1972) made a division of Q. He viewed the prophetic and authoritative part of *Q* as the earliest, and the words of the earthly Jesus as the later part (1972:483). The construction of Schulz is thus roughly the opposite to that of Mack, although they both interpret *Q* as the theological expression of a distinct group. Kloppenborg (1987:244) recognised that the Wisdom sayings were the formative part of the document and that the prophetic judgement oracles were secondary. This does not imply that the Wisdom sayings were older and the prophetic judgement oracles younger. It merely states that in the document itself the Wisdom material was formative and the other material later additions (Kloppenborg 1987:244).

It is with these statements of Kloppenborg in mind that I wish to question the assumption of Mack that the earliest material in *Q* was indeed the authentic interpretation of who Jesus was. The Wisdom material could indeed have been the earliest *Q* material, but it need not be the earliest interpretation of who Jesus was. This view is supported by Piper (1989:196) on the grounds of the uneven distribution of aphorisms in the tradition.

Mack (1993:142-143) further concedes that there must have been a Jewish component in the Q community to explain the Jewish tone given to the contents of the document. In spite of this he still claims a less Jewish and a more Hellenistic environment for the document. If the main environment for an understanding of Jesus was not Jewish, it is impossible to explain why everything we have about Jesus is described in Jewish terms (Downing 1987:139). Jesus was most probably a Hellenistic Jew, but above all, a Jew. The interpretation of Jesus as a

Jew, above all, does not subscribe to the earlier division of Palestinian-Jewish as authentic and Hellenistic-Jewish as unauthentic. As we have seen, Downing also chose the Cynic model for Jesus while maintaining his Jewishness. He made the point that Jesus must have chosen to be seen as a Cynic, and that it was an acceptable model in his environment (Downing 1987:138-141). This view is not entirely without problems, as Sanders (1992) indicated. The question is whether Hellenistic Jews would depict someone acting as Jesus did, as a Cynic.

We know that the Jews formed a distinctive group wherever they found themselves. The documents we have are supportive of a Jewish religious background for an understanding of Jesus. This seems to advocate a Jewish understanding of the figure of Jesus, even in a Hellenistic environment.

Thus, although Mack tried to give an account of the **divergencies** in the Q document, I do not think that they depict the **point of divergence** of the images of Jesus. One could not merely take one interpretation to be authentic, and thus the point of divergence, because it was the primary source of a (hypothetical) document.

The questions concerning Mack's methodological assumptions should not be forgotten. Is it possible to assign a sequence to a hypothetical document that is constructed out of loose fragments? Could one ascribe an inclination to either apocalypticism or Cynicism to these fragments without their original setting?

5 THE KINGDOM OF GOD AS DEMONSTRATION OF DIVERGENCE

As I have indicated above, the point of divergence of the images of Jesus is a construction intended to clarify the diverse images of Jesus. This construction could probably be undertaken from different points of departure. I have chosen the Kingdom of God as the nucleus for a construction of the point where the images of Jesus diverge.

This choice is open to criticism. By using the Kingdom of God as it is found in the texts one immediately chooses a literary approach. This means that great care has to be taken to use sound historical judgement in the assessment of results.

Another point of critique is the fact that the term "Kingdom of God" is a much discussed topic with a wide range of contradictory conclusions as we have seen in chapter two. In the discussion of the Kingdom below, I would not venture to solve the problem of the correct meaning of Kingdom. I wish to ask a complete different set of questions.

These questions are related to where these different interpretations of Kingdom could possibly have originated. What could Jesus have said about the Kingdom that could have been interpreted with such diversity?

The image that would emerge from this endeavour would have certain traits that are the result of the questions asked. Its main feature would be that it would be more open to diverse interpretations than an exclusive image such as prophet of restoration eschatology or Cynic sage. The image could also be perceived as saying too little, as not being definitive enough. But by being too definitive it would lose its use as tool for clarification of diversity.

5.1 Kingdom on the lips of Jesus

One of the biggest problems of the Kingdom sayings is that the authenticity of many is questioned.

The view that Jesus uttered the futuristic Kingdom sayings at all, was contested by Mack on the grounds of a voting by the Jesus Seminar (Mack 1987:44). This means that quite a number of scholars reject the authenticity of these sayings. Without getting bogged down in a discussion on authenticity, one has to remember that we are working with texts. This means that it is very probable that the authors of the texts could have originated the futuristic Kingdom sayings. Jesus spoke about a Kingdom of sorts, but these remarks were interpreted in different ways.

5.1.1 Curiosities in the use of Kingdom

If one looks at the situation from a historical perspective it is very unlikely that such an important motif as the Kingdom of God, could not ever have been brought forward by Jesus. We find it attested in the first stratum where all eleven instances are attested independently by at least more than one source (Crossan 1991). This indicates that something Jesus said about the Kingdom must have impressed his hearers immensely for them to repeat it in such a way. That Jesus spoke about the Kingdom is thus not merely taken from *Mark* 1:15.

5.1.1.1 The Kingdom is not used in all parallel texts

One has to note that Kingdom is to be found in one saying and left out in its parallels in other texts. Here are two examples:

"And preach as you go saying,'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying, give without pay." (Mt 10:7-8a).

So they went out and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them. (Mk 6:12-13)

they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere. (Lk 9:6)

It is possible in this instance, that *Matthew* used a Kingdom saying and put it into this saying as he interpreted it. It could possibly have been in *Q* as well and omitted by *Luke* (Crossan 1992:457). One may deduce from this that Kingdom did not necessarily occur in a historical situation in the setting of the mission of the disciples. It demonstrates that *Matthew* saw Kingdom as an integral part of the message that the disciples had to preach. This does not mean *per se* that *Matthew* understood Kingdom in the same way as *Mark.*

ii) **When the crowds learned it, they followed him; and he welcomed them and spoke to them of the Kingdom of God, and cured those who had need of healing.** (Lk 9:11)

As he went ashore he saw a great throng, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. (Mk 6:34)

> **As he went ashore he saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick.** (Mt 14:14)

In the example above it is *Luke* that inserts the Kingdom where *Matthew* and *Mark* do not have it.

These examples are part of roughly fifteen that indicate that the writers of *Matthew* and *Luke* did not merely copy the Markan use of Kingdom. They used Kingdom creatively for their own purposes.

5.1.1.2 Kingdom in the Gospel of Thomas and Q

If we want to look at the whole picture, we have to keep in mind that there are extra-canonical texts that also use Kingdom in conjunction with Jesus. Mack (1987:45) recommended that the *Gospel of Thomas* and *Q* have to be kept in mind when investigating the use of Kingdom. Of the eleven instances where Kingdom is attested independently by more than two texts the *Gospel of Thomas* occurs ten times and *Q* six times. This clearly indicates the importance of the *Gospel of Thomas* and *Q* when speaking about the Kingdom.

As we have seen above, *Q* is witness to a divergence in thought from Wisdom to apocalyptic. If one reads through these stages of development, one finds that the Kingdom of God is mentioned five times in Q1 (QS 8, QS 19, QS 20, QS 26, QS 46). In Q2 it is used three times (QS 17, QS 28, QS 48). In Q3 it is found only once (QS 56).

This serves to confirm that Kingdom did not have an unvarying meaning. It also indicates that Kingdom was not merely a pointer to apocalypticism.

In *The Gospel of Thomas* the term is used eighteen times (saying 3, 20, 22, 27, 46, 49, 54, 57, 64, 74, 94, 95, 96, 97, 105, 107, 112, 113). The term is used in the context of Wisdom that prevails in the document. Kingdom could thus be used in the environment of Wisdom which means that we have to be careful in assigning it only eschatological significance.

5.2 The meaning of Kingdom of God beyond temporality

The biggest question that surrounded the debate on the Kingdom revolved around the temporality of the Kingdom. It is understandable that this was the centre of the debate because it played a rôle in the apocalyptic approach that was undisputed for so long.

In the state of the question at present the question of temporality is besides the point. We should rather ask the question of meaning over and above the aspect of temporality. What did Kingdom mean to different people? What would an ordinary Jew have thought if he had heard the term? Who else could have interpreted it in another way?

I must haste to add that even the term "ordinary Jew" is fraught with problems. Do we really know something about the ordinary Jew? We have asked the question above as to the influence of Hellenism on the people of Galilee. We have noted quite a few differences between Galileans and Jews from Judea. We had to conclude that first century Palestine harboured a variegated society. It is safe to assume that the people were not unanimous in their thought about most issues. This has to be kept in mind when we discuss the meaning of Kingdom.

5.3 The Cynic Kingdom

Kingdom was an important point of discussion for Cynics. They set up their own sort of kingdom and their own sort of kingship against the kingdoms and kings they came to know in this world. Epictetus reasons on the way one should behave towards tyrants. He points out the absurdity of being afraid of someone that could kill you and thus only have power over your corpse (Epict *Diss* I. xix 7-9). Epictetus maintains that people are made free by Zeus and that they lose this freedom to a tyrant only if they do it out of themselves. This is typical Cynic thought on the freedom of the individual.

Höistad discussed this issue in *Cynic hero and Cynic king* (1948). The political terms of king and kingdom became metaphors for the person that reigned over all circumstances with freedom and self control. The person of ethical principle was a king that could rule in any circumstances over any situation, this made his world thus managed, his kingdom. Downing (1987:76) remarks on the Cynic that bears the humiliation of the people as a king that rules over his subjects and slaves.

It becomes clear that Cynic thought about king and kingdom transcended the obvious spatial and temporal connotations it has. It became terms for a mode of behaviour.

5.4 Cynic kingdom and eschatological kingdom

In contrast to the Cynic kingdom where people became kings in their kingdoms by the correct ethical (natural) behaviour, the eschatological kingdom was thought of more in spatial and temporal terms.

The eschatological kingdom was discussed extensively in chapter two above. From the sociological reasons given for this phenomenon, we may deduce the difference in approach between the Cynics and the eschatological view. The Cynics used kingdom and king in order to help them cope with the life they had chosen. These terms enabled them to take control of their life, no matter what life hurled at them, they could reign over it in freedom and with sovereignty.

The apocalyptists also used "kingdom" to enable them to cope with their situation. They found themselves in an alien world. This may have been, either because they were physically under threat, or that they perceived themselves to be threatened. Under these circumstances they anticipated a return of the kingdom of God. When this kingdom comes, their opponents will be punished and the righteous (being themselves) justified. The kingdom thus serves the end of making people endure hardship because they will someday be vindicated. In this view, kingdom is spatially and temporally defined.

5.5 The Kingdom of God in the terms of the religion of Israel

In chapter two we concluded that Judaism gave no clear indicators that Kingdom had to be taken eschatologically. Mack (1988:70) agreed with Vielhauer that the Kingdom was not combined with Messiah in Jewish apocalyptic thought. We have seen that Jewish religious thought was diverse. Within this diversity we have to look at another possibility that may be very significant. Despite the diversity in Jewish thought, we have to be aware that the main stream of Jews thought and believed in roughly the same way. If this were not so, the temple cult, the

position of the religious leaders and the function of society as a whole, would be impossible.

The Jewish teachers were concrete in their teaching and thought about God. As soon as one reads the Talmud or the Mishna one is struck by its immersion in everyday life. The Jewish religion strikes me as a way of relating to God in an everyday manner. Their views on the kingship and Kingdom of God could have been so common that a treatise on the subject would have been stating the obvious. It is therefore impossible to find a philosophical treatise on what Kingdom of God would have meant in Jewish religion. It has to be deduced.

It is imperative to distinguish between Jewish religion and Jews. We have seen that Jews could have been influenced by a wide spectrum of world views, from apocalypticism to Cynicism and beyond, but there was a distinguishable content of Jewish religion that should be acknowledged.

In Jewish religion God was thought about in existential terms. He was involved in the everyday life of his people and their lifestyle depicted it. The Jewish manuscripts at our disposal are witness to this. We have to ask ourselves what Kingdom of God would have meant in such concrete terms. In order to investigate this a brief survey of Jewish history, as they perceived it in their theological writings, is necessary. I will follow the lines drawn by Le Roux in *Rewolusie en reïnterpretasie* (1987).

The Jews' first notion of king and kingdom was that of God as king. This was seen in the theocratic society envisaged before the institution of the kingship in Israel. Later this kingship of God was attested by the

earthly king who was seen as "son of God". The king was thus the earthly representative of God, who was in reality the king of Israel. This view became part of a "national" theology that gave security. God would never desert his people, or their king. He would also protect Jerusalem because of his temple (Le Roux 1987:104-105).

This national theology differed from the theology behind the Mosaic law. Mosaic law stressed the obligation of the people to serve God. The national theology took it for granted that God would protect his Kingdom Israel, no matter what they did.

King Josia made a return to the Mosaic law that stated that God protected those who are obedient. Before the exile there were clashes between the proponents of each of these theologies. The book of *Jeremiah* is an example of these clashes in the time shortly before and after the exile.

The proponents of the national theology were disillusioned to the point of crisis by the exile. Psalm 137 is an example of the difficulties that the national theology gave to people in the exile. During the exile the Mosaic theology gave the necessary impetus for further belief in God. After the exile it became the prevalent theology (Le Roux 105-155).

It could thus be said, that the kingship of God could only be experienced by those who are obedient. The Kingdom of God would thus be there where he is obeyed as master. According to the theology developed during the exile the thought of Kingdom of God lost its spatial connotations. This was the prevailing view amongst the Sadokite priests. This theology made the Jewish religion so resilient during the *Diaspora.*

Because the kingship of God was not limited to a spatial kingdom, Jews in any place could serve him as king.

5.6 The case for Kingdom in terms of the religion of Israel

To make a case for Kingdom in terms of Jewish religion, we will have to recap the problems with the eschatological kingdom and the Cynic kingdom.

We have seen thus far, in chapter two and three, the case for the eschatological interpretation of kingdom and that for the Cynic kingdom.

Sanders did not use kingdom as proof for his image of Jesus as prophet of restoration eschatology. After he had established the image though, he naturally understood kingdom in terms of eschatology.

Both Mack and Downing used kingdom as yet another parallel between Jesus and the Cynics. In both cases the kingdom could be interpreted only after the choice of image was made.

Sanders (1992) immediately pounced on the weakness of the Cynic argument. He questioned the generalisations that were made to depict Jesus as a Cynic within a Jewish community. To sustain the Cynic image of Jesus, the probability that some of his contemporaries could see him as a Cynic sage, had to be taken as the most prevalent view. This assumption is just as difficult to disprove as it is to prove, but Sanders' critique has to be taken seriously. It is difficult to picture a Jewish Jesus who has to be understood in Hellenistic terms.

The eschatological image of Jesus was shown by Mack, to be a development that could be ascribed to the influence of *Mark* on historical research of who Jesus was. Mack did a great deal to show that the

eschatological image could be traced to its origins. Its origins could be shown to be within certain communities and not with Jesus. To depict Jesus as eschatological prophet would thus also not do justice to the Historical Jesus.

5.6.1 Jewish religion as environment for the writings on Jesus

In answer to the assumption of supporters of the Cynic image, an image within the Jewish religion would be much easier to accept. The texts at our disposal are all written within the context of Jewish religion. This is attested by the use of Jewish texts in quotations, the rôle of the Jewish religious leaders, the discussions conducted in terms of Jewish religious thought, and the use of Jewish historical figures. The fact that the Gospels portray Jesus in a Jewish environment, could not be argued away. The work of Downing presented us with striking Cynic parallels to a surprising large part of the Jesus material. What he did not do, was to provide us with the distinctly Jewish context of the Jesus material. Seen against the background of the Jewish context of the texts, it makes sense to try to understand Jesus from the perspective of Jewish religion.

5.6.2 Religion as preserver of Jewish culture

Despite the influences of Hellenism, which I do not wish to deny, we have proof that the Jewish religion played a fundamental rôle wherever one found Jews. We have fleetingly touched upon the *Diaspora* above (5.5). The rôle of Jewish religion as preserver of a culture is clearly illustrated by this phenomenon. Since the exile in Babylon there had been Jews who lived outside Palestine. After the return of the exiles in

the time of Ezra a sizeable community remained under Persian rule. They were known as the people of the captivity (*Golah).* Despite the distance from Palestine they remained a strong Jewish community for nearly one thousand years (Roth 1970:20-23). In the *Diaspora*, the scattering of Jews mainly into Europe, the phenomenon of Jewish nationality and religion were kept intact, despite the long distance from Jerusalem. The Jewish religion was acknowledged by most of the governments under which the Jews found themselves (Roth 1970:136-139).

Despite the vast distances between Palestine and the Jews of the *Golah* and the *Diaspora*, they remained Jewish in religion and thought. Thus the influence of Hellenism in Galilee could not have been to such an extent that the Jews in that region would interpret a religious figure in terms of a Hellenistic image.

Given the function of Jewish religion amongst the Jewish people, it is imperative that the meaning of kingdom should be investigated within the framework of Jewish religion.

5.6.3 The image of Jesus in Jewish religion

Chapter four gave us an image of Jesus within Jewish religion. That image made Jesus part of Charismatic Judaism in the line of Elijah, Elisha, Honi and Hanina. These figures were a distinct part of Jewish religion. Jews could immediately place such figures within their religious framework, whether they agreed with them or not.

Our discussion of eschatology emphasised the fact that when people asked whether somebody was a prophet, they did not have eschatological

expectations in the first place. They more likely wanted to place this person within charismatic, or "orthodox" Judaism. If the observer of the charismatic had been eschatologically inclined, he would have interpreted the figure along eschatological lines. In this way the charismatic could have been interpreted in many ways.

Critique was levelled against this type of argument. The critique boils down to the assumption that this argument entails that Jesus was unclear in what he was saying and doing. He actually blundered along and was vested with authority by his followers. Against this critique one may name numerous instances where the acts and words of people are understood in different ways. This does not mean that the person did not know what he was saying or doing, or that he had no plan or vision. On the contrary, it underscores the fact that the person made such an impact that his words and deeds were interpreted and thus formed the basis for different traditions.

We are heirs to the different interpretations of the Kingdom of God. We have the figure of Jewish charismatic, and the notion of the kingship of God in Jewish religion, to endeavour to clarify the different views of the Kingdom.

6 KINGDOM, JESUS AND JEWISH RELIGION

The most urgent question that has to be pursued now, is whether some of the authentic Kingdom sayings could be understood from Jewish religion and the figure of the Jewish charismatic.

The context of these sayings will still pose problems. We do have the context that they are in at the moment. What we will need to do, is to move from these familiar contexts to the context of Jewish religion.

I have chosen three complexes that are most probably authentic Jesus material (Crossan1991 and Funk 1993). They are "Kingdom and children", "mustard seed" and "blessed the poor". The investigation of these clusters will be concentrated on the probable meaning of these texts in Jewish religion.

6.1 Kingdom and children

In this complex Kingdom is attested by four independent sources. The sources are: *The Gospel of Thomas* 22:1-2 [1st stratum]; *Mark* 10:13-16 [2nd stratum]; *Matthew* 18:3 [3rd stratum]; *John* 3:1-5, 9-10 [3rd stratum] (Crossan 1991:436, 459). We also have *2 Clement* 12:1-6 that has an explanation of *The Gospel of Thomas* 22:4. The explanation of *2 Clement* 12 is of importance to us because it is an eschatological interpretation of a logion in *The Gospel of Thomas* 22 that is not eschatological.

> **Gospel of Thomas 22:1-4 Jesus saw some babies nursing. He said to his disciples,"These nursing babies are like those who enter the Kingdom" They said to him,"Then shall we enter the Kingdom as babies?"Jesus said to them, "When you make the two into one, when you make the inner like the outer and the outer like the inner, and the upper like the lower, when you make male and female into a single one, so that the male will not be male and the female will not be female, when you make eyes replacing an eye, a hand replacing a hand, a foot replacing a foot, and an image replacing an image, then you will enter the Kingdom."**(Transl Meyer1984:23-24)

Mark 10:13-15 and parr. **And they were bringing children to him, that he might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it he was indignant, and said to them,"Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."**

Matthew 18:1-3 **At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying,"Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them, and said,"Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven."**

John 3:3-7 **Now there was a man from the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him,"Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him."Jesus answered him,"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him,"How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered,"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you,'You must be born anew.'....**

From reading these texts it becomes clear how something Jesus said about Kingdom and children was interpreted in different ways.

6.1.1 Kingdom and children in the Gospel of Thomas

In the *Gospel of Thomas* the mood is not eschatological at all (GThom 18,51,112). The prologue describes the sayings as secret. The first saying in the gospel asserts that whoever finds the interpretation of the sayings recorded in the book, will not taste death. The finding of the

secret does not lie in the future but could presently be achieved. The logion in saying 22 is to be understood in the context of secret sayings that could keep one from tasting death if one understands and obeys it.

Kingdom and not tasting death are very closely related in the logia that immediately precede saying 22. Saying 19 and 20 are concerned with the Kingdom of heaven and disciples who would not taste death because they obey the sayings. Saying 21 describes the disciples as little children that are defenceless in this world. They therefore have to be on their guard because they will have trouble, and it will come suddenly. In saying 22 the motif of children is taken further and is combined with the Kingdom. Those who enter the Kingdom are compared with infants that are being nursed. One has to be just as naive and un-discerning as a suckling infant to enter the Kingdom.

The motif of being like children and seeing or entering the Kingdom is used twice more, in saying 37 and 46. We are able to witness how this motif is used and developed in the text. If the disciples become as children they will see Jesus, the "Child of the Living One" (GThom 37). Saying 46 contains the notorious saying about the greatness of John the Baptist. The saying declares that whoever becomes like a child will know the Kingdom and will become greater than John.

By combining the Kingdom with children, the *Gospel of Thomas* emphasises the way one has to behave to be part of the Kingdom here and now. It is possible to deduct that the Kingdom is not spatial but in this world for those who have the Wisdom to see it (GThom 112). Being a child is a way of life that makes it possible to perceive the secret Kingdom.

6.1.2 Kingdom and children in the Markan cluster

The Synoptic gospels correspond in their version of the logion. It starts off where the disciples rebuke people for bringing children to Jesus. He responds by declaring that the Kingdom belongs to people that are like children and then laying his hands on them.

The major part of the Kingdom debate revolved around the Kingdom in the synoptic gospels. We have seen that most scholars interpret the Kingdom in an eschatological sense. Although they assign varied meanings to eschatology, the broad consensus is eschatological. Mack (1988) demonstrated that *Mark* could be read as an apocalypse. Whether or not the synoptics interpreted the Kingdom eschatologically, we have ample proof that they were interpreted eschatologically themselves. We must conclude that the synoptic texts are open to various interpretations that depend on the approach of the reader.

Most commentators emphasise the humility of children. They see this logion as a call to the disciples to be humble. In being humble they will enter the Kingdom, whatever this Kingdom stands for. Fowl (1993:153-158) demonstrates that the humility of children is emphasised in *Matthew* 18:1-5. The Matthean interpretation was conveyed to *Mark* 10:13-15 and *Luke* 18:15-17. The Markan use of this saying is not very lucid in what receiving the Kingdom as a child could mean. In these circumstances the best interpretation seems to be that of humility.

If one examines the passage in *Luke* in its micro context as Fowler did, it is a possibility that the episodes of the rich ruler (Lk 18:18-25), the disciples as followers of Jesus that left everything (Lk 18:28-30), the blind man of Jericho (Lk 18:35-43) and Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-10), may

shed light on a possible interpretation of what receiving the Kingdom as a child, means in *Luke*. The ruler's question is directly concerned with receiving eternal life. Fowl takes the eternal life and Kingdom of God to denote the same concept in Luke. This is done almost intuitively by most commentators. As soon as one makes this choice, it is quite easy to see the ruler as one who did not enter the Kingdom as a child. The disciples are an example of leaving all else to follow Jesus, and could be seen as people entering the Kingdom as children. Likewise the blind man from Jericho was singlemindedly focused on Jesus. He thus became a further example of entering the Kingdom as a child. The biggest contrast to the ruler is Zacchaeus. He is also rich, but gave up his riches in a singleminded focus on Jesus.

Read in this way, receiving the Kingdom as a child means to be singlemindedly focused on Jesus. Nothing else matters more than this. One need not romanticise children to understand that this figure of speech could be interpreted in this way.

This exposition once again emphasises the ease in which different interpretations of the same saying could be made, even in the same cluster of texts.

6.1.3 Kingdom and children in Matthew 18:3

The term "Kingdom" occurs fifty five times in the Gospel of Matthew (Computer-Konkordanz). Given that Matthew was a Jewish-Christian gospel (Luz 1985:63-64), Jewish religious views on "Kingdom" could have played a large rôle in the gospel. We find that the "Kingdom of heaven" (Mt 4:17) is curiously juxtaposed with the

earthly Kingdoms of 4:8. This should indicate that there is dissimilarity between the earthly kingdoms and the Kingdom of heaven. The fact that Jesus uses the same words as John the Baptist, a Jewish charismatic, has to be taken seriously as well. Kingdom is furthermore used in conjunction with repentance which is anchored in the religion of Israel as the prophets of old indicated. The sermon on the mount could rightly be interpreted as the will of God that the law and the prophets proclaimed (Luz 1985:191). The sermon on the mount is furthermore closely related to the Kingdom of heaven which emphasises the Israelite view of the kingship of God that is manifest where he is obeyed. These first instances of "Kingdom" in Matthew sets the parameters for its understanding in the rest of the book.

The passage in Matthew 18:3 is clearly a repetition of the same motif of Kingdom and children. We have here a case of the same logion that is used in different situations. This phenomenon reminds us that we are busy with a construction by Matthew and not historiography.

The situation is introduced by the disciples. They are concerned about who might be the most important in the Kingdom of heaven. Jesus' answer calls to the humility that is needed to enter the Kingdom (Barth 1982:121-124). This call to humility is linked to the sermon on the mount and as such it forms an intimate unity with the preaching of the "Kingdom".

6.1.4 Kingdom and children in John 3:1-7

The term Kingdom is used only five times in *John* (Jn 3:3&5; 18:36[3x]). In *John* 3:3&5 we have the only instances of Kingdom of

God in the gospel. Brown (1975:130, 135-136) interprets this as possible influence of the tradition. We have to bear in mind that the mention of Kingdom in *John* 18:36 refers to Jesus' own Kingdom. In Johannine thought there is no difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Jesus (Jn 17:10). This is quite different from the Synoptics where Jesus speaks about the Kingdom of God and not about his own kingdom.

When Jesus answers Pilate in *John* 18:36, it sheds light on the Johannine understanding of Kingdom. The Kingdom in John is in the first place not the same as a worldly Kingdom. The people that belong to this Kingdom do not act as people of this world, therefore they do not fight when Jesus is arrested.

The people of this Kingdom became children of God. They are born from above, or anew, into the Kingdom of God. Just as children are born into this world from earthly parents, they are born into God's Kingdom with God as their father through the Holy Spirit.

One may be tempted to read these passages as eschatology. If we keep in mind typical Johannine play with opposites like light and darkness, we find the same tendency in John three. There is an interplay of opposites like, above and below, human and spirit, earthly and heavenly and once more light and darkness. We may ask whether *John* did not intend to speak about the Kingdom as something that can be seen and known only by the initiated, those born from above. This is clearly far removed from an eschatological intent. Such an interpretation brings us close to the Gnostic debate. I am not interested in entering this debate, thus one remark would do. The total Gnostic argument is being

questioned on different grounds and I would under these circumstances rather not depict *John* in Gnostic terms. It is clear though, that *John* makes much of the initiated and understanding.

The Johannine use of Kingdom is clearly further developed than that of the Synoptics. We saw that in the equality between Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Jesus. The fact that children are used as part of an extended argument that is based on opposites, makes it possible to deduct that children are used as example of the initiated, those who experience the Kingdom of Jesus.

6.1.5 Kingdom and children in Jewish religion

What children would have denoted in Jewish religion, is open to a wide spectrum of interpretation. Children are spoken of mostly in relation to their family. From the fifth statement of the decalogue we find the emphasis of filial responsibility towards parents (Bildstein 1976). Children are seen as token of God's blessing (Ps 128). They are regarded as the fulfilment of life (Navè Levinson 1982:68).

This traditional view of children is difficult to subscribe to Jesus. We have ample textual witness that he did not hold the traditional familial views (GThom 55:1-2, 101. QS 52. Mk 3:19-21, 31-35. QS 19.) We have to get to a Jewish interpretation of children that is nearer in context to the texts above, to be of any value to our investigation.

It is possible that *Matthew* 21:16 may lead us to a viable explanation. McNamara (1983:185-188) argues that we have a Midrash of *Psalm* 8:3(2) in *Matthew* 21:16. To interpret this passage as Midrash places us in the midst of Jewish religion.

I shall give a translation of the passages and then discuss its relevance to this investigation.

> **Matthew 21:14-16 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple,"Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant; and they said to him,"Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them,"Yes have you never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast brought perfect praise'?"** (αἶνον).
>
> Psalm 8: 1(2)b-2(3)**Thou whose glory above heavens is chanted by the mouths of babes and infants, thou hast founded a bulwark** (αἶνον [praise] in LXX) **because of thy foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.**

If one compares the texts it becomes clear that *Matthew* is nearer to the *LXX*, than the Hebrew of *Psalm* 8. This may at the onset seem to disqualify a Jewish understanding of this text. The fact that we know that there is a development that preceded the text as we have it in *Matthew*, makes it possible to postulate a situation nearer to the Jewish world of midrash (McNamara 1983:186). The signs of midrash are so strong in the text that the use of the *LXX* could be understood as an augmentation by either Matthew or a prior source, that used this midrash on *Psalm* 8.

Jewish reflection on "bulwark" and "babes and sucklings" were brought together in a midrash about babes and sucklings praising God. The texts used in this midrashic exposition was *Exodus* 15:2 where the Lord is praised as "bulwark". The key words occurred in *Psalm 8:2(3),*

68:26(27), 29:1; Job 3:16; and Joel 2:16. The Targum on *Psalm* 68:26 (27) renders the verse:

Praise the Lord embryos in the womb of their mothers, the seed of Israel.

The Hebrew uses the words; "...from Israel's fountain" where it is understood as embryos in the womb.

It was believed that children at the breast praised the Lord at the Red Sea (PalTg Ex 15:2). This view was particularly old and found in the *Wisdom of Solomon* that dates around 50 B.C.(McNamara 1983:187).

We see that in a midrashic way the children at the breast praising the Lord, evoked the deliverance from Egypt. This was the model for further deliverances that were recalled at each Passover. The praise that the children gave Jesus also took place at the Passover.

In this Jewish midrash we see that children at the breast were able to see the deliverance of God. The fact that children are able to see the strength of God, emphasises the power of God. In this sense children, in their insignificance and powerlessness, depict those that focus on the rule of God.

6.1.6 Assessment

In line with Jewish religion it is clear that Kingdom and children were closely connected. The midrash of *Psalm* 8, is not an eschatological interpretation. In the discussion of Kingdom in Jewish religion above, it became apparent that Kingdom alone would not have evoked eschatological thoughts, but rather thoughts about the power and reign of God.

If we acknowledge the historical probability that Jesus almost certainly said something about Kingdom and children, it is not that improbable that it was said in a Jewish religious context.

The saying about Kingdom and children could have arisen in the context of how to enter the Kingdom, as we have it in the *Gospel of Thomas* and *John*. It could also have been said in the context of the question of who or what is important in the Kingdom as in the Synoptic gospels. Both these situations, at different times could have justified the metaphor with the different nuances of each situation. It is even possible that the saying or sayings about Kingdom and children could have originated in an entirely different situation and placed in an entirely new context.

A saying about Kingdom and children on the lips of a Jewish charismatic would have made perfect sense. The charismatic was never vested with much acknowledgement in formal religion - not in his own lifetime. Being the least respected within religious circles, the metaphor of children would have been very evocative. We have seen that the charismatic claimed an unmediated link with God. In this sense the religious concept of Kingdom and children would have fitted the charismatic image very well.

6.2 Mustard seed

In this complex Kingdom is attested by three independent sources. The sources are: *Gospel of Thomas* 20:1-2 [1 st stratum], *Q*1 46 [1st stratum] (Mack 1993:97), *Mark* 4:30 [2nd stratum] (Crossan 1991:437, 457).

Gospel of Thomas 20 **The disciples said to Jesus,"Tell us what the Kingdom of heaven is like. "He said to them,"It is like a mustard seed, the tiniest of all seeds. But when it falls on prepared soil, it grows into a large plant and shelters the birds of the sky."** (Transl Meyer 1984:23).

Q1 46 **He said,"What is the Kingdom of God like? To what should I compare it? It is like a grain of mustard which a man took and sowed in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches."** (Mack 1993:97).

Mark 4:30-32 **And he said,"With what can we compare the Kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."** (Crossan 1986:5).

In comparison we find that the versions of *The Gospel of Thomas* and of *Mark* are closely related. Both of them emphasise the smallness of the mustard seed and the largeness of the plant that comes from it. This makes it possible to interpret the parable as a parable of growth pertaining to the small beginnings and the glorious end of the Kingdom. The mustard parable in Mark could also be seen as a midrash of *Ezekiel* 31 and *Daniel* 4 (Miller & Miller 1990:148-149). In *Ezekiel* Pharaoh is likened to cedar of Lebanon that "**towered high above the trees of the forest**" and "**all the birds of the air made their nests in their boughs**" (Ezk 31:3-6). In *Daniel* 4 king Nebuchadnezzar relates a dream in which a tree grew to such height that "**it was visible to the ends of the earth**" and "**the birds of the air dwelt in its branches**". The midrashic sources on the great monarchs compares the Kingdom of God with the rule of

earthly kings. The Kingdom is understood to be greater than the rule of these kings.

The *Q* version of the parable places emphasis on the fact that someone planted the mustard in his garden. In the other versions it fell there by accident. The exposition of this parable by Crossan fits the *Q* version (Crossan 1991: 276-279). Crossan interprets this parable from the vantage point that mustard was a weed that could take over a cultivated garden. The weed furthermore attracted birds to the garden that was very undesirable indeed. There could also be halachic significance to the mustard seed according to the mishnaic tractate *Kilaim* that deals with the commandments from the Pentateuch which prohibit the planting together of diverse kinds (Young 1989:207). It would thus be possible to interpret the *Q* version to mean that the Kingdom was a kingdom of undesirables.

6.2.1 Assessment

The parable of the mustard seed conforms with Jewish thought in the time of Jesus. We need not import the idea of the mustard seed from outside the Jewish religion. As we have seen above there was discussion on the mustard seed and it was the subject of midrash. The undesirability and great impact of the mustard seed, despite its insignificance, could easily be identified with the Kingdom that a charismatic Jew would preach. The charismatic was a reactionary type, that did not fit in with the established cult. As we have seen above, such a person evoked resentment that branded him as an undesirable. The parable need not be

taken out of its Jewish background or be reinterpreted in apocalyptic terms to make sense.

6.3 Blessed the poor

This complex is attested by three independent sources. The sources are: *The Gospel of Thomas* 54 (1 st stratum), *1Q* 54 (1 st stratum), *James* 2:5 (3 rd stratum).

> **1Q How fortunate are the poor; they have God's Kingdom**
>
> (Mack:1993:73).
>
> **Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.**
>
> **Luke 6:20b. Blessed are you poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God.**
>
> **Gospel of Thomas 54 Blessed are the poor: yours is the Kingdom of heaven.**
>
> **James 2:5 Listen, my beloved brethren. Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom which he has promised to those who love him?**

6.3.1 The poor in the Q parallels

The text of Matthew 5:3 is the most deviative of the parallels of Q. It replaces "Kingdom of God" with "Kingdom of heaven" which does not alter the meaning of the text but emphasises its Jewish sentiment. A more serious deviation is the addition of *τῷ πνεύματι*. At first glance this addition may seem like a softening of the meaning of this beatitude. Both Luz (1985:206) and Luscomb (1987:38) interpret it as an emphasis of Jewish thought. The poor in spirit is to be seen as reference to the

Hebrew word עני. In the LXX עני is translated with πτωχός thirty-eight times (Luscomb 1987:37).

The term "τῷ πνεύματι" describes the meaning of οἱ πτωχοί as not merely the destitute but gives it the meaning of an attitude of humility before God that is expressed by עני. The Matthean use thus evokes parallels in Jewish religious thought (Is 61:1; 66:2; Ps 51:19).

We may conclude from this that Matthew exploited the Jewish background of οἱ πτωχοὶ by adding τῷ πνεύματι in his interpretation of this beatitude. Its significance for our study lies in the fact that it was not an alien thought in Jewish religion.

The Lukan version is nearer to that of *Q* in all respects, but the Matthean interpretation clarifies the way in which a Jew would most probably have understood the saying in the context of his religious background.

The Jewish attitude towards wealth and the poor were shown by Schmidt (1987:164)) to be not so much dependent on socio-economic values, as on a fundamental religious- ethical tenet. The role of this tenet superseded all the other factors in the life of a religious Jew.

The importance of this observation for our study lies in the fact that the Cynic view was more concerned with socio-economic values than Jewish religion. The impact of Jewish religion was very great on the Jew. His attitude was governed more by his religion than his socio economic circumstances. Schmidt demonstrated this with the example of Philo. Although Philo was a wealthy member of the upper class, he produced thirty eight passages that devaluate wealth (Schmidt 1987:76).

The reason for this is the rôle of the Jewish religion in forming the ethics of Philo.

Although this saying of Jesus could be interpreted in a Cynic way, a Jew would most likely have interpreted it in his religious context.

We have observed that the Lukan version of the saying is near to the form of *Q*. A deviation from *Q* is to be found in the addition of the woes. In Luke the disciples are addressed directly by the beatitude. The beatitudes in Luke are not mere ontological statements, but are for those who conduct themselves in the way prescribed by the beatitudes. This explains the woes as directed to those who do not follow the conduct prescribed in the beatitudes (Schmidt 1987:141). Here the hostility to wealth is also governed by religious motives.

6.3.2 The poor in the gospel of Thomas 54

In the gospel of Thomas the poor are addressed in the second person. They are spoken to in their present situation and assured that they have the Kingdom of heaven at present. Here we find that the first stratum witness is still devoid of any futuristic view on the Kingdom of heaven.

The eschatological interpretation of this saying seems to be of later origin. We have come to see on various previous instances that the eschatological interpretation of a particular saying seems to be later. This observation is supported by Schmidt (1987) and Mack (1993) amongst others.

6.3.3 The poor in James 2:5

James is the latest independent attestation in this complex. Vorster (1986:146) demonstrated that there are points of similarity between *James, Luke* 6 and *1 Enoch* 97:8-10. This leads us to interpret *James* in apocalyptic terms, where future judgement and resurrection play a significant rôle. The ethical questions concerning the poor are resolved against the background of the apocalyptic universe of the recipients and writer of the text (Vorster 1986:146).

In this sense Kingdom is to be taken as the coming Kingdom that would come about at the end. The poor are seen as the materially poor, but are qualified in terms of those (poor) who love God (Vorster 1986:146). The change of their fate is to be understood in terms of the coming Kingdom of God. The coming Kingdom decides the ethical question of the position of the poor that love God.

6.3.4 Assessment

The texts on the poor and the Kingdom in Q and the gospel of Thomas are not eschatological and may be interpreted in a Cynic way. The understanding of the poor in Jewish religion gives us an opportunity to understand these texts without postulating an environment that is problematic to reconcile with the Jewish background of Jesus. Jewish religion has a long tradition of hostility to wealth as an ethical tenet. If we concede the Jewishness of Jesus, it is evident that the Jewish religion should give us the first evidence to understand his words. The fact that the charismatic in Jewish religion was mostly pictured as one of the poor makes the possibility of a charismatic origin plausible.

7 JEWISH RELIGION AS POINT OF DIVERGENCE

The three complexes on the Kingdom that we have assessed subscribe to the Jewish religion as a very possible point of divergence for the different views on Jesus.

The Kingdom sayings that we have studied above, are not in their original context. We have to take them as interpretations of previous sayings that were not necessarily in the same context. The environment of Jewish religion provides us with a plausible original context. This was indicated by the fact that in all the above instances the Kingdom and its point of comparison were not alien to Jewish religion. We could also indicate that interpretation has taken place, so that we do not have the original Jewish meaning. Taken in conjunction with the Jewish environment of the life of Jesus, the plausibility of a Jewish religious background is bolstered.

In all the instances above it was possible to determine that an eschatological interpretation of these Kingdom sayings was a later development. This was demonstrated by the witnesses in the earliest strata that were not eschatological. This observation coincides with those of many Historical Jesus researchers of our day.

It is possible to postulate a hypothesis that takes the socio-economic situation of a time after Jesus into account and explain the rise of the eschatological view. This was done by Mack in his book *A myth of innocence* (1988).

In view of the present research it is more difficult to account for the view that Jesus was a Cynic sage. The evidence in the texts of the earliest strata could easily be interpreted along Cynic lines. As Downing

(1988) has pointed out, there are many Cynic parallels to a lot of Jesus material.

The largest argument against the Cynic image of Jesus is the fact that he is constantly portrayed as a Jew in a Jewish environment. We have seen above that the rôle of Jewish religion was always a significant factor in Jewish society. The religious acts of a Jew in Jewish society would rather have been understood in the context of Jewish religion, than Hellenistic culture. This strengthens the argument for a Jewish religious point of divergence.

The Cynic parallels also leave a gap where the miracles of Jesus are concerned. The miracles are part of the total image of Jesus and could not be wiped under the carpet. A Cynic reinterpretation of Jesus could skip the instances of Jesus' miracles, but if the Cynic image were the original, it would be most difficult to account for the addition of the miracle stories. On the other hand Charismatic Judaism provides us with a perfect environment for accounts of miracles.

It would also be more feasible to postulate a situation where the words and acts of Jesus in a Jewish environment were reinterpreted in a Cynic way by Hellenists. The movement from a Jewish environment towards a Hellenistic environment explains the stratification and environment of the texts more easily than the other way around.

8 FROM JEWISH RELIGION TO ALL THE IMAGES OF JESUS

In this reconstruction I wish to portray a possible scenario for the formation of the images of Jesus.

We start off with a charismatic Jewish Jesus. As we have seen above, he spoke about the Kingdom of God in an existential manner in the terms of Jewish religion.

Jesus spoke to the people about the Kingdom. For him it entailed the reign of God. He was perceived by the people as a charismatic. This was a definite type of person within the Jewish world, but all cultures had their own charismatics. We find them as far afield as India and ancient Europe (Van den Heever 1993:419). Other people also came in touch with Jesus' message. The Hellenists also perceived Jesus as a charismatic. In their perception the charismatic was a radical Cynic and not a Jewish Hasid. As an example we could look into the instances of Jesus as one that frequently partook in banquets, which could easily be taken as indication of the Cynic way of life. It is equally true that the Jewish sage was also pictured at the table in discussion about the law (Smith & Taussig 1990:47). Thus the Cynic correlation started amongst Hellenistic interpreters of Jesus. As soon as he was understood in this sense the interpretation of Kingdom of God became Cynic as well. Archaeological evidence seems to confirm the deduction that ethnic diversity in Christian circles existed since an early stage.

The graffiti found at archaeological sites reveals that different groups held diverse religious views. It is evident that the graffiti bore similar distinctive traits according to the language in which it was written (Strange 1983:18).

By taking this into account, we are able to postulate a similar situation regarding Jesus. The Hellenists translated his person into

Hellenistic terms that coincided with the Hellenistic charismatic, the Cynic sage.

In the eclectic environment which Jesus found himself there could most probably have been people that had strong affinity to apocalypticism. This point was strongly argued by Allison (1994:652-658). That Jesus even may have had followers who thought apocalyptically does not prove though, that he was an apocalyptic prophet. We have seen that sayings and acts of Jesus could have been interpreted in an apocalyptic way.

9 CONCLUSION

Where do all the previous arguments bring us? Firstly, to the realisation that diversity in Historical Jesus research cannot be wished away. It is a given fact that has to be explained. As soon as one accepts the diversity it can become a tool for discovering more about the Historical Jesus.

In the second place we have to remember that the Historical Jesus will always be a construction. Therefore the search for the Historical Jesus may never become an end in itself. It is always an endeavour undertaken to broaden our understanding of Jesus and those who followed him, and wrote about him.

The charismatic image has to be tested against the total reflection of Jesus in the sources. It is imperative that any construction should be checked continuously to ensure that there is not a better image to clarify our questions. The first test for the charismatic Jesus would be its clarifying abilities. Could it help to clarify how the differences in our

sources came about? Could our understanding of the development of the primitive church be elucidated by using the charismatic Jesus as point of departure?

Our acceptance of the diverse interpretations of Jesus may also provide a hermeneutical tool for understanding our own diversity. Whether the charismatic Jesus passes the test or not, is not as important as that we acknowledge the primitive diversity in the interpretation of Jesus of Nazareth.

APPENDIX: CRITIQUE ON CROSSAN'S METHOD

1 INTRODUCTION

No method is beyond critique. This is also true of the method applied by Crossan that is used in this thesis to determine the authenticity of Jesus material. His basis of authentication relies on the two criteria of stratification and multiple attestation. The method further involves, what he calls, material investment. This includes the use of the two source hypothesis and an early date for *The gospel of Thomas*.

2 CROSSAN'S USE OF THE JESUS MATERIAL

The stratification of the material, that is one of the main parts of Crossan's method, could be debated. He sees much material as early and independent, that other scholars would see as late and dependent (Scott 1994:26). Crossan's use of the *Gospel of Thomas*, the stages of development in *Q*, the Cross Gospel and secret Mark could all be debated and this leads to the fact that the case for Crossan's stratigraphy remains controversial (Scott 1994:26).

2.1 Critique on the two source hypothesis

The two source hypothesis that forms the base of Crossan's methodology, is not accepted by everyone, here the work of W.R. Farmer (1964) comes to mind. Farmer (1964:200) argued that Mark was not written first. He gave five reasons for the inadequacy of the hypothesis of Marcan priority.

The first is its failure to account for Mark's selection of items in relation to Matthew and Luke. The most simple way to account for Mark's choice of material is to place him after Matthew and Luke.

Griesbach found this the only way, because Mark could then have used the other gospels to choose the material most suited for his audience (Farmer 1982:3).

Secondly the theory of Mark's priority cannot explain the pattern of order and selection of Mark against that of Matthew and Luke. It is more likely that the second evangelist used the first, and that the third evangelist used, both the first and the second. If this is accepted the order and selection of material in Mark shows that it was written last (Farmer 1982:4).

The third problem is that the relationship between Matthew and Luke indicates that they are not independent as the priority of Mark would necessitate. The agreements between Matthew and Luke against their deviation from Mark, cannot be explained if they were both relying on Mark (Farmer 1964:202-212).

The external evidence, in the fourth place, indicates Matthean priority. Two Peter's citation of the transfiguration has a closer affinity to Matthew than to Mark. Ignatius knew the text of Matthew. Mark is used by Justin Martyr only during the Middle of the second century. The church fathers give Matthew priority as well. Clement of Alexandria is the first to mention that Matthew was written first, Luke second and Mark third (Farmer 1982:6).

Farmer (1982:6-11) asserts that the historical development of the church indicates a growth from the Jewish centre to the gentile. Matthew is the most Jewish of all the gospels and Mark the least. This would fit in with Matthean priority.

Recent work by Goulder (1993) also deviates from the two source hypothesis. He argues that *Luke* knew both *Mark* and *Matthew* and used them by going from the one to the other, without any embarrassment when he saw fit (Goulder 1993: 151-152). The hypothesis of Goulder needs no lost documents like *Q*. His interpretation of Josephus' use of *Samuel/Kings* and *Chronicles* supports the possibility of *Luke* using *Mark* and *Matthew* in the same way.

The elasticity of the two source hypothesis emphasises its problematic nature (Goulder 1985:2). Throughout its history the two source hypothesis was modified to answer all exceptions that may lead to its refutation. In this way it lost the most important task of a hypothesis, its clarity and particularity. Without this the two source hypothesis is losing its purpose.

An example of how the two source hypothesis is becoming too elastic is found in the way that *Q* is bolstered against falsification.

Q is the most liable for falsification of all the lost documents that have to keep the two source hypothesis in place (Goulder 1985:4). *Q* is used as a means to clarify the common material in Matthew and Luke, since the hypothesis holds that they were not aware of each other. *Q* is also thought to have no passion narrative. There is a minor agreement in the Passion narratives of Matthew (26:67f) and Luke (22:63f) against Mark (14:65). There are a number of other equally damaging agreements in the passion narrative (Goulder 1985:5). This one instance should be enough to topple *Q* and most of the two source hypothesis. What happened though, is that the leading scholars that support the two source hypothesis, argue that all instances of this type of agreement are

interpolations from *Matthew* into *Luke*. There are numerous other scholars that propose an "Ur-Markus" that had this wording. There could have been parallel lost written accounts or intermediary gospels. One could even concede that Luke knew Matthew, and that they both knew Q as well (Goulder 1985:6). We can see that with this type of argument, it becomes impossible to falsify *Q*. Because it cannot be falsified the hypothesis becomes so elastic that it is useless.

The numerous works on *Q* leads one to believe that the hypothesis is becoming an end in itself. We now have scholars that even do literary criticism on *Q* (Mack 1993). One has to ask whether it is possible. To construct *Q*, we have only the loose fragments it supposedly consisted of. To do literary criticism one has to have the sequence in which these fragments were written in the original *Q*. Because we only have a number of fragments, it is impossible to ascertain the sequence of events. We have to be wary of the ease in which we come to conclusions that are built on hypotheses made of hypotheses.

2.2 Crossan and the two source hypothesis

Despite the critique on the two source hypothesis it is a very significant tool in New Testament studies. Crossan uses the research of other scholars, like Kloppenborg and Patterson in the stratification of the Jesus material. This indicates that his work does not operate in a scholarly vacuum. The number of publications on *Q* indicates that the two source hypothesis has large support amongst scholars. The opponents of the two source hypothesis are also troubled by its overwhelming following amongst scholars.

The slight suspicion I have about the two source hypothesis is actually fostered by its ability to answer all the questions. Despite my own wariness of the two source hypothesis, I would have to concede that it has a big influence on theology. In reading New Testament literature, I became aware of how many new hypotheses were built on the two source hypothesis. The question remains whether research that accepted this hypothesis could survive the advent of a better theory. This means that an argument is preferable when it is not completely dependent on the two source hypothesis for its validity. Crossan (1994:147) himself sees the two source hypothesis, and his assumptions on *Q* and *the Gospel of Thomas* as material investments on which there may possibly never be agreement. He would rather have agreement on the formal procedures.

3 THE FORMAL PROCEDURES OF CROSSAN

Crossan (1994:147) argued that the validity of his method should be accepted on the grounds of his formal procedures. The criteria for authentication that Crossan employs, are inventory, multiple attestation and stratification. Because I use Crossan's method for authentication, I concentrate on this part of his method. These criteria date from a positivistic phase in the research endeavour. We have to assert whether these positivistic criteria could render post modern answers. At a glance we could say that it is highly unlikely.

Crossan (1994:160) does not see himself as a positivist, he acknowledged that there will always be divergent Jesuses (1994:159). One of the triads in his method, namely the triad of social anthropology,

Greco-Roman history and literature elevates his method's results to a post modern level.

The method of Crossan places a lot of material at one's disposal. His inventory, stratification and attestation are useful in helping one to come to conclusions of one's own. In principle sequence of strata, hierarchy of attestation and the bracketing of singularity are sound procedures.

One has to be cautious of the fact that all these procedures also need interpretative input which will most certainly differ from one scholar to another.

3.1 Another way to analyze pre-gospel traditions

There are other methods to bring us nearer to the original words and deeds of Jesus. Robbins (1993:113) uses a socio-rhetorical method that explores the social and cultural argumentation in a text. He then does source analysis with a system of evaluation that is developed with the help of insights into the rhetorical treatises of the same time as the text that is studied. This method shows up the differences between a post modern method such as the socio-rhetorical and the method of Crossan that is best described as literary-historical in its last phases of authentication of the texts. A truly post modern approach could do without authentication of particular texts (Theissen 1978:3).

The socio-rhetorical method is synchronic and helps one to concentrate on the final text that one has. It becomes possible to evaluate the material at hand without making a diachronic comparison with other material. It is thus an inner textual activity (Robbins 1993:115).

4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion I will have to defend my choice to use Crossan's method. After emphasising the problems with the two source hypothesis above, one has to conclude that the problem is unsolved as yet. We have arguments and counter arguments but the evidence is inconclusive. It is thus impossible to make a choice on a historically sound basis. This relativises this study, but that is not overly negative. It actually makes one aware of the complexity of history and historical thinking. This awareness must help the researcher to avoid circular arguments and the building of hypotheses on dubious data.

The work of Sanders was written in a positivistic milieu. When working with material like this it is best to meet the material on its own terms. For this particular material the method of Crossan is invaluable. It enables one to meet Sanders on his own terms. By virtue of Crossan's socio-historical triad, it is possible to bridge the gap from Sanders to a new line of thought.

The method of both Downing and Mack is dependent on the two source hypothesis. Crossan's method thus makes it possible to assess them on their own terms as well.

In the last instance the method of Crossan need not be utilised that much in the assessment of Vermes. The reason for this is to be found once more in the procedure followed by Vermes, that does not depend that much on the authentication of Jesus material.

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NOTE: All references made to the classics and Josephus are taken from the Loeb classical library if not indicated otherwise.