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MY BLOOD OF THE COVENANT: REVERBERATION OF
THE NEW COVENANT IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

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MY BLOOD OF THE COVENANT: REVERBERATION OF
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For the glory of God

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PREFACE

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In Matthew 26:28, Jesus refers to his blood as “my blood of the covenant.”¹ How important is the word “διαθήκη” for Matthew’s theology? From a purely statistical standpoint, διαθήκη occurs thirty-three times in all of the NT.² It occurs only three times in all four canonical Gospels.³ Its rare appearance seems to justify modern NT theologies for whom, apart from the occasional nod of recognition, covenant plays a peripheral role.⁴

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Bible quotations come from the English Standard Version.

² McKenzie lists occurrences of the word *diathēkē* in the NT with the following three distributions: (1) the Gospels and Acts (Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 1:72; 22:20; Acts 3:25; 7:8); (2) the letters of Paul (Rom 9:4; 11:27; 1 Cor 11:25; 2 Cor 3:6, 14; Gal 3:15, 17; 4:24; Eph 2:12); and (3) the letter to the Hebrews (Heb 7:22; 8:6, 8, 9 [twice], 10; 9:4 [twice], 15 [twice], 16, 17, 20; 10:16, 29; 12:24; 13:20). Steven L. McKenzie, *Covenant, Understanding Biblical Themes* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000), 83-84.

³ The synoptics mention the word “covenant” only once in each Gospel.

⁴ A scholar who explored a covenantal outlook for Matthew’s Gospel was the German scholar Hubert Frankemölle. Jack Kingsbury summarizes Frankemölle’s thesis:

According to Frankemölle, Matthew and his community are Gentile Christian in orientation and universal in outlook. Nevertheless, in the situation that calls forth the first Gospel there is a question, owing to Israel’s rejection of Jesus as the Messiah and the resultant destruction of Jerusalem, as to God’s faithfulness to his people in history and the validity of his OT promises. To meet this situation, Matthew does “covenant theology” (Bundestheologie), that is to say, he develops a theology of God’s activity in history after the fashion of the Deuteronomist and Chronicler. With the latter as his models, Matthew is concerned to show his church that throughout the OT and in the person of Jesus there has been continuity to God’s activity in history. What has happened is not that God has been unfaithful to Israel but that Israel has been unfaithful to God. As a result, Israel has ceased to be God’s chosen people, and the church has taken its place. In short, God has come to be with his own in the person of Jesus and to renew his covenant, but he has made neither Israel nor a remnant of Israel his partner but the church. The church, then, is henceforth called to respond to God by doing his will as set forth by Jesus.” (Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* [Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1991], 37)

In the end, while Kingsbury “heartily agree that central to Matthew’s concept of history is the schema of prophecy and fulfillment,” nevertheless he

demur[s] when Frankemölle goes on to characterize Matthew’s theology as “covenant theology” and . . . were Matthew doing “covenant theology” in the strict sense in which Frankemölle seems to be using the term, surely it would be incumbent upon him to depict the church as the ‘new Israel’ or

Michael Gorman observes the same issue in Christian theology: “Jesus’ death is the means by which the people of God are liberated, forgiven, and brought into a new covenant with God. My main point now, however, is that despite its apparent significance to Jesus and the evangelists, (new) covenant is not very significant to the Christian demur theological tradition on the atonement.”⁵ Similarly, Porter observes, “The concept of covenant seems not to have figured as large . . . as one might have expected.”⁶ Referring to the index of subjects in some studies in Matthew may illustrate Porter’s and Gorman’s points.

Kenneth Grayston contends that when it comes to the passion narrative, particularly the phrase “for the forgiveness of sins,” Matthew “is a collector and arranger of material.”⁷ Matthew’s special interest is in the teaching of Christ.⁸ These words were recorded in Matthew’s Gospel because “his liturgical tradition presents” him.⁹ Therefore, for a scholar like Grayston, the word διαθήκη appears in Matthew with no special theological significance. Painter also states that it would be a categorical confusion “to

the ‘true Israel,’ terms he does not use. Matthew’s central concern is decidedly more christological in nature than Frankemölle is willing to concede. (Kingsbury, *Matthew*, 39)

While undoubtedly Frankemölle’s line of argument has not been convincing to several scholars, Kingsbury’s insistence that “Matthew’s central concern” to be “thoroughly christological in tenor,” may not preclude the Gospel also to exhibit strong covenantal framework in which covenant and Christology exist in symbiotic relationship. The present thesis is a minor attempt at showing that relationship. Kingsbury, *Matthew*, 36-40.

⁵ Michael J. Gorman, *The Death of the Messiah and the Birth of the New Covenant: A (Not So) New Model of the Atonement* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 15. Robert Saucy also laments, “While it might seem counterintuitive for biblical theology concerned with the NT corpus, *the new covenant per se finds little heuristic value for modern practitioners of NT theology.*” He illustrates his point by surveying modern NT theologies, such as by Marshall, Ladd, Morris, Goppelt, Guthrie, Schreiner, and Thielman, and how “covenant” is either mentioned in passing or entirely neglected. Mark R. Saucy, “Canon as Tradition: The New Covenant and the Hermeneutical Question,” *Themelios* 36, no. 2 (January 2015): 218.

⁶ Stanley E. Porter, “The Concept of the Covenant in Paul,” in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Jacqueline C. R. de Roo (Boston: E. J. Brill, 2003), 269.

⁷ Kenneth Grayston, *Dying, We Live: A New Enquiry into the Death of Christ in the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 353. Grayston asserts, “Matthew is a collector and arranger of material. When his liturgical tradition presents him with the statement that Christ’s blood is poured out for the forgiveness of sins, he records it even if it does not match his previous teaching.” Grayston, *Dying, We Live*, 353.

⁸ Grayston, *Dying, We Live*, 354.

⁹ Grayston, *Dying, We Live*, 353.

read covenant into any discussion of relationship with God.”¹⁰ He maintains, “Had it been the point . . . it could easily have been done.”¹¹ A similar line of argument is also echoed by Scot McKnight from the historical Jesus research front.¹² He contends, “Covenant and kingdom are alternative hermeneutical categories. . . . Inasmuch as Jesus chose kingdom, covenant appears to be left to the side for others to use.”¹³ These claims, in part, are generated by the lack of covenant terminology in the NT.¹⁴

First, Porter argues that the paucity of covenant terminology should not be

¹⁰ John Painter, *1, 2, and 3 John*, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 2008), 101. Painter is objecting to Malatesta’s work on the concept of Interiority in John’s Epistles. See E. Malatesta, *Interiority and Covenant: A Study of and in the First Letter of Saint John* (N.p.: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 1978). This thesis agrees with Painter that covenant is not an umbrella category for any type of relationship. It is more defined than that. The present thesis adapts Hugenberger’s definition that covenant is “an elected, as opposed to natural, relationship of obligation established under divine sanction.” Gordon Paul Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant: A Study of Biblical Law & Ethics Governing Marriage, Developed from the Perspective of Malachi* (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1994), 215. The present thesis disagrees with Painter, however, in his assertion that “had it been the point of 1 John to deal with relationship with God in terms of covenant it could easily have been done.” Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 269. This thesis argues that the concept of the new covenant is the hidden context frequently evoked implicitly even when the actual term is not used. It is not incumbent upon an author to use a specific term (albeit highly specialized such as the term covenant).

¹¹ Painter, *1, 2, and 3 John*, 101. Painter is in good company in his assessment that had covenant been significant for NT authors, they could easily have used it. Their infrequent reference, therefore, is indicative of covenant having lesser significance.

¹² Scot McKnight, *Jesus and His Death: Historiography, the Historical Jesus, and Atonement Theory* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 293-321. Similarly, see Sam K. Williams, *Jesus’ Death as Saving Event: The Background and Origin of a Concept*, Harvard Dissertations in Religion (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for Harvard Theological Review, 1975), 208-9.

¹³ McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 311. However, McKnight does not reject the validity of the concept of covenant for Gospel studies. He takes the concept of covenant to be “anachronistic” due to the early church’s pneumatic experience and hermeneutics. He writes, “We propose then that covenant and kingdom are alternative, hermeneutical categories—categories useful to Jews who are trying to get a handle on the diverse theological expressions of Jewish tradition as well as grasp Jewish history. Inasmuch as Jesus chose kingdom, covenant appears to be left to the side for others to use.” McKnight then concludes “I am not arguing that the terms are mutually exclusive, but that Jesus had at least two options and chose kingdom and not covenant.” See McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 311.

¹⁴ Saucy also observes, “Part of the reason for this lack of attention to the new covenant . . . [is] its relative rare appearance on the pages of the NT.” Saucy, “Canon as Tradition,” 218.

equated to the absence of its concept.¹⁵ The tendency to confine the idea of “covenant” to “a single lexical item in the language” (e.g., διαθήκη), and use that lexical frequency (or the lack thereof) as a litmus test for its theological relevancy, might unearth a deeper methodological issue— what linguists often refer as “word-concept” fallacy.¹⁶ As such, Porter explains that “there needs to be a serious rethinking to lexicographical method, to ensure that those words that fall within the semantic domain of covenant or theologically motivated relational language are examined and given their due place.”¹⁷ In the last analysis, Porter finds righteousness and covenant terminologies to have conceptual relations.¹⁸ For instance, Matthean themes¹⁹ such as righteousness, kingdom, and fatherhood can be shown to be covenantal concepts.²⁰

¹⁵ Porter laments, “Barr’s work in many ways becoming one of those artefacts that is often acknowledged yet widely misunderstood, with the result that much lexicography study of the Greek of the New Testament continue as before.” Porter, “The Concept of the Covenant in Paul,” 270-72.

¹⁶ Porter, “The Concept of the Covenant in Paul,” 285. An author may employ other words within the conceptual semantic domain to convey the concept of covenant. Porter writes, “One of the semantic shortcomings that Barr rightly noted, and that has been repeated in several significant works since then, is the tendency for New Testament lexicography, theology and conceptual study to be word-based, with the result that words and concepts are often equated.” Porter, “The Concept of the Covenant in Paul,” 285. Likewise, he also observes,

Some of these factors involve collocation (the patterns of usage of a lexical item and its immediately surrounding words), other lexical items used with related meanings (such as synonyms and antonyms, as well as other sense relations), syntactical patterns, literary types, and contextual parameters such as situation and culture. All of these considerations emphasize that lexicography is a far more complex discipline that has often been noted, and involves more than simply examining all of the occurrences of a given word. (Porter, “The Concept of the Covenant in Paul,” 273)

¹⁷ Porter, “The Concept of the Covenant in Paul,” 284.

¹⁸ Porter, “The Concept of the Covenant in Paul,” 285. See also Tan, who approaches covenant similar to Porter and takes that the New-Moses theme and the symbol of the twelve, constituting the new people of God, to be allusions to “new covenant realities.” K. H. Tan, “Community, Kingdom and Cross: Jesus’ View of Covenant,” in *The God of Covenant: Biblical, Theological and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Jamie A. Grant and Alistair I. Wilson (Leicester, UK: IVP, 2005). Petrus J. Gräbe also reaches the same conclusion as Porter, i.e., covenant and righteousness having semantic relations. Petrus J. Gräbe, *New Covenant, New Community: The Significance of Biblical and Patristic Covenant for Contemporary Understanding* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2006), 115-16.

¹⁹ This thesis does not explore Matthean themes due to the limited scope of the project and the modest nature of its claims.

²⁰ Another difficulty with Gospel and covenant research is since the introduction of E. P. Sanders’ seminal work and the subsequent rise of the New Perspective on Paul, often times the point of

Second, while Paul Williamson acknowledges that covenant terminology is infrequent, this fact alone should not be indicative of “covenant” having a lesser role in NT.²¹ He observes that the concept is primarily communicated by “covenantal realities”²²:

Ideally, therefore, an examination of the theological significance of covenant in the New Testament should not restrict itself to texts that explicitly employ the term. As in the Old Testament, the covenant concept is much wider than that. . . . It is thus clear that the concept of covenant is much more pervasive in both testament than the mere frequency of explicit covenant terminology might one to conclude.²³

Third, as Muller, Vanhoozer, and Kline note, covenantal-plotline structures the narrative of the Gospels.²⁴ The literary similarities between the Gospels and the book of

debate has centered on “covenant nomism.” One wonders whether nomism has completely eclipsed the concept of covenant. E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Boston: Fortress Press, 1977).

²¹ Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath: Covenant in God’s Unfolding Purpose*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007), 33. There is a general consensus among those who work in the field of covenant research that the concept of covenant plays a major role in the interpretation of NT documents. See John H. Walton, *Covenant* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994); William J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: An Old Testament Covenant Theology*, rev. ed. (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2013); Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*; Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012); Jeffrey Niehaus, *Biblical Theology: Special Grace Covenants (New Testament)*, vol. 3 (Wooster, OH: Weaver Book, 2017); Thomas R. Schreiner, *Covenant and God’s Purpose for the World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017).

²² Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 33. All God’s covenant promises anticipate this eschatological reality, and God’s covenant commitment to Noah, Abraham, Israel, the Levitical priesthood, and David typify or foreshadow it in one way or another. For Williamson, these “covenantal realities” are the very fulfillment of “covenantal promises” or “covenantal commitments” typified and “foreshadowed in the Old Testament.”

²³ Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 182. Dumbrell also makes an important observation about the use of the covenant in postexilic prophets, particularly how Daniel incorporates the language of kingdom into covenant:

In the post-exilic period there is no advance upon the theology of the new covenant developed by the major exilic prophets. Yet the literature of the post-exilic period reveals a measure of reaction to their teaching, and certainly in some instances, an attempt to implement it. While therefore what follows is to some degree unrelated to the main theme of this book, it may be helpful to indicate summarily post-exilic developments within the community of faith, as a preparation for the New Testament era in which the theology of the new covenant is so heavily appealed to. (Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 219)

²⁴ Mogens Müller has repeatedly called attention to how the new covenant structures the narrative of Matthew’s Gospel in particular and the NT in general. See for example Mogens Müller, “The Gospel of St Matthew and the Mosaic Law: A Chapter of a Biblical Theology,” *Studia Theologica* 46, no. 2

Exodus (“with its covenantal orientation”) function to cast the gospel genre as one that has “the inauguration of a divine covenant” as its “literary center of gravity.”²⁵

Vanhoozer also extensively argues that “creation and covenant,” “cosmic stage, and covenantal plot,” are the meta-narrative of the biblical script.²⁶

In sum, the paucity of covenant vocabulary does not imply that its concept is absent or it has lesser significance.²⁷ Covenant may be conveyed by *conceptually related*

(January 1992): 109-20; Mogens Müller, “The Theological Interpretation of the Figure of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: Some Principle Features in Matthean Christology,” *New Testament Studies* 45, no. 2 (March 1999): 157-73; Mogens Müller, “Bundesideologie Im Matthäusevangelium: Die Vorstellung Vom Neuen Bund Als Grundlage Der Matthäischen Gesetzesverkündigung,” *New Testament Studies* 58, no. 1 (January 2012): 23-42; Mogens Müller, “The Hidden Context: Some Observations to the Concept of the New Covenant in the New Testament,” in *Texts and Contexts: Biblical Texts in Their Textual and Situational Contexts. Essays in Honor of Lars Hartman*, ed. Tord Fornberg and Lars Hartman (Oslo, Norway: Scandinavian University Press, 1995), 649-58; Mogens Müller and Henrik Tronier, *The New Testament as Reception*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series (Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 9-11.

²⁵ Meredith G. Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1997), 181. Kline observes covenantal orientations between the Gospels and the book of Exodus in both their “content/narrative” and “form/genre”: “The correspondence between the dominant second halves of Exodus and the gospels is a matter of content as well as form.” Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, 178. Furthermore, “distinctive combination of narrative and authoritative words is a feature of Exodus and the New Testament gospels alike . . . the literary similarity of the gospels to Exodus with its covenantal orientation, the principal elements of that parallelism quickly make themselves apparent.” Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, 177.

²⁶ Vanhoozer’s main thesis is that what God was doing in Jesus Christ ultimately makes sense only according to the biblical script that places the person and work of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament context of *creation and covenant*. There is a cosmic stage and a *covenantal plot*; there is conflict; there is a climax; there is resolution. *Evangelical theology deals not with disparate bits of ideas and information but with divine doings—with the all-embracing cosmic drama that displays the entrances and exoduses of God.*” (Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical Linguistic Approach to Christian Doctrine* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005], 38-39, emphasis original) Vanhoozer prefers the category of “drama” over against “narrative.”

²⁷ Likewise, Saucy concludes, “The fact that ‘new covenant’ is rare terminology in the NT should not deflect us from seeing its magisterial highway running throughout the entire NT.” Saucy, “Canon as Tradition,” 218-19. See also Scott J. Hafemann, who proposed for “the covenant relationship” to be an integrative theme for biblical theology. He writes the covenant is “the *structure* that serves to integrate the interrelated themes developed throughout the history of redemption delineated in the Scriptures.” Scott J. Hafemann, “The Covenant Relationship,” in *Central Themes in Biblical Theology: Mapping Unity in Diversity*, ed. Scott J. Hafemann and Paul House (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 23, see also 20-65. Niehaus, while agreeing on the importance of covenant in biblical theology, critiqued Hafemann’s “theologically constructed covenant” proposal and “replace it with a model that is both true to the genre of covenant, and more powerfully descriptive of God’s actual covenant making procedure

lexemes (Porter), covenantal *realities* (Williamson), or its *plot-pattern* (Müller, Kline, Vanhoozer). Next, two related concepts are explored: whether the *hidden context* and what is *implicit* in a narrative are equated to being unimportant.

Brief History of Research

In a collection of essays entitled “text and context,” Mogens Müller observes that the “concept of the new covenant” is the “hidden context” that lies behind the texts of the NT.²⁸ He insists that NT exegesis, like all texts, is determined by its “preconceived understanding.”²⁹ An exegete should pay attention to “the forces which created them.”³⁰ That is to say, though the reader takes “the point of departure in the texts,” it does not mean that “these actually represent the point of departure.”³¹ For Müller, this point of

throughout history.” Jeffrey J. Niehaus, “An Argument against Theologically Constructed Covenants,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 2 (June 2007): 273, see also 259-73.

²⁸ Müller, “The Hidden Context,” 649-57. Saucy also notes that the biblical storyline is “a covenanted movement of God emerging from the OT that the NT canonical writers saw fulfilled in Jesus. It is not merely Jesus who was the center of the apostles’ thought, but Jesus as fulfillment of the new covenant that provides the hermeneutical key for understanding Scripture’s Story and the standard by which the church of any era, including the patristic, must be measured.” Saucy, “Canon as Tradition,” 217.

²⁹ Müller goes on to cite Grundtvig at length who, contra Clausen, considered his view as “unparalleled discovery,” and a corrective to the way the “Reformers viewed Christianity.” He insisted that the “authenticity of the New Testament does not prove itself, but can only be proved by the evident testimony of the church which for the same reason is the only true defensible foundation.” Müller then concludes, “For Grundtvig the real New Testament was not a book, but the covenant of baptism.” This *context* gave birth to the text of the New Testament. He writes that it, on the one hand, “calls forward its own reflected image” in the text and creates a link, so to speak, between the text and the reader by the sheer “strength of its own way of presenting problems.” Müller, “The Hidden Context,” 649.

³⁰ Müller, “The Hidden Context,” 651, Müller doesn’t simply retrace the “congregational theology” path that the Tübingen-school traveled in its form-critical project, particularly represented in the words of Martin Dibelius who wrote, “In the beginning was the preaching.” He rather insists that NT authors were primarily theologians who “at certain time and in a certain context formulated a theology.”

³¹ Müller writes,
We hear remarkably little about baptism in the New testament writings. But this is only remarkable as long as we expect theses writings to be expositions of the entire preaching and teaching of Christianity directed at outsiders. But all New Testament writings address themselves to Christian congregations...with a more or less prolonged Christian experience behind them . . . heard the preaching, taken part in teaching, and who are all baptized. This is simply the hidden context of the everything written. (Müller, “The Hidden Context,” 652)

departure is “the impact of the new covenant,” which is the “*hidden albeit omnipresent context* [emphasis added].”³² Müller then concludes,

The infrequent allusions to the new covenant in the New Testament writings are not due to this concept lacking in importance. By contrast, it is the presupposition for most of what is said. . . . It is the decisive substructure when the texts are considered in connection with the congregation in which they originated, i.e., the hidden albeit omnipresent context.³³

Ulrich Luz is representative when he states that Matthew is a literary whole “to be read from the beginning to end.”³⁴ That is, now that *διαθήκη* is spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper, upon rereading the gospel, as Müller notes, “the end is incorporated in the beginning.”³⁵ What is stated at the end of Matthew, “my blood of the covenant,” is also “its culmination and, accordingly, the token of all that is said in the gospel.”³⁶ Müller then concludes the new covenant “is a substructure underlying the theology and christology of the first congregation.”³⁷ Therefore, what is hidden in the substructure of Matthew’s narrative should not imply that it is unimportant.

³² Müller states, “By means of the New Covenant, God promised to write his law in the heart of his people and give his Spirit within them.” Furthermore, “the picture is more elucidated in Matt 26:28 where “forgiveness of sins (a new covenant reality) is reserved for the deeds of Jesus.” Müller, “The Hidden Context,” 653. Cf. Jer 31:31-34; Cf. Jer 32:38-40; Ezek 11:19-20; 16:59-63; 34:25; 36:26-27; 37:24-28; Isa 42:6-7; 49:8; 54:10, 13; 55:3; 59:20-21; 61:8; Joel 3:1-2; Mal 3:1.

³³ Müller, “The Hidden Context,” 654.

³⁴ Ulrich Luz, *Studies in Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 83.

³⁵ Müller, “The Gospel of St Matthew and the Mosaic Law,” 115.

³⁶ Müller, “The Gospel of St Matthew and the Mosaic Law,” 115.

³⁷ Müller, “The Gospel of St Matthew and the Mosaic Law,” 115. Müller continues, My thesis is that this is because there is a substructure underlying the theology and Christology of the first congregation which, since it is the very foundation, need not be verbalized. The content of the covenant which it is Jesus’ Messianic duty to conclude, appears from the Law and, in particular, from the prophets, i.e. it is inherent in the preaching of the new covenant, which God has promised to conclude in the last days, a different covenant from the one God concluded with the Israelites when he conducted them out of Egypt. (Müller, “The Gospel of St Matthew and the Mosaic Law,” 115)

Dale Allison tackles the question, whether “explicitness equal importance,” or “implicitness equals unimportance?”³⁸ Instead, there is an intricate relationship between what is explicit and implicit in Matthew’s narrative. Matthew’s text “assumes that the requisite sensibility will pass from the explicit to the implicit that it will go beyond what the words directly denote to what they connote.”³⁹ Matthew, for instance, presents the passion predictions both explicitly and implicitly.⁴⁰ The four explicit predictions (16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19) are then supported and elaborated by the implicit (9:15; 12:40; 16:21-23; 17:12, 22-23; 20:17-19, 22-23, 28; 21:38-39; 26:2). In chapter 3, this thesis will argue that Matthew’s subplot implicitly follows the pattern: *Passover ordered to exodus, order to covenant*. When the gospel is read as a literary whole, what is *implicit* does not equal to being *unimportant*.⁴¹

In sum, that covenant terminology is used infrequently in the NT does not translate to its concept also to be infrequent. Moreover, what is implicit in Matthew’s narrative, as the thesis will argue, does not mean it is unimportant to its theology.⁴²

³⁸ Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 321-23.

³⁹ Allison, *The New Moses*, 322.

⁴⁰ Allison states,

The Gospel, on my reading, anticipates being heard and re-heard, and so anticipates an audience that will accordingly appreciate its intertextuality, its allusions to itself. That such informed hearers are the implied hearers of Matthew . . . when one comes to the end, one is asked to start over, for the imperatives to do ‘all that I have commanded you’ (28:20) means to do ‘all that I have commanded you in the previous chapters.’ (Dale C. Allison, *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005], 218-19)

⁴¹ In his chapter on “Foreshowing the Passion,” Allison labors to demonstrate that Matthew often times engages in “allusive patterns” that are not overtly stated and yet scrupulously knitted together in his narrative. A case in point is the many ways in which the passion narrative is foreshadowed in various parts of Matthew’s Gospel. See, Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 218-19.

⁴² Robert L. Brawley also observes a constant interplay between two stories in Matthew’s Gospel: the story of Jesus and the story of Abraham, and Matthew’s fulfillment-in-Jesus motif and the Abrahamic promises. The culmination of these stories in Jesus in turn implicates that neither Matthew’s Jesus nor Abrahamic promises (scripture) can stand in isolation from each other. See Robert L. Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions in the Ethics of Matthew,” in *Realia Dei: Essays in Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation in Honor of Edward F. Campbell, Jr. at His Retirement*, ed. Edward

Thesis and Methodology

The claim of the current thesis is much more modest. It does not seek to break any new ground. The aim is to illustrate the significance of the new covenant in Matthew's Gospel. The core of the argument rests on Müller's observation that the new covenant is a "substructure underlying" Matthew's Gospel.⁴³ The thesis broadly employs an exegetical and discourse analysis methodology following the work of David Clark and Jan de Waard.⁴⁴ Furthermore, Allison's "Allusive-Pattern" methodology is used in chapter 3 to analyze how the text of Matthew alludes to itself (e.g., how the feeding story alludes to the Last Supper).⁴⁵

The plan of the thesis is as follows. The second chapter explores the covenantal significances of the titles "υιοῦ Δαυίδ" and "υιοῦ Ἀβραάμ." The aim is to show that the titles evoke strong covenantal overtones even though covenant terminology is not used. Furthermore, in Matthew, these covenants are synthesized in one christological act of covenant-making.

The third and fourth chapters investigate the only and explicit reference to the covenant in Matthew's Gospel in 26:28. The question raised in these chapters is whether the introduction of the covenant was a strategically placed climactic reference. Chapter 3 is substantial since it seeks to demonstrate that Matthew, at crucial places throughout his Gospel, engages in symbolic significations and interpretations, thus building the narrative

F. Campbell, Prescott H. Williams, and Theodore Hiebert, *Scholars Press Homage Series 23* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 45.

⁴³ Müller, "The Gospel of St Matthew and the Mosaic Law," 115.

⁴⁴ David J. Clark and Jan de Waard, "Discourse Structure in Matthew's Gospel," in *Analyzing and Translating New Testament Discourse*, by David J. Clark (Dallas: Fontes Press, 2019), 13-111.

⁴⁵ After extensive research on the first Gospel, Allison proposes six ways a text may be linked to another: (1) explicit statement; (2) inexplicit citation or borrowing; (3) similar circumstances; (4) keywords or phrases; (5) similar narrative structure; and (6) word order, syllabic sequence, poetic resonance. See Allison, *The New Moses*, 19-20, 140-41. He further developed these allusive patterns in two of his works: Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The Intertextual Jesus: Scripture in Q* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2000); Dale C. Allison, *Scriptural Allusions in the New Testament: Light from the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2019).

for the climactic scene at the interpretation narrative. As such, the (new) covenant has been proleptically symbolized in the feeding miracles and anticipated in the eschatological banquet, leading up to the Last Supper. To that effect, the chapter will argue that Matthew appears to interpret the meaning of Jesus' death within the conceptual framework of *Passover ordered to exodus, ordered to covenant*. The blood of the covenant in 26:28 should be seen as a climactic reference designed to provide Jesus's death its covenantal overtones.

Chapter 5 builds from these conclusions and explores the theme of *interiority* as a covenantal reality. Here Matthew's particular interest on the heart is examined against the new covenant realities of the prophetic promises as the sign of the inauguration of the (new) covenant. Matthew presents Jesus as the interpreter and inscriber of Torah on human hearts in fulfillment of covenant promises. Finally, a summary and conclusion are drawn in chapter 6.

In sum, chapter 2 examines the titles for their covenantal significance (*de facto* covenantal titles); chapter 3 analyzes Matthew's narrative for its covenant framework (Passover, Exodus, covenant); chapter 4 investigates the only explicit reference to covenant in Matthew 26:28 (blood of the covenant), and chapter 5 examines Matthew's focus on interiority (covenant reality).

CHAPTER 2
CHRISTOLOGICAL-COVENANT: THE SOLIDARITY
OF THE COVENANTS IN MATTHEW’S GOSPEL

Matthew’s Gospel commences with the title: Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ. Each of these four phrases, as Dale Allison observes, implicitly sends “vectors [of meaning] in several directions at once,” assuming readers do infer “beyond what the words directly denote to what they connote.”¹ Beneath Matthew’s words, then, lie the OT from which the evangelist was able “to access a common universe of meaning through connotative speech.”² Allison is undoubtedly correct when he writes, “Words and phrases such as ‘son of David’ and ‘son of Abraham’ are not simple things.”³ These simple words evoke covenantal frameworks in “the informed imaginations” of Matthew’s readers concerning the story of Jesus the Messiah.⁴

The primary aim of this chapter is to explore the covenantal significances of Matthew’s expressions: “υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ” and “υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ,” and how he reshapes the story of Jesus to have recapitulated Israel’s covenantal story. The chapter resounds Scott Hahn’s assessment of the dichotomy between kingdom and covenant in gospel studies. He writes, “Davidic kingdom by definition and essence cannot exist in some form that is separate from or irrelevant to the Davidic covenant or for that matter, the other divine covenants of the Old Testament.”⁵ Matthew’s simple expressions, therefore, evoke *de*

¹ Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 322.

² Allison, *The New Moses*, 322.

³ Allison, *The New Moses*, 322.

⁴ Allison, *The New Moses*, 322.

⁵ Scott Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: A Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God’s Saving Promises*, The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 235.

facto covenant frameworks. Thus, the attempt is to show how the concept of διαθήκη is not limited to its lexical use in 26:28. Second, the chapter argues that the Abrahamic, Davidic, and new covenants are synthesized in Matthew’s narrative.⁶ As such, the covenants can be stated as *hypostatically* united in one activity of “christological covenant-making.”⁷ God’s promises to Abraham (to bless all the nations through him) and David (to establish eternal kingdom) are fulfilled in the sacrificial death of the one who is acting as the New Moses (offering his blood of the covenant) and as true Israel (recapitulating the story of Israel).⁸ In this new christological-covenant, God’s promise to create a new covenant people is fulfilled.⁹

The Abrahamic Covenant in Matthew

God’s covenant with Abraham, as Gentry and Wellum contend, forms the “backbone of the metanarrative plot structure” of redemptive history.¹⁰ The Abrahamic covenant entails God’s gift of seed/dynasty, land, and worldwide blessing such that “all peoples on earth will be blessed” (cf. Gen 12:3; 15:5; 18:18; 22:18).¹¹ As such, covenant

⁶ That is, in keeping with other Matthean fulfillment motifs, they are transposed to take place on a different basis than each were first anticipated in their original OT contexts.

⁷ Whittle also uses the expression “christological-covenant making” in her monograph on Paul. Sarah Whittle, *Covenant Renewal and the Consecration of the Gentiles in Romans*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 161 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 186-99.

⁸ In chaps. 3 and 4, the thesis will develop the Passover and covenant context of Jesus’ death in the interpretation narrative.

⁹ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 122.

¹⁰ Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 295.

¹¹ The exodus is a step forward in an advancing the fulfillment of Abrahamic promises than Israel’s constitution. See for instance Robert L. Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions in the Ethics of Matthew,” in *Realia Dei: Essays in Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation in Honor of Edward F. Campbell, Jr. at His Retirement*, ed. Edward F. Campbell, Prescott H. Williams, and Theodore Hiebert, Scholars Press Homage Series 23 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 28; Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 134.

membership in God’s family depended upon this genealogical principle.¹²

In Matthew, the title “υιοῦ Ἀβραάμ” is one of continuity. As observed, the title implies the Abrahamic covenant (cf. 1:1, 2, 17; 3:9; 8:11–12).¹³ If Jesus recapitulates this covenantal story and trajectory, then it is fitting that Matthew presents him as the one who “brings God’s blessing to the nations” (1:1, 2, 17; 28:19).¹⁴ Since the blessing of the nations was the goal of the covenant, the four women mentioned in this genealogy serve as exhibit-A for gentiles inclusion, including “the Magi, the Canaanite woman, and the centurion” (cf. 2:1-12; 8:5-13; 15:28).¹⁵ As the servant of Isaiah, Jesus brings hope to the gentiles (12:18-21; cf. Isa 42:1-4, 9).

However, belonging to the family of Abraham, at the genealogical principle alone, is not sufficient for membership in God’s new family (3:9; cf. 21:33-44; 25:31-46).¹⁶ In 3:8-9, the Baptist especially put into “question the permanent validity of the

¹² For a detailed treatment of the Abrahamic covenant, see, for instance, William J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: An Old Testament Covenant Theology*, rev. ed. (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2013), 59-105; Jeffrey Niehaus, *Biblical Theology: Special Grace Covenants (Old Testament)* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 2:103-38; Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 101-35; Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 223-300; Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath: Covenant in God’s Unfolding Purpose*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007), 77-93.

¹³ See Charles L. Quarles, who writes, Just as Son of David implies far more than that Jesus is merely David’s descendant, so Son of Abraham implies far more than that Jesus is merely born of Abraham’s line. The title Son of David indicates that Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s covenant with David. Similarly, as Son of Abraham, Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s covenant with Abraham. He is Abraham’s promised seed. Son of David implies that Jesus is like David in many remarkable ways. As the Son of Abraham, Jesus is a new Abraham, the Founder of a new chosen people. He will fulfill a role in God’s plan similar to the one fulfilled by Abraham himself. (Charles L. Quarles, *A Theology of Matthew: Jesus Revealed As Deliverer, King, and Incarnate Creator*, Explorations in Biblical Theology [Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2013], 99)

¹⁴ As Matt 3:9 clarifies, “son of Abraham” does not merely mark Jesus as true Israelite. Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 62-63.

¹⁵ Clay Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 10, no. 1 (2000): 68.

¹⁶ David Bauer states, The demand for a baptism of repentance implies, positively, that God wishes to establish a new covenant community around the kingdom which Jesus is about to inaugurate. The question of membership in the covenant community necessarily involved the issue of sonship to Abraham, for God originally established covenant with his people on the basis of the promise he made to Abraham

Abrahamic covenant,” for eschatological salvation.¹⁷ As Allison put it, “the Baptist is not overturning the fundamental idea of *covenant* but rather repudiating the popular understanding of what the Abrahamic covenant entailed.”¹⁸ John thereby led the way for Jesus “to speak and act in ways that pointed to the establishment of a new covenant” in which “biological descent from Abraham was insufficient.”¹⁹ In 12:50, Jesus implied that those who would do God’s will belong to his family. In 8:11-12, following the centurion’s great faith, Jesus underscored the importance of faith for participating in the eschatological banquet with Abraham, “while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness” (8:12).²⁰ God’s promise to bless the nations through Abraham is fulfilled in the messiah.²¹ Thus, what Matthew proleptically foreshadows in the eschatological banquet in 8:10-12 is symbolically enacted at the Last Supper (26:17-30).

regarding Abraham’s descendants (Gen 12:2-3; 15:1-20; 18:9-15; 22:1-19). It is therefore hardly surprising that Matthew presents some among John’s hearers as taking exception to the notion that they were not truly children of Abraham, at least not in a way that really mattered.” (David R. Bauer, *The Gospel of the Son of God: An Introduction to Matthew* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019], 153)

¹⁷ Brant James Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2015), 111.

¹⁸ Dale Allison, in his rebuttal to Sander’s claims of covenant-nomism, puts it this way: John does away not with *covenant* but with popular *covenantal nomism*. . . . It is natural, in my view, to suppose that John the Baptist preached a radical, one-time repentance and delivered fulminating judgments upon those who came out to him because he placed a large question mark over the “*covenantal nomism*” of his day and avowed that those born of Abraham were not by that fact alone worthy members of the people of God. (Dale C. Allison, “Jesus and the Covenant: A Response to E. P. Sanders,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 9, no. 29 [1987]: 60)

¹⁹ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 111.

²⁰ Cf. Matt 20:1-16; 28:16-20. Ham writes, “God has placed Gentiles on equal footing with Jews, and ultimately the disciples are commissioned to make disciples of them too.” Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 68.

²¹ Similarly, Bauer also underscores the relationship between Jesus and Abraham in Matthew: The reference to “children of Abraham” in Matthew 3:7-10 relates to Jesus role as “Son of Abraham” in Matthew 1:1-17, where Jesus’ Abrahamic sonship pertains to his function as the one who, in fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham regarding his son, would be the agent of God’s blessings to “all nations,” that is, to Gentiles. Already in Matthew 2 Jesus begins to fulfil this role when Gentile magi come to worship him and become proleptic disciples. But whereas Matthew 2 emphasizes that Jesus is the Son of Abraham who attracts Gentiles to the kingdom of God, Matthew 3 suggests how Jesus functions as Son of Abraham, namely, by making others, both Jews and Gentiles, true children of Abraham.” (Bauer, *The Gospel of the Son of God*, 153)

By opening his gospel with the title “son of Abraham” and further developing the theme in 3:9; 8:10-11, Matthew indicated the continuity and discontinuity of the Abrahamic covenant in the new.

The Davidic Covenant in Matthew

Unequivocally, Jesus is portrayed as the son of David in Matthew. As such, his kingdom as ‘υιοῦ Δαυὶδ’ is established upon God’s covenant with David. The Davidic covenant ensures the perpetuity of David’s kingdom forever. It is also closely associated with Jerusalem and the temple (2 Sam 7:10-16; cf. Pss 2:7, 89:3-4; 132:11-12).²² The Davidide, as the seed of Abraham, represents Israel, thus summing up both the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenant in himself.²³ Finally, in the prophets, the return of Yahweh and the restoration of the Davidic king was increasingly spoken of as one event.

Matthew references David seventeen times and uses it as a title ten times (cf. Matt 1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30; 21:5, 9). That Jesus fulfills the “Davidic expectations is critical to this gospel.”²⁴ His genealogy is traced from David,²⁵ he was born in the city of David, and he was also declared to be God’s Son in accordance to the Davidic

²² Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 185. Osborne writes, “The title Son of David developing during the exilic period to explain how the promise to David of an eternal throne would be kept and how God would send a ‘righteous Branch’ to remove foreign oppressors from the land and return it to Israel (Jer 23:5 - 8; Ezek 17:22; 37:21 - 28). This expectation continued in the intertestamental period (Pss Sol 17- 18; IQM 11:1 - 18; 4QFlor 1:11-14).” Osborne, *Matthew*, 62.

²³ Brawley notes that synthesis occurs with respect to God’s covenant with David. God’s promise to David (2 Sam 7) that his rule would extend as far as Nile and Euphrates underscores the continuity of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 15:18-21) and the Davidic covenant. Jer 33:25-26 “synthesizes Abrahamic and Davidic covenant traditions. David builds a kingdom because it is part of the inheritance promised to the descendants of Abraham and Sarah.” Davidic and Mosaic also synthesized. Like the Mosaic, the Davidic covenant is contingent upon the obedience of David’s sons (1 Kgs 8:25). Ps 89:28-34 further highlights that failing to keep the statutes and commandments incur punishment, but the covenant would remain intact, thus “combining the Davidic and Mosaic traditions (p.31).” See Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions,” 31, cf. Ps 78. Furthermore, Ps 132:11-12 “modifies the unconditional David covenant by subordinating it to Sinai.” Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions,” 30-33.

²⁴ Osborne, *Matthew*, 62.

²⁵ Cf. Matt 1:1, 6, 17

covenant (cf. 2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:7).²⁶ He is the promised messiah of the prophets²⁷ and the shepherd of God's people.²⁸ He enters Jerusalem to fulfill Zechariah 9:9. In keeping with the Abrahamic covenant, his kingdom rules the nations (8:10-12; 28:19; cf. Ps 2:7-8).

However, there are marked discontinuities from David. Jesus' reign is characterized as "God with us" (1:23, cf. 28:20), which is now transposed into the language of Danielic Son of Man—thereby identifying Jesus as the one who reigns universally and eternally (cf. Dan 7:13-14).²⁹ Unlike popular expectations, the rescue mission of "this son of David" culminates in his death (cf. 1:21; 20:28; 26:28).³⁰ As a result, confessing Jesus only as the messianic son of David is not sufficient. He is both David's Son and David's Lord (22:41-46; cf. Ps 110:1), as N. T. Wright puts it, the "embodiment of YHWH's return to Zion."³¹

In summary, if Jesus is portrayed as the Davidic king, then "it is *de facto* a fulfillment of the Davidic covenant."³² Jesus, born in Bethlehem and declared to be God's Son at his baptism, fulfilled the Davidic covenant. He reigns as the heavenly Son of Man. In doing so, he surpassed it. The gospel that began with the Son of David ends with the risen and exalted Messiah who manifests God's covenant presence as Emmanuel

²⁶ Matt 3:17; cf. Pss 2:7; 89:3-4; 132:11-12.

²⁷ Matt 4:15-16; cf. Isa 9:1-10; 15:22; 16:16; 21:5; 22:41-46. In 9:27, as in 20:30-34, two blind men acknowledge him as Son of David, echoing back to 2:6 that Jesus will be a ruler who shepherds God's people.

²⁸ Matt 2:6; 9:36; 15:29-39; cf. Ezek 34:11-16. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 184-85.

²⁹ Quarles, *A Theology of Matthew*, 91.

³⁰ R. T. France notes, "There seems little doubt that the dominant concern in first-century Jewish hope was with their political subjection, with the restoration of the kingdom of David as the messianic goal. The angel's words thus signal at the start that any political euphoria which may have been evoked by the Davidic and royal theme of the 'book of origin' is wide of the mark of what Jesus' actual mission is to be." R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 54.

³¹ N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1996), 639.

³² Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 235.

(cf. 18:20; 26:29; 28:20). By his broken body and poured-out blood, the Son of David celebrates the Passover and ratifies the new covenant.³³ In this picture, the juxtaposition of a *Davidide*, celebrating *Passover*, and renewing a *covenant*, all point to the great reformation of Josiah and Hezekiah (2 Chron 34-35; 29-30).³⁴ As Michael Barber puts it, “The idea of an eschatological covenant was often linked to restoration hopes . . . as a Davidic reformer . . . that he would speak of an eschatological covenant renewal at this time mirrors the way Hezekiah’s covenant renewal and Passover celebration was linked with restoration hopes.”³⁵ The church is then the new covenant community that is promised to eat from the new David’s table in the eschatological kingdom (26:29).³⁶ Furthermore, in Jeremiah 31-33 (“the book of comfort”), the establishment of the new covenant and the restoration of the Davidic kingdom are “inextricably linked” together.³⁷ All of these lead to the conclusion that by Matthew portraying Jesus as the *Son of David* (invoking the Davidic covenant), celebrating the *Passover* and his words and action at the Last Supper—a picture of *covenant ratification*—seem anything but random.

The Synthesis of the Covenants in Matthew

The most fruitful approach for analyzing the new covenant outlook of Matthew’s Gospel begins with the recognition that the new covenant is not a monolithic

³³ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 237.

³⁴ The pattern seems to be structured after the exodus-plotline, in which God’s redemptive act in the event of the exodus and the ratification of the covenant followed the night of the Passover. For similar observation, see Michael Barber, who notes, “God’s act of redeeming Israel from Egypt is repeatedly linked with covenant language (cf. e.g., Exod 2:24; 6:4-7; Lev 26:9-13, 45; Deut 7:8-9; 29:25; 2 Kgs 17:35-39; 2 Chr 5:10).” Michael Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology: The New Temple, the New Priesthood and the New Cult” (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2010), 667.

³⁵ Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 671.

³⁶ As noted, Jeremiah’s “book of comfort” in chaps. 30–33 predicts the new covenant, the new-exodus, and the restoration of the covenants with David and Levitical priesthood as one unified restoration.

³⁷ Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 663. For a detailed treatment of the relationship between the new covenant, the Davidic and the Levitical covenants in Jer 30–33, a section Lundbom labels as “book of restoration,” see Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, Anchor Yale Bible, vol. 21B (New York: Yale University Press, 2008), 368-546.

concept solely drawn from the prophecy of Jeremiah.³⁸ Further, the idea of the new covenant in the OT itself was cumulative of all the other covenants.³⁹ Thereby, as Brawley notes, the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31 “falls within the brackets of the Abrahamic covenant as it is synthesized with the Mosaic.”⁴⁰ Thus, not only should covenant fulfillments be seen as complex a process as any other promise-fulfillment motif in Matthew, but also the covenants appear to be synthesized (*hypostatized*) and modified in light of the Messiah’s coming. For this reason, the covenants may seem implicit from a lexical standpoint, while the concept remains pervasive throughout Matthew’s narrative. Brawley pays particular attention to how covenants are *synthesized, renewed, and modified* in Matthew.⁴¹ Such a phenomenon can be summarized as “christological-

³⁸ Brawley argues that the “Hexateuch correlates the berit with Abraham precisely with the Sinai. It is clear in Deuteronomy that the two covenants are synthesized as a coherent whole. . . . Sinai is grounded in the fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham.” Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions,” 28.

³⁹ Several scholars point out that the OT exhibits strong coherence and synthesis of all the covenants in the new covenant promises of the prophets. For example, Jeremiah’s influential text of the new covenant in 31:31-33 belongs to the “book of comfort” in chaps. 30–33. This section predicts the new-exodus, the restoration of the covenants with David and Levitical priesthood. See for instance Niehaus, who writes,

The Abrahamic covenant also contains the germ of a third covenant, the Davidic, since the Davidic covenant’s promise of a royal line (2 Sam 7:5-16, especially v. 16) gives more mature and precise form to the promise of royal offspring to Abraham (Gen 17:6). The Davidic covenant is also an integral part of God’s redemptive program. It is established in the Mosaic covenantal context, because David and all of his offspring were vassals of God under that covenant, which also anticipated and provided for the institution of monarchy (Deut 17:14-20). However, it also looks forward to “David’s greater Son,” also a vassal of God in his earthly ministry, who was “born under the law, to redeem those under the law” (Gal 4:4-5). And it is through the work of that Son that the new covenant is inaugurated, and continues its work to this day, ultimately to eventuate in that new humanity, and new heavens and earth, implicit in God’s original creation covenant commitment. (Jeffrey J. Niehaus, “An Argument against Theologically Constructed Covenants,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 2 (June 2007): 273.

Thomas Schreiner writes, “We see three new-covenant themes in Jeremiah. First, Israel was plunged into exile because of sin. Second, God would forgive Israel and restore them from exile. Third, God would raise up for them a new David. When we consider the New Testament witness, it is clear that the forgiveness contemplated in Jeremiah is accomplished by Jesus Christ.” Thomas R. Schreiner, *Covenant and God’s Purpose for the World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 108. See also Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 659-65.

⁴⁰ Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions,” 30, 36.

⁴¹ Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions,” 26-46. See also nn. 23 and 37 of the present thesis.

covenant,” since all the covenants with Abraham, with David, and the New Covenant promises of Deuteronomy and the prophets, are all culminated in him.⁴²

Richard Hays notes that 1:1-17 sketches the plot of Israel’s covenantal history. It juxtaposes “God’s *convent faithfulness*—as signaled by the promise to Abraham and the promise to David” and “*Israel’s unfaithfulness* leading up to deportation to exile.”⁴³ Thus, the prophetic hope for the salvation of the remnant from the exile is hinted in 1:18-25. Matthew then adds Isaiah 7:14 to his already rich allusion-chamber to envision afresh “how God acts in fidelity to the Davidic covenant.”⁴⁴

Matthew’s Emmanuel motif in 1:23 and 28:20 provides a “structural framework” for his “Narrative-Christology.”⁴⁵ It moves from “theocentric” vision in 1:23 to Christocentric vision in 28:16-20.⁴⁶ Thus, on the one hand, the double-naming marks the Davidic messiah to be Moses’ true successor.⁴⁷ As the new Joshua, Jesus will rescue ‘τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ’ from sin’s dominion in a new exodus and lead them into their rest (cf. 2:15; 5:5; 11:25-30). On the other, his conception by the Holy Spirit demonstrates that he

⁴² Therefore, claiming a covenantal framework for Matthew’s Gospel should not be seen on a par with its strong christological focus.

⁴³ Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 111.

⁴⁴ Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions,” 33.

⁴⁵ The expression “Narrative-Christology” is used in Luz’s writings to underscore the kerygmatic nature of Matthew’s story. Ulrich Luz, *Studies in Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 84-85. See also, Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 162. Matthew’s introductory section in 1:1-17 illustrates that the Messiah recapitulates and moves forward the covenantal story of Israel (of Abraham and of David) after the Babylonian exile. The prophet Ezekiel vividly describes how Israel’s covenant unfaithfulness has resulted in the loss of Yahweh’s presence and the deportation of the people to exile (e.g. Ezek 4-11). Then in 1:18-25, the narrative describes how the birth of the messiah would reconstitute God’s covenant people and restore God’s presence among them in two programmatic statements in 1:21 and 1:23.

⁴⁶ David D. Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God’s People in the First Gospel*, Society for New Testament Studies 90 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 241. Furthermore, not only divine presence is expressed in salvation and mission of his people, but it is also active in the life of the community both in the present (18:20) as well as the future kingdom (26:29; cf. 8.23-7; 10.41-2; 12.6; 14.22-33; 17.17; 25.31-46).

⁴⁷ Quarles, *A Theology of Matthew*, 49.

is “Ἐμμανουήλ . . . Μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός (1:23),” “the one in whom God will be palpably present to his people.”⁴⁸ In typical “Sinai presence paradigm,” he rescues his people (τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ) precisely by coming to dwell among them, which is his “saving immanence retrospectively and immediately with his people.”⁴⁹ In these pronouncements, the “double naming” serves to portray Jesus simultaneously as Israel, Israel’s savior, and the embodiment of Israel’s God.⁵⁰ The exile that threatened God’s covenant with Abraham and David is now reestablished in Jesus.⁵¹ Also, by addressing “the one who is born king of the Jews” as “shepherd of my people” (2:2-6), Matthew initiated a “thematic development” to the stricken-shepherd of Zachariah (cf. 26:31), who is the Davidic king (Zech 9:9; Matt 21:1-11) and whose blood of the covenant (Zech 9:11; Matt 26:28) inaugurates the new covenant.

In Herod’s slaughter of the children in Bethlehem in 2:16-18, another covenantal story reverberates. In this unit, Matthew portrays Jesus as recapitulating Israel’s history.⁵² However, by citing Jeremiah 31:15-18, which speaks about the return from exile and is in the same chapter with the *new covenant* in 31:31-33, as Richard Hays notes, his “reference

⁴⁸ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 163. Kupp suggests that the phrase “which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (26:28) is an “elaboration of the angel’s first explanation” of ‘Jesus’ in 1:21. He concludes, “Here the implied reader sees in part the material shape to one of the fundamental questions of the opening narrative frame: how will Jesus bring salvation to his people?” Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 96-97. Gurtner also recognizes the programmatic nature of 1:21 in connection with 26:28 “which serve as a framing, or inclusio, for his entire discussion of the relationship between Jesus’ death and the forgiveness of sins.” Daniel M. Gurtner, *The Torn Veil: Matthew’s Exposition of the Death of Jesus*, reissue ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 127.

⁴⁹ Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 238. Thus “Μεθ’ ἡμῶν ἔγωγε μεθ’ ὑμῶν” functions to convey God’s covenant-presence.

⁵⁰ Kupp writes, “Matthew’s Gospel from this point on is a gradual unfolding of the content of these ascriptions and their characterizations of the Messiah.” Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 235.

⁵¹ Bauer, *The Gospel of the Son of God*, 142.

⁵² For a superb discussion of the theme of recapitulation in Matthew, see Joel Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel: Use of Israel’s History in Matthew 1:1-4:11* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

works as a metaleptic trope, recalling the wider context of Jeremiah’s prophecy.”⁵³ Once again, the covenantal stories of Abraham and David, the new covenant of Jeremiah and Messianic restoration of Zechariah, are all synthesized in the saving story of Jesus, who is the “God-with-us Messiah.”⁵⁴ Jesus recapitulates Israel’s covenants and her mediators. This covenantally rich story is told without any mention of the word *διαθήκη*.

Conclusion

The titles “*υιοῦ Δαυὶδ*” and “*υιοῦ Ἀβραάμ*” do not merely prove Jesus’ true Jewish identity and messianic status.⁵⁵ They underscore God’s faithfulness to the promises that he made to Abraham and David.⁵⁶ The son of David will save his people from their sins (1:21) by pouring out his covenant-blood for the forgiveness of sins (26:28). Because he gives his body as Passover sacrifice (26:17-25, 26-27), he inaugurates the new exodus. God is raising children to Abraham, and membership in this family is no longer based on biological descent (cf. 3:10). Therefore, the covenants are mutually interpretative since Matthew synthesized them in one christologically defined act of covenant making. That the gospel is now offered to all the nations (28:18-20) demonstrates that the Abrahamic covenant has come to fruition. Thus, the synthesis of the Abrahamic, Davidic, and Mosaic into one christological-covenant, i.e., the new covenant, undergirds Matthew’s narrative.

The next two chapters develop the importance of covenant for Matthew by analyzing how he intentionally triangulated *Passover*, *exodus*, and *covenant* in the

⁵³ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 116.

⁵⁴ See Kupp, who writes, “The symbolism of Jesus’ cleansing the Temple reaches as far back as Matthew 1, for if it was as Son of David, humble king, that he rightfully entered the royal city, it is as the ‘God-with-us’ Messiah that he now symbolically destroys the entire sacrificial worship system of the Temple (driving out sellers and buyers) and foreshadows his predictions of its demise and replacement (see 23.38; 24.2).” Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 90.

⁵⁵ Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions,” 32.

⁵⁶ Brawley, “Reverberations of Abrahamic Covenant Traditions,” 32.

interpretation narrative. Suffice to say, the concept of covenant in Matthew reverberates more loudly than often recognized.

CHAPTER 3

ALLUSIVE-PATTERNS AND EVOCATIONS TO PASSOVER, EXODUS, AND COVENANT IN MATTHEW'S NARRATIVE

Symbols, structures, and patterns are powerful mediums of information. As Xavier Leon-Dufour states, “The universe which the Bible bids us enter is a universe of symbols.”¹ Jeffrey Niehaus identifies in Matthew’s *structure* what he finds “with the other biblical covenants”—a covenant narrative that includes “biographical data,” leading up to “the climax or moment of covenant institution.”² The story that began with the *γένεσις* of the Messiah, fulfilling both the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants, climaxes in 28:18-20 with the risen and exalted Lord. He is Emmanuel, *covenantally* present with those whom he commissioned to actualize God’s covenant to Abraham for all the nations. In these two endpoints of the gospel story, Matthew inserts a well-crafted interpretation narrative in 26:1-30 that evokes the *pattern* of the Exodus: Passover *order to* exodus, *ordered to* covenant.³ In the interpretation-narrative, Matthew’s Jesus was aware and

¹ Xavier Leon-Dufour, *Sharing the Eucharistic Bread: The Witness of the New Testament* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 289. Leon-Dufour further remarks that one way believers enter into this universe is through *remembrance*, which is “to go back to the very source of life and, having there come in contact with God, to be carried into the future by his intentions. In this ‘recognition’ we see that God is at work in Jesus and in us; as a result we enter into the divine work and make the covenant produce its fruits of grace.” Leon-Dufour, *Sharing the Eucharistic Bread*, 296.

² Niehaus concludes,
In sum, Matthew’s genealogy starts with two powerful reminders of the Lord’s great promises to Israel (through Abraham and David), and ends at the Herodian period, when the Lord’s national and royal promises to Israel through Abraham and David have apparently become a shadow, or a parody, of what God’s people expected. At precisely such a nadir, Jesus—the seed of Abraham and son of David who would fulfill the Abrahamic blessing to all nations and also fulfill the Davidic promise of an everlasting throne—is born. (Jeffrey Niehaus, *Biblical Theology: Special Grace Covenants [New Testament]*, vol. 3 [Wooster, OH: Weaver Book, 2017], 4-8)

³ Matthew embedded into his narrative symbolic and verbal clues that evoke covenantal plotlines of the Pentateuch.

fully in control of what was going to happen to him.⁴ He provided theological significations to the fact and manner of his death and deliberately chose the Passover feast as the occasion to offer his blood as a covenant sacrifice.⁵ He performed his last “prophetic sign” in words that are “reminiscent” of the formation of the people of God through the Exodus from Egypt and through the ratification of the covenant at Sinai.⁶

This chapter aims to analyze Matthew’s narrative for three conceptual frameworks: *Passover*, *exodus*, and *covenant*. First, in what follows, the thesis will attempt to explore three overlapping symbols: (1) the Messianic banquet, (2) the feeding episodes, and (3) the Last Supper. Second, it analyzes those explicit verbal interpretations over the bread and the cup in the interpretation narrative (26:1-30). The aim is to show if any allusive-patterns connect the institution narrative (rich with Passover terminologies and covenant symbolisms) with Matthew’s larger story, thus demonstrating intent that Matthew intertwined the *Passover*, *exodus*, and *covenant* plotline as his structural framework in which διαθήκη in 26:28 is its climax.

⁴ Scholars observe that in the passion narrative Matthew pays special attention in portraying Jesus’ control over the events that are unfolding. See for instance Ulrich Luz, who pays particular attention to how throughout the passion narrative Matthew portrays Jesus as sovereign Lord. He writes, “The beginning of the Matthean passion narrative is programmatic. Jesus is the sovereign Lord over the events that will take place, not the victim of his opponents’ power. It is his hour that has come, not that of his opponents. What God wills and Jesus knows will now happen.” Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* 21-28, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 333. See also Eduard Schweizer, who writes that Jesus “himself sets the entire process of the Passion in motion by what he says.” Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News according to Matthew* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), 485. W. D. Davies and Dale Allison note, “The passion commences with a word of Jesus.” W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 3, International Critical Commentary (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 437.

⁵ Similarly, in his schema of ‘*theo-drama*,’ Vanhoozer maintains that the Last Supper is a “communicative act” by which “the sharing of the body and blood of Jesus draws us into the *theo-drama*”: “The Last Supper is a complex communicative act whose similarities with the Passover blend the story of Israel (looking back to the exodus and forward to the return from exile) into the story of Jesus (the lamb whose death would redeem not only Israel but the whole world).” Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical Linguistic Approach to Christian Doctrine* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 75.

⁶ Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1982), 110.

Proleptic Symbols and Actions prior to the Institution Narrative

In Matthew, Jesus' symbolic and prophetic actions are in line with the prophets of the OT "whose prophetic actions are both figurative and efficacious."⁷ E. P. Sanders contends that the vital point to understanding Jesus' ministry is "Jewish restoration eschatology," which presupposes God's fidelity to the covenant.⁸ In Matthew, Israel's hope for restoration is symbolically and parabolically enacted in Jesus' actions. His actions, such as the call of the twelve, his frequent table-fellowship with sinners, his triumphal entry to Jerusalem, and his controversial act of temple cleansing, demonstrate his aims.⁹ Brant Pitre contends that the feeding miracle "is best explained as a prophetic sign to signal Jesus' identity as the long-awaited 'prophet-like-Moses.'"¹⁰ These are a few ways in which Matthew evoked the symbolic significance of Jesus' actions. Particularly relevant is the symbolic association of *table-fellowship* with *the feeding miracles* and the *Last Supper* in Matthew.

Allusive Pattern: The Symbol of Banquet

When Jesus' practice of sharing a meal with sinners (cf. 9:11-13) is read in conjunction with his eschatological teachings and parables (interpreting those same actions [cf. 8:11-12; 26:29]), an eschatological picture of the messianic banquet emerges.¹¹

⁷ Clay Ham, "The Last Supper in Matthew," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 10, no. 1 (2000): 66. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel engaged in symbolic acts and interpreted the significances of those figurative acts (Isa 20:1-6; Jer 13:1-11; 19:1-13; 27:1-28:17; 32:6-15; Ezek 4:1-17; 5:1-12; 12:1-25).

⁸ E. P. Sanders likewise concludes, "The existence of 'Jewish restoration eschatology' is supported by the New Testament, and Jesus fits believably into that world-view." E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 335-36.

⁹ The twelve may symbolize a new community; his frequent table-fellowship with sinners may symbolize the universal offer of the kingdom; his triumphal entry to Jerusalem may symbolize his messianic mission; and his controversial act of temple cleansing may symbolize its replacement with a new and better temple.

¹⁰ Brant James Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2015), 69.

¹¹ Michael Barber, "The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology: The New Temple, the New Priesthood and the New Cult" (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2010), 580. See also, Pitre, who notes, "As Second Temple Judaism understood it, the messianic feast was a celebration not

Particularly insightful is how Jesus pictures those who participate in the messianic banquet as those who participate in the eschatological kingdom (8:11; 26:29).¹² First, then, several scholars recognize Jesus' practice of table-fellowship to be "a prophetic sign," "an acted parable representing an offer of and summons to the blessings of the kingdom of God."¹³ Because of his associations with undisputed sinners, he was called "a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners" (cf. 11:19).¹⁴ Receiving sinners who "respond to the divine invitation" was the distinguishing mark of his call for repentance.¹⁵ Jesus offered "the truly wicked . . . admission to *his* group *if* they accepted

only of Yahweh becoming king, but also of the people of God being ordained into a priestly order. Thus, Mark's presentation of the Jesus movement as a burgeoning temple order and the inaugural manifestation of the kingdom of God blends elegantly with the priestly and royal aspects of the Last Supper." Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 494.

¹² John P. Meier likewise observes, "Jesus' offer of table fellowship to all, including social and religious 'lowlives' like toll collectors and 'sinners,' was meant to foreshadow the final eschatological banquet and to give a foretaste of that banquet even during his public ministry." John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 2, *Mentor, Message, and Miracles* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 966.

¹³ George Ladd also understood that "to invite sinners to the Great Banquet of the Kingdom was precisely the Lord's mission." George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 176. See also Barber, "The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology," 580.

¹⁴ Ladd writes,
 Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God is the announcement by word and deed that God is acting and manifesting dynamically his redemptive will in history. God is seeking out sinners; he is inviting them to enter into the messianic blessing; he is demanding of them a favorable response to his gracious offer. God has again spoken. A new prophet has appeared, indeed one who is more than a prophet, one who brings to men the very blessing he promises. (Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*, 178)

¹⁵ Ladd contrasts Jesus' call of repentance with that of John's: "John called upon men to forsake their sins in view of the coming day of judgment; Jesus called on men to accept an invitation." Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*, 177. See also Sanders, who argues,
 Some support for this view comes from considering, again, the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus. It appears that John's message was distinguished from Jesus' on the question of repentance and the sinners (Matt 2 1:3 2). One might argue that the distinction between them was that John called for national repentance while Jesus sought individuals who were lost, but that both equally hoped for conversion and righteousness. But this is not likely. We must remember that it was an accusation against Jesus that he associated with sinners, while John came in the way of righteousness. This points to a more fundamental difference than those of tactics and audience. John, the preacher of repentance, was not accused on the grounds that Jesus was. It appears that John was the spokesman for repentance and righteousness ordinarily understood. Jesus, equally convinced that

him.”¹⁶ That is, Jesus offered them forgiveness of sins without going through the proper channels of the law, sacrifice, priesthood, and the temple, “as normally understood” in Judaism.¹⁷ Such a call to repentance lies not in the future, “it is conditioned by the fact that God is now acting” in Jesus.¹⁸

Second, the language of table fellowship, as Joachim Jeremias has observed, also falls within the domain of “the symbolic language of eschatology” in its orientation.¹⁹ Thus, in Matthew there is a close association between the concept of eschatological salvation and table fellowship (Matt 5:6; 8:11-12; 22:1-14; 25:10, 21, 23; cf. Rev 3:20; 19:7, 9).²⁰ Table-fellowship symbolisms in Matthew then are picked up and developed parabolically in one of two ways: (1) words and actions in the feeding episodes reminiscent of Moses in the wilderness (14:13-23) and, (2) words and actions during the Last Supper

the end was at hand, proclaimed the inclusion of the wicked who heeded him. (Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 206)

¹⁶ Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 210, emphasis original. Sanders makes a strong claim that the term “sinner” in the Gospels refers to those who willfully “transgressed the law” rather than referring to those who were merely found to be in a ceremonially unclean state (i.e. in reference to purity laws as Judaism construed them). He writes,

The criticism that Jesus ate with “sinners” . . . [should not be taken to mean] that the *haberim* accused Jesus of eating with the ‘*amme ha-arets*, [but] Jesus associated with those who transgressed the biblical law. Making purity and table-fellowship the focal points of debate trivializes the charge against Jesus. It becomes a dispute between the *haberim* and the ‘*amme ha-arets*, and Jesus strikes a blow against the minutiae of the former. One then misses the point of the charge: that Jesus was accused of associating with, and offering the kingdom to those who by the normal standards of Judaism were wicked. They were doubtless also impure, but it was not impurity as such which made them wicked, nor can Jesus’ inclusion of them be construed as defiance primarily of the laws of ritual purity. (Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 187)

¹⁷ According to Sanders, these who received forgiveness of sins from Jesus would have otherwise “indefinitely remained sinners,” since they have not gone through the proper channels of Judaism. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 206.

¹⁸ Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*, 178.

¹⁹ Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (London: Hymns Ancient & Modern, 2012), 233. In the Old Testament, the metaphors of “bread and water” as eschatological metaphors can be seen in Amos 8:11-14; Jer 15:16; Isa 55:1-3. Barber explains that the eschatological banquet “itself may be modeled on the covenant meal celebrated at Mt. Sinai after the Exodus.” Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 579.

²⁰ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 234.

reminiscent of the Passover and covenant ceremony of Exodus 24.²¹ The forgiveness of sin that Jesus offers to sinners now in his table-fellowships is symbolized in the feeding miracles. The banquet is “the middle term of comparison between the Passover and the Lord’s Supper.”²² The meal indicates the coming eschatological exodus and is intrinsically tied to his death as Passover and covenant sacrifice.

Allusive Pattern: The Symbol of the Feeding Miracles

Almost doubtless that Matthew juxtaposed two feeding stories in chapters 14 and 15 to symbolize, retrospectively, Yahweh’s provision of manna now extended to both Jews and Gentiles.²³ Just as there are symbolic associations between the feeding episodes and the exodus story, so there exist verbal parallels between the feeding miracles and the Last Supper. Thus, the miracles looked back to the exodus, “anticipate” the Last Supper (26:20-28), and “foreshadow” the future messianic banquet (cf. 26:29).²⁴ As Table 1 demonstrates, several commentators have noted the verbal similarities and the order in which they occur—particularly between 14:13-21 and 26:20-29—cannot be easily dismissed.²⁵ W. D. Davies and Dale Allison list nine such elements that are “assuredly to

²¹ Both of these three themes (eschatological banquet, feeding miracles, and the Last Supper) centered around a meal. The symbolism of table-fellowship, signifying sinners’ membership in the kingdom, and their forgiveness of sins, is thematically tied to the “blood of the covenant” for the forgiveness of sin” (Matt 26:28).

²² I. Howard Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, American ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 80.

²³ As Allison observes, the fact that the feeding miracle of the five thousand is the only miracle attested by all four canonical Gospels, demonstrates its significance to the Evangelists. Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 238. For the theological significance of the two feeding stories in relation to the inclusion of gentiles, see Michael F. Bird, *Jesus and the Origins of the Gentile Mission* (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 108-11.

²⁴ Allison, *The New Moses*, 238.

²⁵ Table 1 is based on Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 2:481.

be reckoned with.”²⁶ Of these, the most striking parallels are Jesus’ four actions over the bread: “taking, blessing, breaking, and giving.”²⁷

Table 1. Parallels between feeding story and the Last Supper

Elements	Matt 14:13-21	Matt 26:20-29
1. ‘evening’	ὀψίας δὲ γενομένης (14:14)	ὀψίας δὲ γενομένης (26:20)
2. ‘reclined’	ἀνακλιθῆναι (14:19)	ἀνέκειτο (26:20)
3. ‘having taken’	Λαβών (14:19)	λαβών (26:26)
4. ‘bread’	ἄρτους (14:19)	ἄρτον (26:26)
5. ‘he blessed’	εὐλόγησεν (14:19)	εὐλόγησας (26:26)
6. ‘broken/broke’	κλάσας (14:19)	ἔκλασεν (26:26)
7. ‘gave/having given’	ἔδωκεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς (14:19)	δοὺς τοῖς μαθηταῖς/ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς (26:26)
8. ‘ate/eat’	ἔφαγον (14:20)	φάγετε (26:27)
9. ‘all’	Πάντες (14:20)	Πάντες (26:27)

If the connection is correct, then Matthew may have intended the ‘exodus-Passover’ pattern to structure his gospel. The feeding episodes call to mind the manna provision of the exodus tradition.²⁸ Jesus, as the new Moses, sustains his people and brings about their

²⁶ Davies and Allison note,

While these parallels can and have been dismissed as simply due to the common features of Jewish meals, influence from the Eucharist on 14:13-21 is assuredly to be reckoned with. First, the parallels occur in precisely the same order in the two passages. Secondly, the parallels extend beyond typical motifs or themes associated with Jewish meals (e.g. ὀψίας δὲ γενομένης, ἔδωκεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς, πάντες). Thirdly, Matthew has introduced certain changes which increase the parallelism. These include (a) the addition of ὀψίας δὲ γενομένης in 14:15 diff. Mark 6:35 (cf. Matt 26:20), (b) the changing of ἐδίδου (Mark 6:41) to ἔδωκεν (Matt 14:19; cf. 26:27), and (c) the omission of fish from 14:19 = Mark 6:41. It seems to us evident that Matthew intended 14:13–21 to be closely related to the institution of the Eucharist.” W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 2, International Critical Commentary (T & T Clark International, 2004), 481.

²⁷ Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 584.

²⁸ For example, Barber notes,

The elements common to both stories: language of the “wilderness” (ἔρημος; cf. Exod 16:1, 3, 10, 14; Matt 14:13, 15; Mark 6:32, 35; Luke 9:12); the description of the need for food (cf. Exod 16:2-3; Matt 14:15; Mark 6:35; Luke 9:12); the giving of miraculous “bread” (ἄρτος; cf. Exod 16:3, 4, 8, 12, 15, 22; Matt 14:17-18; Mark 6:38; Luke 9:13); bread is provided with another item (cf. the quail in Exodus 16; the fish in the Gospels); the food is gathered up into receptacles (cf. Exod 16:17; cf. Matt 14:20; Mark 6:43; Luke 9:17). (Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 577).

eschatological deliverance. If they participate in the eschatological Passover, then they will undergo the new exodus in his death and experience forgiveness of and salvation from sins (1:21; 26:28, 29).²⁹

However, Matthew did not “envisage the exodus, the eucharist, and the messianic banquet as three discreet events.”³⁰ By associating the feeding episode with the Last Supper, therefore, Matthew made, as Allison put it, an “intricacy of association,” an allusive-pattern between “the exodus from Egypt, the last supper, and the messianic banquet.”³¹ As such, each of these three themes “typologically recapitulates” one another to make up one coherent picture.³² As the present thesis continues to argue, Matthew intended the intricate movement from Passover, exodus, and covenant as a narrative framework to interpret the saving significance of Jesus’ death. Thus, these conceptual and verbal associations, as Allison ably put it, “were for [Matthew] *superimposed images*, and all three reproduced a fundamental pattern of Jewish religious experience, one involving *redemption, bread, and covenant*.”³³

Summary

In sum, if this line of argument is correct, then the close associations between the messianic banquet (eschatological participation), the feeding story (new exodus imagery), and the Last Supper (a Passover meal) function as clues that Matthew envisaged the *Passover, exodus, and covenant* pattern to undergird his entire gospel beyond the

²⁹ On the close association between the feeding miracles with the eschatological banquet, see Davies and Allison, who note, “It seems safe to suppose that Matthew . . . understood Jesus’ compassionate provision of bread and fish to prefigure the coming eschatological feast . . . a foretaste of the meal in the kingdom of God. In addition, both bread (or manna) and fish (or Leviathan) are associated with the messianic feast in many Jewish texts (cf. 2 Bar. 29:3–8; 4 Ezra 6:52.” Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 2, 481.

³⁰ Allison, *The New Moses*, 242.

³¹ Allison, *The New Moses*, 242.

³² Allison, *The New Moses*, 242.

³³ Allison, *The New Moses*, 242, emphasis original.

bounds of the institution narrative.³⁴ That is because, as argued thus far, covenant sits intentionally as the climax of the plot structure of Matthew's narrative-arc, in which exodus and Passover are the backbones of that storyline.³⁵ That Mathew deliberately associates the death of Jesus with Passover and covenant is shown in 26:1-30, which is where the thesis turns next.

Evocations and Significations in 26:1-16

In what follows, the thesis explores five ways in which Matthew deliberately stages the passion narrative with a figure who acts like the New Moses, and who verbally and symbolically interprets the meaning of his own death as having Passover and covenant significance. In doing so, an attempt will be made at demonstrating the movement from Passover to exodus and to covenant to be inextricably intertwined in Matthew's narrative.³⁶

Discourse Features of 26:1-30

As the storyline progresses into the passion narrative, a rich cultic symbolism of Passover and covenant begins to dominate. Though Matthew follows Mark closely throughout the passion narrative, "subtly yet forcefully," he reshapes the narrative,

³⁴ William Dumbrell also recognizes the strategic association between the *Passover, exodus and the new covenant*:

The new covenant was God's final arrangement with his people. The Last Supper was a *Passover* meal commemorating the release from bondage (cf. Ex. 12:2-27; 13:8-9), *designed to introduce the new covenant* and the rule of the kingdom of God. The Passover connotation of the Last Supper made such an introduction of the new covenant associated with a further exodus redemption particularly comprehensible. By its Passover analogies, the Last Supper signified a 'new exodus', to be followed by the establishment of a covenant. (William J. Dumbrell, "Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30-10:4," in *Out of Egypt: Biblical Theology and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Mary Healy et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 292, emphasis added.

³⁵ For a lucid explanation of storyline development and tracing the plotline of the narrative arc, see Jonathan T. Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 172-82.

³⁶ Davies and Allison similarly conclude, "That Jesus' saving death is associated with Passover is part of the Gospel's new exodus typology" demonstrates "clearly the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice is analogous to the meaning of Passover" and whose sacrifice "is the basis of a new covenant." Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 3, 437, 472.

“according to his own theological perspective.”³⁷ One way he does that is by slowing down the narrative in 26:1-2 to stress two theologically significant and uniquely Matthean materials. First, in 26:1, Matthew signals a transition from the eschatological discourse to the passion narrative with his refrain: “πάντα τοὺς λόγους τούτους.”³⁸ Now that Jesus had finished giving all his instructions to his disciples, he announces the one thing that is left, namely, his impending death.³⁹ Second, Matthew expands the common material that he shares with Mark 14:1: “δέ τὸ πάσχα . . . μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας” and associates it with his fourth and final passion prediction.⁴⁰ Particularly important is how Matthew portrays Jesus. He is the one who alone has the authority to interpret the meaning of his death, and his words “set in motion the events that are to follow.”⁴¹

Second, after a brief transition in 26:1-2, the rest of the narrative in 26:3-30 is divided up into two scenes (S1 and S2) which in turn are divided up in two sets of three episodes each (S1E1, S1E2, S1E3; S2E1, S2E2, S2E3).⁴² S1, as Figure 1 shows, consists of three episodes: 26:3-5; 26:6-13, 26:14-16.⁴³

³⁷ Donald Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, The Passion Series (Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, 1985), 48.

³⁸ The discourse marker most probably refers back to the entire teaching activity of Jesus, the discourses preserved in the gospel, and not only the end of the eschatological discourse of chap. 24–25. See Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 50.

³⁹ Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity, 1992), 643.

⁴⁰ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 3, 436-37.

⁴¹ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 51; Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, vol. 3, 438.

⁴² David J. Clark and Jan de Waard, “Discourse Structure in Matthew’s Gospel,” in *Analyzing and Translating New Testament Discourse*, by David J. Clark (Dallas: Fontes, 2019), 90.

⁴³ Figure 1 adapted from Clark and Waard, “Discourse Structure in Matthew’s Gospel,” 90.

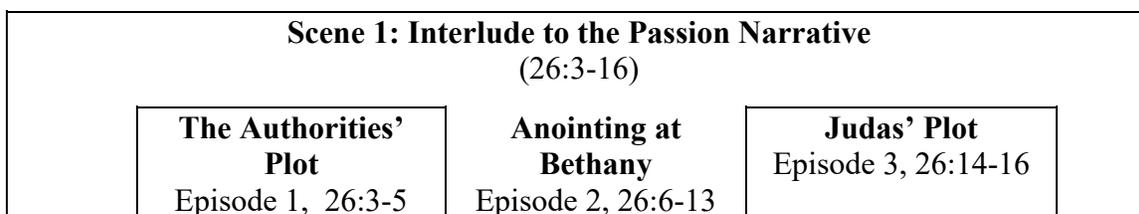


Figure 1. Episode divisions in 26:1-16

Likewise, as figure 2 shows, S2 is also made up of three episodes: 26:17-19; 26:20-25; 26:26-30.

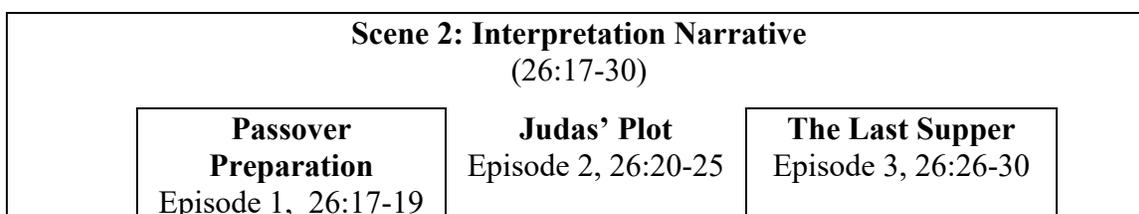


Figure 2. Episode divisions in 26:17-30

In the next sections, the thesis analyzes the episodes contained in each of these major discourse units to show how they are structured and contribute to the plotline of 26:1-30.

Evocation: The New Moses and the New Exodus in 26:1

First, the significance of “πάντας” in the discourse marker (26:1) may be deliberate in creating textual allusions to how the book of Deuteronomy comes to close with the story of Moses in Deuteronomy 31:1, 24; and 32:45.⁴⁴ As table 2 shows, both Moses and Jesus had just finished delivering “πάντας τοὺς λόγους τούτους,” and having done so, they both die.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Allison notes that the narratives of both figures are bookended by “significance mountain scenes.” Allison, *The New Moses*, 194.

⁴⁵ Table 2 adapted and modified from Allison, *The New Moses*. Allison observes that at least four times Matthew places the story of Jesus in manner similar to Moses (Matt 4:8; 5:1-2; 15:29; 17:1-2). Yet, Moses dies on the mountain having failed to enter the Promised Land because he “broke faith” with Yahweh. In contrast, Jesus dies according to plan, “as it is written of him” (26:24), to be a Passover

Table 2. Allusion of πάντας τοὺς λόγους in Deuteronomy

	Matt 26:1	Deut 32:45	Deut 31:1	Deut 31:24
+sun(teleo)	ἐτέλεσεν	ἐξετέλεσεν	συνετέλεσεν	συνετέλεσεν
+Subject	ὁ Ἰησοῦς	Μωυσῆς	Μωυσῆς	Μωυσῆς
+Type of authoritative speech delivered	πάντας τοὺς λόγους τούτους,	λαλῶν	λαλῶν πάντας τοὺς λόγους τούτους πρὸς πάντας υἱοὺς Ἰσραήλ.	γράφων πάντας τοὺς λόγους τοῦ νόμου τούτου εἰς βιβλίον ἕως εἰς τέλος,
+Recipients	εἶπεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ	παντὶ Ἰσραήλ καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς	καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς	καὶ ἐνετείλατο τοῖς Λευεΐταις

As such, the new Moses theme throughout Matthew “coheres into a pattern, a structure of meaning.”⁴⁶ Matthew sets the stage of the passion narrative with Jesus as the new Moses, the new teacher, and deliverer, who would “undergo the final act of liberation on behalf of his people.”⁴⁷ Thus “the story of Jesus is the story of a new exodus.”⁴⁸

The entire sequencing of events in Matthew is not only around two “parallel personages (Jesus and Moses)” but also “parallel plots” borrowed from the book of Exodus.⁴⁹ Thus, Jesus is the new Moses whose “new saving event” is told within the plot

sacrifice for the forgiveness of his followers and sets the new exodus in motion. Allison, *The New Moses*, 263.

⁴⁶ Allison memorably writes, “All along we have been examining the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle; and, when there are all put together, a distinct image stares back at us. I refer not to the face of Moses but rather to a picture of which he is only a part, albeit a very important one.” Allison, *The New Moses*, 195.

⁴⁷ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 51.

⁴⁸ Allison, *The New Moses*, 195.

⁴⁹ Allison, *The New Moses*, 195. Allison further notes, Matthew commenced by replaying the plot of Exodus 1-2 and of the haggadah that grew up around those chapters; thus the circumstances of Mary’s pregnancy, the prophecy of Israel’s savior, the issuance of Herod’s decree, and the saving of Jesus’ life are all recollective. What comes next? The text jumps forward many years, quotes a new exodus text from Isaiah (3:3), and then tells of Jesus’ experience of baptism—which ritual, be it noted, Paul likened to the passing of Israel through the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:1-5). After that we read that Jesus, like Moses, fasted for forty days and forty nights (4:2), after which (5:1-2) he climbed a mountain and, having sat down, critically engaged the Mosaic Torah and delivered fresh imperatives (cf. 7:28-29). Does not the whole sequence inexorably push us to the conclusion that in Matthew’s opening chapters we have to do not just with parallel personages (Jesus and Moses) but with parallel plots, that an extensive typology underlies all of Matthew 1-7, that the story of Jesus is the story of a new exodus, that Matt 1:1-5:2 contains a

structure of the book of Exodus that centers around key events such as the Passover and exodus (Exod 12-13; 14-18); covenant and presence (Exod 19-24; 25-40).⁵⁰ In doing so, as Ferdinand Hahn observes, Jesus' actions belong to "the total complex of the idea of Jesus as the eschatological prophet and the new Moses."⁵¹ Matthew deliberately stages the passion narrative with Jesus as the new Moses, casting "the shadow of the exodus over the story of" and associating the final act of Israel's deliverer (delivering all covenant instructions to the people) with the last act of Jesus (delivering all-new covenant instructions to his disciples).⁵² Thus far, the narrative shows a conceptual movement from the Passover to exodus. As the thesis explores next, Jesus inaugurates the eschatological (new) covenant and restores the divine presence.

Evocation: The Fourth Passion Prediction and the Passover (26:2)

Second, Matthew continues to provide authorial commentary on the nature of Jesus' death in the uniquely Matthean fourth passion prediction (26:2). Since the first passion prediction in 16:21, Matthew's narrative has steadily moved toward Jerusalem and his impending death on the cross.⁵³ Yet, the fourth prediction characterizes all the

predictive structure which leads the alert reader to anticipate, in the events. (Allison, *The New Moses*, 195-96)

⁵⁰ At this juncture, Allison is correct to say, The Gospel is the literary record not of an unsuccessful eschatological prophet like Moses but a successful one, who for Christians had accomplished a new exodus. This is part of the implication of Matt 3:3. . . . "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." The line from Isa 40:3 is, in its original context, a proclamation of the eschatological exodus. . . . In Matthew (as in Mark 1:3) it helps cast the shadow of the exodus over the story of Jesus. (Allison, *The New Moses*, 199)

⁵¹ As quoted in Allison, *The New Moses*, 256.

⁵² Matthew in Matt 3:3 already uses Isa 40:3, which in its original context is a "proclamation of the eschatological exodus," which is a familiar theme in the Dead Sea Scrolls such as 1QS VIII:12-14. Allison, *The New Moses*, 199.

⁵³ As Senior eloquently puts it, the passion predictions "clarify Jesus' identity, insisting that the cross reveals the inner core of Jesus' commitment to give his life on behalf" of the many. Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 30-31.

previous three (16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19), to have cultic and pascal significance.⁵⁴ The deliberate nature of retelling the Passover story, now within the context of Jesus’s death, emerges in 26:1-2. The passion-Passover association signals that Jesus intends that his death would accomplish what the pascal lamb had done on the night of the first exodus. Moreover, the passion-Passover association is further strengthened by the use of the metaphor: “drinking the cup” in the third prediction (20:17-23) and the Last Supper (26:27-28; cf. 26:39).⁵⁵

In sum, the Passover colors the passion predictions.⁵⁶ Unlike the other three, which were forward-looking in nature, Matthew’s fourth prediction inaugurates the passion and locates his death within the Passover feast. Thus, this could be one more clue for the convergence of the themes of suffering, Passover, and exodus in the narrative.⁵⁷ In the

⁵⁴ Thus far in the predictions, the reader is informed that Jesus was going to be betrayed, crucified, and then resurrected. In 26:2, however, the reader learns that Jesus dies as predicted during Passover. More pointedly, the passion draws significance from the feast of Passover, and as such, the fourth prediction interprets the meaning of his death as Passover sacrifice. This is confirmed by the perfect *Οἶδατε* which correlates two events: the Passover feast, “τὸ πάσχα γίνεται,” and the event of him being handed over to be crucified (his passion), such that his passion draws significance from Passover. The observation is further confirmed by the futuristic-present tense use of the verbs in “τὸ πάσχα γίνεται” and “ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται,” emphasizing the immediacy and certainty of these two events. Furthermore, “εἰς τὸ σταυρωθῆναι” expresses purpose. For more grammatical observations, see Charles L. Quarles, *Matthew*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert W. Yarbrough (Nashville: B & H, 2017).

⁵⁵ The cup, *ποτήριον*, serves as a thematic device to link the third prediction more broadly with the passion narrative and particularly with the Last Supper. This linkage corresponds to ‘keyword\phrase’ in Allison’s devices for detecting allusive patterns. See Allison, *The New Moses*, 140.

⁵⁶ The noun *πάσχα* occurs four times in Matthew and all instances of the word are found in the current discourse unit (Matt 26:2, 17, 18, 19). According to Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, the term *πάσχα* (a borrowing from Hebrew) has three different meanings which refer to three different aspects of the Passover. In a context which speaks of “the Passover taking place” (Matt 26:2), the meaning is the festival (51.6). With a term such as *ἐτοιμάζειν* “to prepare” (Matt 26:19), the term *πάσχα* means the Passover meal, that is to say, “to prepare the Passover meal” (51.7). But with a term meaning “to kill” or “to sacrifice” (Luke 22:7), the meaning is the Passover lamb. These different meanings in Greek reflect similar uses in Hebrew. (Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 2nd ed. [New York: United Bible Societies, 1996], 41)

⁵⁷ As conflict increases toward the end of the gospel, the occurrence of “son of man” sayings (26.2, 24 [x2], 45, 64), and his suffering, death, crucifixion greatly increase. furthermore, similar to Mark’s gospel, Matthew locates the passion predictions on the way to Jerusalem, “ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ . . . Ἱεροσόλυμα,” (cf. 20:17). Senior rightly observes, “ὁδός” functions to highlight the Isaianic new exodus motif that began in 3:3: ‘prepare the way of the Lord.’ Thus, as the Baptist came ‘ἐν ὁδῷ δικαιοσύνης’ (21:32), so the just

next scene, Matthew uses Jesus' sovereignty and his authoritative interpretations as a way of authorial commentary to unpack the significance of Jesus' death, to which the thesis turns next.

Evocation: Jesus' Sovereignty and Significations (26:3-16)

Third, the rest of the section in 26:3-16, as figure 3 shows, is "framed by prophecies of betrayal and desertion."⁵⁸ The scene turns to the heart of the plot and progresses in three episodes.⁵⁹ Jesus' acts of signification and sovereignty over the events are demonstrated clearly in the opening episode (S1-E1; 26:1-5), where it is dominated by two accounts that are "parallel in structure but antithetical in content" (26:2-3; 4-5).⁶⁰ In the next episode (26:6-13) Jesus is portrayed as providing theological commentary to a certain woman's extravagant act of anointing his head.⁶¹ Then in 26:14-16, the tension between verse 2 and verses 3-5 finds a resolution as the two antagonists meet. Judas' plot to hand him over to the officials comes to fruition just as Jesus predicted. Therefore, the second scene is framed by two plots to put Jesus to death in 26:3-5 and 26:14-16 (thematically connected by παραδίδομι).⁶² This leaves 26:6-13, which lies at the center of

'way of the Son of Man' will culminate on his death on the cross and is further clue for the convergence of the themes of suffering, Passover and exodus." Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 30.

⁵⁸ Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*, 100.

⁵⁹ The narrative τότε in v. 3 signals a tension between v. 2 and vv. 3-5, highlighting Jesus' complete control of the events that are yet to unfold.

⁶⁰ The tension is between Jesus' final passion prediction (26:2), that he would be killed during Passover feast, and the Jewish leadership's plot to kill him in stealth (26:3-5). See Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 3, 436.

⁶¹ Davies and Allison understand that Jesus interprets her act as "a prophetic deed" preparing his body for burial and that she anointed his head "inevitably suggests Jesus' messianic status: he is the anointed one." Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 3, 444.

⁶² The verb παραδίδομι occurs 15 times at strategic places throughout chaps. 26 and 27 (Matt 26:2; 26:15; 26:16; 26:21; 26:23; 26:24; 26:25; 26:45; 26:46; 26:48; 27:2; 27:3; 27:4; 27:18; 27:26). The repetition seems to connect the episodes into a coherent reading against the backdrop of opposition and betrayal.

the structure with Jesus’ authoritative interpretation. Thus, the scene progresses in the Plot-Interpretation-Plot pattern, which repeatedly draws the reader’s attention on Jesus’ intentionality and signification.⁶³

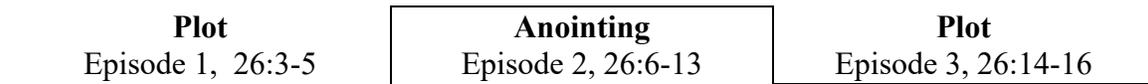


Figure 3. Scene 1 of the narrative block in 26:1-30

Therefore, Jesus’ own words and those interpretative clues gleaned from Matthews’ narrative structure in 26:1-16 serve as an essential theological commentary as to the nature and purpose of his death. The intentional associations between his *passion* and *Passover* in 26:1-16, and between *Passover* and *covenant* in 26:17-30 (which will be explored next), are suggested by the literary structure and authorial commentary.⁶⁴

Summary

In sum, unlike Mark, Matthew stages the passion narrative with Jesus, who is the new Moses, the eschatological prophet with divine instruction to his covenant people (26:1) and through whose sacrificial death inaugurates the new exodus (26:2). Matthew purposefully juxtapositions the fourth prediction (and with it all the predictions elsewhere in his Gospel) with the Jewish Passover festival, which commemorates the deliverance of Jews from Egypt. As it is written of him, the Son of Man will be handed over as Passover

⁶³ That is, he attaches significance to the unfolding events during his last days in Jerusalem. The observation further underscores, as Marshall put it, that “the Last Supper is not a foreign body within the Gospel of Matthew but fits naturally into a sequence of presentation of the ministry of Jesus.” Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 98.

⁶⁴ Kline’s observation agrees with the present thesis in that “the underlying theme of the passion narratives in the gospels is precisely that of their Exodus counterpart—the inauguration of the covenant.” Meredith G. Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1997), 178. He further remarks that not only the “covenantal orientation of the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ,” is explicitly stated in “covenantal terminology,” but it is implicitly stated in “the gospels’ extensive appropriation of the exodus-Sinai experiences of Israel as a typological model in the delineation of the Messianic history.” Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, 178.

sacrifice for the rescue of his followers (26:24, 28c). All along, the new exodus, Passover, and covenant currents have been flowing underneath the flow of Matthew’s narrative. The explicit fulfillment passages, as Wright observed, are then “simply the tip of a very large iceberg.”⁶⁵ The next section builds from this conclusion and makes the case that these implicit prophetic symbols and parabolic actions come to climax in Jesus’ verbal interpretation of the bread and the cup in the institution narrative.

Prophetic and Verbal Interpretations in 26:17-30

The next scene, 26:17-30, as shown in figure 4, consists of three episodes that are parallel to the previous scene, and are mutually interpretive (26:3-5; 26:6-13; 26:14-16). What connected these six episodes in these two scenes is Jesus’ conviction that he will be crucified during Passover feast, as the eschatological Passover sacrifice and whose blood explicitly stated as covenant-blood.

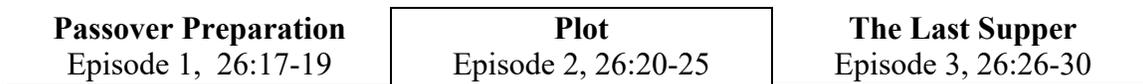


Figure 4. Scene 2 of the narrative block in 26:1-30

The current scene structure, however, is different in that the episodes are reversed. As table 3 shows, Jesus engages in two-fold interpretations in S2-E1 and S2-E3, while at the

⁶⁵ Wright argues that the entire gospel of Matthew sits on the “Matthew’s plot and structure presuppose the entire Jewish story-line to date.” N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God, Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 388. He particularly notes how the first and last discourse units in Matthew begin with beatitudes and ends with woes. Wright then concludes, “I propose the Pentateuch seen as covenant, and summarized as such in Deuteronomy 27–30, part of the great concluding speech of Moses to Israel as the people gather on the east of the Jordan before going in to possess the land.⁶⁰ There, the covenant between YHWH and his people is set out in terms of a list of curses and a list of blessings.” N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 388-89.

center lies S2-E2, where the plots to kill him in the previous scene (S1-E1 and S1-E3) reach fruition.⁶⁶

Table 3. “Plot-interpretation” narrative

Plot	S1-E1
Interpretation/ Signification	S1-E2
Plot	S1-E3
Interpretation/ Signification	S2-E1
Plot	S2-E2
Interpretation/ Signification	S2-E3

Signification: Passover and the Motif of Betrayal (26:17-19)

Fourth, another proleptic signal to the paschal and covenantal nature of Jesus’ death is found in Matthew’s unique use of the phrase “καιρός μου” in 26:18.⁶⁷ In the Last Supper, by associating καιρός with Jesus’ paschal death, Matthew signals that through the death of Jesus the kingdom decisively breaks in history.⁶⁸ As the hour closes in, Jesus intentionally instructs his disciples to prepare the Passover (interpretive act). As such, on the one hand καιρός links “the awaited New Age” of salvation with his sacrificial death as Passover sacrifice and whose blood ratifies the New Covenant for the forgiveness of sins (26:18).⁶⁹ On the other hand, καιρός links the salvation with the coming kingdom of his Father in the future (26:29).

⁶⁶ The theme of the previous scene is in reverse order. S1-E1 and S1-E3 consist of plot to kill Jesus, whereas in S1-E2 Jesus engages in interpretation. In S2, S2-E1 and S2-E3 are interpretations where as S2-E2 is the plot to kill Jesus comes to fruition.

⁶⁷ Senior acknowledges that καιρός in Matthew can be “used purely neutral” to signify a “chronological sense” as in 11:25, or to introduce a new narrative development as in 12:1 or 14:1. Already in 8:29; 13:30, 40 and 21:34, καιρός is used to connote the idea of the day of the Lord as the time when the kingdom invades history in order to consummate it. Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 182.

⁶⁸ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 61.

⁶⁹ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 61.

The next discourse unit, 26:20-25, with its motif of betrayal (cf.26:21), portrays Jesus as the innocent sufferer.⁷⁰ It follows from all this that Jesus is presented as an innocent paschal lamb who dies on behalf of the people (cf. 26:28).⁷¹ The thesis turns next to these explicit interpretations.

Signification: The Interpretation Narrative (26:28-30)

Fifth, Jesus' interpretations of the bread and the cup in the last episode of the second scene (26:28-30) are the most profound interpretations having paschal and covenantal significances.⁷² For Frederick Dale Bruner, the Last Supper is Jesus' "verbal and visual definition of what his death means."⁷³ These dense "metaphorical connotations" such as *bread*, *cup*, and *poured out*, and their subsequent associations with his body and blood, signal that Jesus is engaging in prophetic-signification.⁷⁴ As Peter Stuhlmacher remarks, the Last Supper functions "as a festival of the gospel's true symbolic realization."⁷⁵ Jesus' act of interpretation is entirely in line with the OT

⁷⁰ Ham observes that the recurring Zecharian allusions in 26:15, 28, 56, 64, coupled with the betrayal motif "thematically . . . implicates Judas and the Jewish leaders for their rejection of Jesus as the divinely appointed shepherd." Ham, "The Last Supper in Matthew," 100.

⁷¹ Jesus' innocence is emphasized later in the narrative by Judas, Pilate's wife, and Pilate (Matt 27:4, 19, 24). For instance, Ham writes, "By framing the account of the Last Supper with the prophecies of betrayal, Matthew stresses the sinfulness of Judas' betrayal of the innocent one and heightens the promise of the words spoken during the meal." Ham, "The Last Supper in Matthew," 67.

⁷² Senior acknowledges that, for Matthew, "covenant [is] an important symbol of redemption . . . incredible, indelible bond forged" between Jesus and his disciples who participate with him by eating his body and drinking his blood." Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 67.

⁷³ Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Churchbook: Matthew 13-28*, vol. 2 of *Matthew: A Commentary*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 956, quoted in Ham, "The Last Supper in Matthew," 53. See also Craig S. Keener, who writes, "The last supper was a symbolic act, like the triumphal entry and Jesus' act in the temple." Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1999), 630.

⁷⁴ Ham, "The Last Supper in Matthew," 58.

⁷⁵ Peter Stuhlmacher, *Jesus of Nazareth-Christ of Faith* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 102. Jesus' interpretation of the bread and the wine that centers around his own suffering and death, "coheres remarkably well with the implication of his prophetic sign in the Temple," (21:12-16) and "the cultic nature of the words of the institution and the implication of Jesus action for the Jerusalem temple

institution of the Passover, celebrating Yahweh's deliverance of Israel from Egypt, where interpretations of the elements were offered (Exod 12; Deut. 16).⁷⁶ Subsequently, unleavened bread "is inextricably bound up with the Passover itself."⁷⁷

In light of Matthew's "fulfillment in Christ" motif, Jesus' words and action at the Last Supper underscore the continuity of "the saving acts of God in the past."⁷⁸ Jesus' symbolic actions and words capture "a rich complex of ideas [that] offers deep insight into how Jesus saw himself and his death as fulfilling several different OT types simultaneously."⁷⁹ In keeping with the exodus tradition, Jesus interprets the bread and the wine as his own body and blood, which is significant for understanding the nature of his death.⁸⁰ Nicholas Perrin notes, "The Last Supper becomes to the cross what the Passover ritual was to Israel's miraculous sea crossing."⁸¹

cult." Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 436. For more detailed observation, see Pitre, who further remarks, "To the extent that the entire Mosaic covenantal system stands or falls with the Temple cult, Jesus' statement about a new covenant ratified by his own blood implies that the Temple and its animal sacrifice are obsolete." Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 437.

⁷⁶ Deut 16:3 interprets the bread as the bread of affliction. In keeping with Exod 13:2, 6-9: "You shall tell your son on that day, 'it is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt'" The explanatory "for" clarify the significance of the bread in Dt. 16:2-3. The OT remains the conceptual framework for understanding the meaning of the Last Supper.

⁷⁷ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 379.

⁷⁸ See, e.g., Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The Intertextual Jesus: Scripture in Q* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2000). Marshall argues that the use of OT in the Supper is not merely intertextual but typological: "The OT records the acts of God which are seen to have correspondences in the experience of the early church, with the important proviso that the new act transcend the old." Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*, 147.

⁷⁹ Ham, "The Last Supper in Matthew," 53-54. Marshall is also in line with Allison's remark when he writes, "This would be entirely consistent with what we know from elsewhere in the Gospels of his self-understanding as the One who fulfills the Law and the prophets." Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*, 89. See also Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 378.

⁸⁰ As for the association of the wine with the Passover on Jub. 42:2 and 42:6, see Pitre, who notes, "In this text, written centuries before Jesus' day, we find the first mention of wine as a constitutive part of the Passover meal . . . by the time we get to the first century, both the drinking of wine and the singing of hymns and psalms are firmly anchored in the Passover celebration." Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 385.

⁸¹ Nicholas Perrin, "Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels," in *Last Supper*, ed. Joel B. Green, Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013), 493.

In sum, Jesus' interpretive words and actions over the bread and the cup are entirely in keeping with the Passover tradition. To the present thesis, this observation seems a significant clue as to the overall design of the gospel in which Passover, exodus, and covenant are—to borrow Allison's phrase—"superimposed images" that undergird the narrative.⁸² Before concluding the chapter, "was the Last Supper a Jewish Passover meal," is briefly explored.

Was the Last Supper the Jewish Passover Meal?

The question, "Was the Last Supper a Passover meal, and what was its significance?" is one of the most disputed chronological discussions in historical Jesus research.⁸³ First, all four evangelists place the passion narrative within the context of Passover (Mark 4:17-15:47; Matt 26:20-27:61; Luke 22:14-23:56a; John 13:2-19:42). Second, the synoptic Gospels clearly identify the meal as the Jewish Passover meal (Matt 26:17, 18, 19; Mark 14:12 [2x], 14, 16; Luke 22:7, 8, 11, 13, 15).⁸⁴ In addition, Mark and Luke plainly state that the evening the disciples prepared the meal was "ὅτε τὸ πάσχα

⁸² Allison, *The New Moses*, 242.

⁸³ For studies on this subject, see Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*; Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*; Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*; Scot McKnight, *Jesus and His Death: Historiography, the Historical Jesus, and Atonement Theory* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 251-334; Ben Witherington III, *Making a Meal of It: Rethinking the Theology of the Lord's Supper* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007); Perrin, "Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels"; Jonathan T. Pennington, "The Last Supper in the Fourfold Witness of the Gospels," in *The Lord's Supper: Remembering and Proclaiming Christ Until He Comes*, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Matthew R. Crawford (Nashville: B & H, 2011), 31-67; Andreas Köstenberger, "Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal?," in Schreiner and Crawford, *The Lord's Supper*, 6-30; Craig S. Keener, *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009), 296-99; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 1:386-401; N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1996), 554-62.

⁸⁴ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 256. The synoptic Gospels refer to it nine times. They refer to "the disciples going into Jerusalem to prepare (*hetoimazo*) the Passover meal on the afternoon before the last supper." Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 256. Also, Jesus and the disciples eat the Passover meal. In Luke, Jesus specifically identifies the meal as "Passover" in Luke 22:15. Both Luke and Mark state that the evening Jesus ate the Last Supper was when they sacrifice the paschal lamb (Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7).

ἔθουον” (Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7).⁸⁵ As C. K. Barrett contends, in Luke’s version of the account “to eat the Passover” can “only mean to eat this Passover lamb.”⁸⁶ Therefore, the synoptic Gospels unequivocally state that the meal was none other than the Jewish Passover meal.

John, however, seems to suggest that the Passover meal has not yet been eaten at the time when Jesus was crucified (John 18:28; 19:31; Cf. 13:1). Consequently, scholars have been sharply divided on whether the meal is a Jewish Passover meal (celebrated on Nisan 15) or an ordinary meal (eaten the evening before the official Passover lambs were sacrificed on Nisan 14), albeit having Passover significance.⁸⁷ In his magisterial work, Jeremias has made the classic case that the Last Supper was the Jewish Passover meal eaten on the official night of Nisan 15.⁸⁸ He draws fourteen parallels between the Last

⁸⁵ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 17. Pitre observes, “This reference to the sacrifice of the lambs is one of the clearest chronological indicators that the Synoptic Gospels date the Last supper to the same evening as the ordinary Jewish Passover meal.” Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 256. Likewise, Meier confirms, “What is clearly stated in the Gospels is that “the Synoptics portray the Last Supper on Thursday evening as a Passover meal.” Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 1991, 1:389.

⁸⁶ C. K. Barrett, “Luke XXII. 15: To Eat The Passover,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 9, no. 2 (19581001): 305-7.

⁸⁷ Jeremias summarizes the various attempts to reconcile the synoptic and the Johannine chronologies in one of the following three ways: (1) *The synoptics are right and John should be interpreted accordingly*. “To eat the Passover” in John 18:28 refers to Nisan 15 denoting paschal sacrifices (hagigah) in the days following the night of the Passover. Thus, the dating of John would then agree with that of the synoptics; (2) *John is right and the synoptics should be interpreted accordingly*. According to this view, Jesus on his own authority anticipated the Passover meal and celebrated it a day earlier than the people on Nisan 14. The difficulty of this view is the wording of Mark 14:12; (3) *Both the synoptics and John are right*. In the year Jesus was crucified, the Jews celebrated the Passover meal on two consecutive days since Nisan 15 fell on a Sabbath.” Contra to those who contend that the synoptics followed “pharisaic reckoning of the days of the month and John the Sadducaic,” Jeremias, while admitting its possibility, deems this position to be entirely “conjectural” and lacking in evidence. Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 20–26. Marshall, on the other hand, states that while there is an element of conjecture in all of the theories put forth, the theory “is the most plausible.” Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 74. Instead of regarding “the respective perspectives of the evangelist as mistaken”—since each contains clear evidence for their historical plausibility—Marshall continues “it seems best to adopt a solution of the third type.” Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 74.

⁸⁸ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*. Jeremias offers fourteen arguments to support his position that the Last Supper is the Jewish Passover meal celebrated on the official date 14th of Nisan, the very night the paschal lambs were sacrificed in the temple. Marshall agrees with Jeremias that (4), (5), (6) and (8) confirm that the Last Supper was some sort of festal meal. Argument (1) clearly identifies the meal as Passover meal whereas 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12 fits within the requirement of a Passover meal. Marshall

Supper and the Jewish Passover meal.⁸⁹ If the Last Supper is a Jewish Passover meal, then, as Pitre notes, “everything Jesus did and said at that meal needs to be interpreted in that context.”⁹⁰ Alternatively, if the meal was a kind of, as N. T. Wright puts it, “quasi-Passover meal” (which was eaten a day ahead without a lamb present at the meal),⁹¹ or as Scott McKnight contends, if “Mark has passoverized” a regular meal,⁹² then a question arises as to how much of Jesus’ actions and words at the meal could rightly be understood as having Pascal characteristics.⁹³ Pitre offers a mediating position, a fourth hypothesis,

then concludes that arguments 3, 7, 9, 10, and 12 are the weightiest evidences and 12 “belongs to the central core of the tradition about the meal . . . it may well be claimed that from the beginning the tradition indirectly and perhaps directly testified that the meal had a paschal character. The prima facie impression which we get from the Synoptic Gospels is thus confirmed when we dig below the surface of the narrative.” Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 62.

⁸⁹ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 41-62. Even though scholars have found some of his arguments unconvincing, Pitre acknowledges, “No complete refutation of Jeremias’s cumulative argument has ever been forthcoming.” Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 316.

⁹⁰ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 254. As far as the apparent conflict of chronologies between the synoptics and John, see Jeremias, who writes, “None of these attempts at harmonization therefore is convincing; the situation still is quite simply that the synoptics and Johannine dating of the Last supper sharply contradict one another, and that means that the question remains an open one: was the Last supper of Jesus a Passover meal or not?” Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 26.

⁹¹ Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 556; Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 281. The Johannine hypothesis camp is further divided into two camps: (1) Jesus’ last meal with his disciples was an *ordinary* meal. The Synoptics depiction of the Last Supper as a Passover meal was simply retrospective “theologoumenon.” For scholars who support this view, see James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered: Christianity in the Making* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1:772-73; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 1991, 1:399; and (2) Jesus’ last meal with his disciples was an *anticipatory* Passover meal, a “quasi-Passover meal,” which Jesus celebrated 24 hours ahead of schedule in Jerusalem. Supported by scholars such as Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 556-59; McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 272-73.

⁹² McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 272. McKnight’s statement that “Mark . . . call the meal Pesah because, in fact, Jesus turned a Passover week meal into a kind of Pesah” serves as representative of the view that Mark “passoverized” an ordinary meal. The real issue with this claim is that it is difficult to construe Mark’s temporal phrase “ὅτε τὸ πάσχα ἔθουον” this way (Mark 14:12; cf. Luke 22:15). Most likely, either Mark has committed a factual error to make a theological statement, “theologoumenon” or John’s use of the word “Pesah” is broader than the first meal eaten on the night of Nissan 15. See Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 291-92.

⁹³ Pitre writes,
When the data from the Gospels and ancient Jewish descriptions of the Passover are properly taken into account, it seems clear that the explanation given by advocates of the Synoptic hypothesis for why John both altered the date of the crucifixion and emphasized Jesus crucifixion at noon does not hold up to historical scrutiny. To put it bluntly: the popular theory that John has altered the chronology of Jesus death in order to have Jesus’ condemnation in John 19:14 coincide with the noon

which he designated as the “Passover hypothesis.”⁹⁴ Particularly he critiques the Johannine hypothesis (though it currently enjoys scholarly consensus) that it “is plagued by a number of serious problems that continue to go unaddressed by many of its advocates.”⁹⁵

This brief survey of research demonstrates that regardless of differences of scholarly opinions, a consensus emerges that Matthew—along with the other synoptic

sacrifice of the Passover lambs founders on the fact that there does not appear to have ever been a noon sacrifice of the Passover lambs. This is a serious flaw. . . . Indeed, it is the Synoptics Gospels, and not John, who tells us that Jesus died at the ninth hour.” (Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 330)

⁹⁴ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 331-73. The first three hypothesis in Pitre nicely corresponds with Jeremias’ three, albeit in different order: (1) *The Essene Hypothesis*, claims that the chronological differences between the Synoptics and John’s Gospel is due to “the Jewish liturgical calendars” in use in the first century; (2) *The Johannine Hypothesis* argues that John is right and the synoptics are wrong in their claims that the Last Supper was not a Jewish Passover meal; (3) *The Synoptic Hypothesis* states that the last supper was a Jewish Passover meal. The contradictory evidence in John is irreconcilable. This hypothesis finds support from prominent scholars such as Martin Hengel, Craig Keener, and E. P. Sanders. (4) *The Passover Hypothesis* affirms, “Both John and the Synoptics are right: the apparent contradiction is based on a misinterpretation of Jewish Passover terminology in John’s Gospel. The contradictory evidence has been misinterpreted by scholars who do not give adequate attention to the cult, chronology, and terminology of the Jewish Passover.” Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 259.

⁹⁵ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 373. Pitre argues that when all of the Hebrew Scripture, Second Temple Jewish literatures and rabbinic sources are combined, paschal terminology emerges as having at least four different meanings: (1) The Passover lamb sacrificed on Nisan 14, (2) The Passover meal consumed on Nisan 15, (3) Passover peace offering sacrificed and eaten during the Passover feast (John 18:28), and (4) The Passover week, consisting of seven days, Nisan 15-21. Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 373. See also, Marshall who already proposed, “Since it is John’s gospel which gives the impression that Jesus’ meal was not a Passover meal, it is worth asking whether this Gospel contains any evidence that supports the paschal character of the meal.” Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 58-66. Nonetheless, in the end, his investigation led him to conclude with the Johannine hypothesis that

so much activity on a feast remains a difficulty; and it seems more plausible to accept John’s chronology whereby such activity takes place on an ordinary day, not a holyday . . . [however] several of the objection to dating the events following the Last Supper on the Day of the Passover still apply if we place the events tent-four hours later, and that all the objection can be adequately refuted, provided that we make the reasonable assumption that the Jewish authorities acted irregularly over the trial of Jesus. (Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 58-66)

Pitre argues,

In sum, when John’s account of the Jews refusing to enter Pilate’s praetorium so that they might ‘eat the Passover’ in John 18:28 is interpreted both in its literary context as following the Passover meal described in John 13:1-20 and in the historical context of ancient Jewish Passover terminology, the expression does not appear to refer to consuming the initial Passover lamb, but rather to consumption of the Passover peace offering. (Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 356)

He also proposes, “The apparent contradiction between John and the Synoptics regarding the date of the Last Supper is the result of the misinterpretation of ancient Jewish Passover terminology and chronology in the Gospel of John.” Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 331.

gospels—presented the Last Supper unequivocally as the Passover meal and that this observation is theologically significant.⁹⁶ Jeremias is undoubtedly right that associating the Last Supper as Passover is not merely a historical interest: “The relationship between the old covenant and the new, between promise and fulfillment, are brightly illuminated.”⁹⁷

Paramount to the present study is the conclusion one draws as to what happened at this meal and what significance Jesus attached to it. As the next chapter attempts to demonstrate, that renewed focus of Jesus at the Last Supper is seen in his authoritative interpretation of his own death with terminologies drawn from the Jewish Passover celebration, the exodus deliverance, and ratification of the covenant.

Conclusion

In select sections of the Gospel and throughout the passion narrative, Matthew uses allusive-patterns (eschatological banquet, feeding miracles, the last supper), evocative allusions (the new Moses, new exodus, new Passover, new covenant) and verbal significations (passion predictions, pronouncements, interpretation narrative) to structure the subplot of his narrative around three conceptual frameworks: Passover, Exodus, and Covenant. The analysis attempted to demonstrate that these thematic underpinnings cast

⁹⁶ For instance, Jeremias admits that “the Last Supper would still be surrounded by the atmosphere of the Passover even if it should have occurred on the evening before the feast.” Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 88. Likewise, Marshall concludes, “The Last Supper held by Jesus with his disciples was a Passover meal, probably held in advance of the official date, which is to be understood against the background of the ideas associated with the Passover by the Jews.” Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 76. Marshall also writes, “Reminding those who shared in it that they were part of the people of God who had been brought out of Egypt by his mighty actions, who had been joined to him by the covenant in the wilderness, and who could look forward to the mighty hand of God bringing salvation to his people in the future.” Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 143. Finally, McKnight admits that Jesus “turned a Passover week meal into a kind of Pesah. He did so by interpreting the various elements of that meal as symbolic of his own death. In so doing, the decisive act of redemption was no longer the exodus but instead what God was about to do through the death of his agent of salvation.” McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 272. “See for instance Jeremias, who admits that “the Last Supper would still be surrounded by the atmosphere of the Passover even if it should have occurred on the evening before the feast.” Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 88.

⁹⁷ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 88.

the shadow of the book of Exodus' subplot upon Jesus' redemptive death "within the context of the prophetic hope for a new exodus."⁹⁸ As Wright helpfully put it: "Passover looked back to the exodus, and on to the coming of the kingdom. Jesus intended this meal to symbolize the new exodus, the arrival of the kingdom through his own fate. The meal, focused on Jesus' actions with the bread and the cup, told the Passover story, and Jesus' own story, and wove these two into one."⁹⁹ Matthew carefully stages the passion drama to look and feel very much like the story of Passover (26:1-5; 17-30). As Mogens Müller observes, "in Matthew, the ransom saying is associated with the motif of the new covenant, according to which the new obedience is made dependent on sin losing its power."¹⁰⁰ The ransom saying is then inextricably linked with Passover and the new covenant. The observation that his death is a Passover sacrifice coheres remarkably well with the meaning of his death that Jesus further elucidates in the interpretation of the bread and the wine. The gravity of the moment is demonstrated in that "the Twelve, the living symbol" of God's covenant people, "celebrate the Passover with Jesus."¹⁰¹ Therefore, the story of the exodus, the story of Passover and the story of the covenant are all converged in the story of Jesus, son of Abraham (1:1), who delivers his people from their sin in fulfillment of the covenantal promises given to Abraham.

⁹⁸ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 434.

⁹⁹ Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 559.

¹⁰⁰ Mogens Müller, "The Theological Interpretation of the Figure of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: Some Principle Features in Matthean Christology," *New Testament Studies* 45, no. 2 (March 1999): 157-73.

¹⁰¹ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 207.

CHAPTER 4

BLOOD OF THE COVENANT: JESUS AS COVENANT SACRIFICE

Certainly, Marshall is not overstating his case when he asserts that the language of the New Testament and the theological vocabularies that developed thereafter were “reminiscences of the saying at the Lord’s Supper.”¹ Goppelt writes, “The institution of the Lord’s Supper is an important summary of all OT typology in the NT. The comprehensive concept in which this is all summarized is . . . *the New Covenant*. Jesus is the Christ, the mediator and the incarnation of the New Covenant. His church is the people of the New Covenant.”² The explicit statement to διαθήκη in Matthew 26:28 is neither a notion that suddenly occurred nor is it a mere passing on of tradition that existed in some form.³ Instead, it has been implicit in occasional turns of phrases and scriptural allusions throughout Matthew leading up to the Last Supper. In the previous chapter, the great Moses-like savior, having finished giving instructions to his disciples (26:1), he predicted his death (26:3-5) and died as Passover sacrifice (26:26-30). Therefore, Matthew’s prologue to the passion narrative (26:1-16) connects Jesus’ passion with Passover (26:17-25), but that is not all. If the claim of the present thesis is correct, then there is one more commencement left following Israel’s grand story of redemption: the

¹ I. Howard Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, American ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 155.

² Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1982), 116.

³ Grayston emphatically holds this position. Kenneth Grayston, *Dying, We Live: A New Enquiry into the Death of Christ in the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 353. Similarly, Petri Luomanen critiques Roger Mohrlang and Blaine Charette that “the idea of a new covenant almost appears out of thin air” in their studies. Petri Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven: A Study on the Structure of Matthew’s View of Salvation*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament 2, Reihe 101 (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 35.

ratification of the covenant. Exactly that is where Matthew goes next in 26:28-30.⁴ Matthew retells the covenant ratification ceremony of Exodus 24, now as an act of christological-covenant making: τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης.⁵

Jesus as Passover Sacrifice: The Bread Saying

The leitmotif of the new exodus reverberating throughout Matthew (“reminiscent circumstances”), coupled with the implication that Jesus dies during Passover feast (“keywords” cf. 26:1-25) and the claim that Jesus’ blood is sealing a covenant (“explicit statement” cf. 26:28), may illustrate yet again that Matthew mirrors the narrative plot structure of the book of Exodus (“structural imitation”).⁶

First, the expressions “τὸ σῶμά μου”⁷ and “τὸ αἷμά μου,” may be taken together as a hendiadys to represent his entire self as a sacrifice.⁸ Furthermore, Jesus

⁴ However, when Jesus reclines to eat the Passover meal with his disciples, the actual event of the new Passover, the commencement of the new exodus and the inauguration of the new covenant lie still in the future. As such, the Last Supper functions as a symbolic act filled with Passover, exodus and covenant significance and serves to invite future followers to participate in them through the liturgical provisions.

⁵ The addition of “μου” in “τὸ αἷμά τῆς διαθήκης” of Exod 24:8, as the thesis will argue further, is a demonstration that regardless of the checkered manuscript evidence for the presence or absence of “κατηνῆ,” Matthew implied for the new covenant (NA27 lists the following manuscripts such as A C D W 074 f1:13 etc.). This is not mere covenant renewal; it is qualitatively different from the one ratified at Sinai.

⁶ After extensive research on the first gospel, Allison proposed six ways a text may be linked to another: (1) explicit statement; (2) inexplicit citation or borrowing; (3) similar circumstances; (4) keywords or phrases; (5) similar narrative structure; and (6) word order, syllabic sequence, poetic resonance. See Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 19-20, 140-41. He further developed them in Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The Intertextual Jesus: Scripture in Q* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2000).

⁷ Clay Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 10, no. 1 (2000): 58. σῶμά appears 4 times in Matthew’s passion narrative (26:12, 26; 27:58-59) and may describe figuratively “the person of Jesus as destined for death.” Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 58. See also Marshall, who, following the influential study of H. Patsch, concludes that the linguistic evidence for the Aramaic origin of the word *sarx* is “against the likelihood of *soma* being a translation of *bisra*, and thus it seems more probable that the flesh\blood contrast is a later development. We can take it, then, that Jesus used the bread to represent himself.” Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 86. Furthermore, Matt 16:17; 23:30, 35[3x]; 26:28; 27:4, 6, 8, 24, 25. In 16:17 αἷμα is used in conjunction with σὰρξ to connote mankind in contrast to God.

⁸ Frederick Bruner remarks, “The biblical God gives rites in order to communicate realities . . . [and] he put ‘rites and ceremonies’ at the heart of his saving deeds.” Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary*, vol. 2, *The Churchbook, Matthew 13-28*, rev. expanded ed. (Grand Rapids: William B.

takes the bread and equates it for his body, which implies that he also relates it with the lamb.⁹ Just as there was an association between the bread and the whole lamb (since the body was not dismembered), so Jesus may have represented his body as bread to indicate himself as that Passover sacrifice.¹⁰ Then, in keeping with the Mosaic Passover legislation (Exod 12:8-11; Num 9:11-13), he instructed his disciples to eat it.¹¹ What is implicitly stated in “this is my body” is “this radical reinterpretation of the Passover;” as Hare put it plainly, “by means of my imminent death, a new exodus will occur.”¹² Douglas Moo

Eerdmans, 2007), 619. In accordance with the pattern established in Exod 12-24, Jesus commemorates a new Passover.

⁹ Scot McKnight, *Jesus and His Death: Historiography, the Historical Jesus, and Atonement Theory* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 281. This sacrificial representation would still be true, even for a McKnight who takes the view that a lamb was absent during the meal. Notwithstanding that historical inquiry, the theological concern in Matthew is whether Matthew understood that Jesus equated his own body as paschal lamb and what significance he attached to it. In either case, as the thesis seeks to illustrate, Jesus in Matthew saw himself as Passover sacrifice.

¹⁰ For instance, Pitre, after surveying Rabbinic sources and the long standing tradition of the Hebrew scripture associating the element of the unleavened bread with the eating of the lamb, adds an additional line of evidence from Rabbinic literature—(Mishna, Pessahim 10.3; Tosefta, Pesahim 10.9). These texts speak of the lamb as “body.” He then concludes,

Significantly, both the Mishnah and Tosefta explicitly speak of the ‘body of Passover lamb’ (guphow shel pasha) with reference to the main course consumed during the Jewish Passover meal . . . these rabbinic description of the Passover in the second temple strongly suggest that Jesus, by explicitly identifying the bread as his body, is also implicitly identifying himself with the sacrificial body of the Passover lamb. (Brant James Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper* [Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2015], 408-9)

¹¹ Exod 12:8-11 says, “They shall eat the flesh that night”; Num 9:11-13 reads, “They shall keep it; they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.” For the Mosaic prohibition against drinking blood, see Gen 9:4; Lev 3:17; 7:26-27; 17:10-14; 19:26. In sum, whether an actual Lamb was present at the Last Supper, eaten on Nisan 15, or a day earlier than the official Passover on Nisan 14, Jesus intended the unleavened bread of the Passover to represent his body: the body of the sacrificial Lamb.

¹² Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew, Interpretation* (Louisville: John Knox, 1993), 297. In the NT, Jesus sacrificial death is indeed viewed as Passover sacrifice. Whether there was a lamb present or not at the meal, Paul and the early Christians as well as extant Christian art indicate that Christians understood Jesus as the Passover lamb (1 Cor 5:7; cf. 1 Pet 1:19; Rev 5:6, 9, 12; 12:11; John 1:29, 36; 19:36; 1 Cor 10:14-21). See, e.g., Nicholas Perrin, “The Last Supper,” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green, Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013), 493.

observes that Matthew’s characterization of the meal within the context of Passover and exodus, “unmistakably points to the sacrificial character of his death.”¹³

Second, more significant is Jesus’ identification of the cup with his own blood and the command for his disciples to drink it.¹⁴ αἷμα metaphorically connotes “the death of someone by violent means.”¹⁵ Moreover, the metaphorical use of the noun αἷμα in conjunction with the participle ἐκχυννόμενον, in both Matthew 23:35 and 26:28, further illustrate his *innocent blood* is poured by a violent means.¹⁶ Finally, the verb ἐκχυνν- when used metaphorically, evokes the language of Leviticus (sacrificial libation).¹⁷

¹³ Douglas J. Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives* (1983; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008), 308. See also Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1999), 631.

¹⁴ In Mark and Matthew, Jesus identifies the cup as “my blood of the covenant” (Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24). In Luke and Paul, the wine is identified as “the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25). In Matthew, αἷμα occurs eleven times. Once it is used in conjunction with σὰρξ to connote mankind in contrast to God. Significant are 23:30 and 23:35[3x] where four times αἷμα is used in conjunction with ἐκχυννόμενον to connote the violent death of the prophets which “anticipates that Jesus also suffers a violent death.” Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 67. Followed by 26:28, where Jesus’s blood would be poured out for the establishment of the new covenant and forgiveness of sins. The last 5 instances “all connote that Jesus is innocent.” In all three depictions of the Supper, the blood is to be “poured out” (Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20). Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 67.

¹⁵ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 2nd ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 237. In all three depictions of the Supper, the blood is to be “poured out” (Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20). In 23:35, the blood “αἷμα” of the righteous was “poured-out ἐκχυννόμενον” on the ground, indicating the violent nature of their death. In addition, context supplements that their violent death was a rejection of them and their messages. As such, in 26:28, Jesus’ blood too would be poured-out as a rejected-righteous sufferer. However, Jesus’ poured-out blood unlike that of Abel, brings forgiveness of sins. For more, see Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 58.

¹⁶ For the theme of “innocent blood” in Matthew, see for instance Catherine Sider Hamilton, who writes, “The blood of Abel and Zechariah poured out upon the ground. Verbal echoes likewise link the slaughter of Bethlehem’s children to each of the innocent blood passages, while an intricate interlacing of chapters 2 and 27 draws the deaths of the children together with Jesus’ death: contrary to the usual reading, the blood of the children points forward to Jesus’ blood; his death stands parallel to theirs.” Catherine Sider Hamilton, *The Death of Jesus in Matthew: Innocent Blood and the End of Exile* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 44.

¹⁷ For its potential sacrificial connotations in connection with Passover, see Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 67; Robert H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 18 (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1967), 528; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33B (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 773; D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gæbelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 537.

Put together, with these symbolic acts (“the breaking of bread” and “the pouring of the cup”) and expressions (‘σῶμά-αἷμά’ and ‘ἐκχυννόμενον’), Matthew applies to Jesus the language of the cult. Jesus’ death is the death of an innocent and righteous sufferer whose blood is poured out sacrificially as unblemished paschal lamb.¹⁸ Thus, “I go to death as the true Passover sacrifice, is the meaning of Jesus’ last parable.”¹⁹ The cumulative force of these expressions suggests that Matthew presents Jesus as the “the eschatological paschal lamb,” as the fulfillment of “all that of which the Egyptian paschal lamb and all the subsequent sacrificial Paschal lambs were the prototypes.”²⁰ Yet, Matthew’s portrayal of Jesus as Passover sacrifice takes covenantal significance in 26:28.²¹

Jesus as Covenant Sacrifice: The Cup Saying

Covenant ceremonies of the OT were sealed by blood, and the New Covenant was no different.²² Broadly, a covenant is “something God established to place people in

¹⁸ Unlike the blood of righteous Abel, Jesus’ blood brings forgiveness of sins. As Bruner put it, Jesus’ blood “can wash away all sins and grant forgiveness.” Bruner, *Matthew*, 254. See, e.g., Joachim Jeremias, who writes, “Applying to himself terms from the language of sacrifice . . . *Jesus speaks of himself as a sacrifice.*” Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (London: Philadelphia: Hymns Ancient & Modern, 2012), 222, emphasis original.

¹⁹ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 224.

²⁰ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 223. See also Goppelt, who writes, “No longer does the church celebrate the Passover; it celebrates the Lord’s Supper instead. The church does not hallow the Lord’s Day by remembering the deliverance from Egypt (cf. Deut 5:15), but by proclaiming Christ’s cross and resurrection they do not hallow it by praising miracles of God performed for Israel, but by praising the mighty acts of God that have occurred among them.” Goppelt, *Typos*, 114.

²¹ For the significance of Jesus’ priest-like words and actions, see Dunn, who writes, “His words and actions in the upper room declared the beginning of the Temple cult’s replacement, bread instead of a sacrificial animal, a new covenant without sacrifice.” James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered: Christianity in the Making* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1:795.

²² For a concise treatment on the Last Supper, see for example Craig S. Keener, *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009), 298-302; McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 303-21; N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1996), 560-63; Allison, *The New Moses*, 256-61; Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 58.

a particular relationship to himself.”²³ The thesis assumes a definition proposed by Hugenerger that a covenant is “an elected, as opposed to natural, relationship of obligation established under divine sanction.”²⁴ As Bruner puts it, “the word ‘covenant’ is to the Lord’s Supper what a wedding certificate is to a marriage.”²⁵

Covenant making in the OT was accompanied by three elements: sacrifice, oath, and meal.²⁶ The covenant bond was established as an oath was undertaken, a sacrifice was made, and the same sacrifice is then eaten, thus ratifying it in a meal.²⁷ As such, in the OT, “covenant was inextricably linked with cult.”²⁸ Moreover, as Jeremias observes, διαθήκης in the gospels “is a correlate of βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν,” further linking the

²³ For a discussion on the nature of covenant in the Last Super, see for instance Goppelt, who observes, “The new covenant inaugurated and sealed by Jesus’ covenant blood poured out . . . encapsulates the eschatological restoration of Israel in a new exodus.” Leonhard Goppelt, *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1, *The Ministry of Jesus in Its Theological Significance* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009), 219.

²⁴ Gordon Paul Hugenerger, *Marriage as a Covenant: A Study of Biblical Law & Ethics Governing Marriage, Developed from the Perspective of Malachi* (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1994), 215. Hugenerger writes,

From our lexical study it was determined that the predominant sense of בְּרִית in Biblical Hebrew is that of “an elected, as opposed to natural, relationship of obligation established under divine sanction.” With the help of four “diagnostic” sentences, it was argued that there are four essential ingredients in the Old Testament understanding of בְּרִית, namely 1) a relationship 2) with a non-relative 3) which involves obligations and 4) is established through an oath. (Hugenerger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 215)

See also Wright, who explains, “This agreement between God as sovereign and people as vassals involves promises from God and fidelity from the people. “Jesus’ coming death will effect the renewal of the covenant, that is, the great return from exile for which Israel had longed.” Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 560.

²⁵ Bruner, *Matthew*, 632.

²⁶ Cf. Ps 50:5. For a detailed treatment of the concept of covenant, see Scott Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: A Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God’s Saving Promises*, The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Michael Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology: The New Temple, the New Priesthood and the New Cult” (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2010), 90-97; Dennis J. McCarthy, *Old Testament Covenant: A Survey of Current Opinions* (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1972); Stanley E. Porter and Jacqueline C. R. de Roo, eds., *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2003); Dennis J. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant: A Study in Form in the Ancient Oriental Documents and in the Old Testament* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1963), 91-95.

²⁷ Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 90-97.

²⁸ Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 90.

concepts of “covenant” with the kingdom.²⁹ Guhrt also notes, “If the term covenant does not appear as often as one might expect, the reason is . . . the new covenant and the kingdom of God are correlated concepts.”³⁰ Dumbrell insightfully remarks that in the postexilic prophets, and particularly in Daniel, the notion of the “kingship of God” was seen as the culmination of what the successive covenants pointed forward.³¹ Conceptually, therefore, all four elements are present in the Last Supper. Jesus as the Davidic-Shepherd king (kingdom, cf. 26:29) pours his blood as a sacrifice (cult) to establish the new covenant (covenant) and invites his disciples to participate in it (meal).³² Particularly insightful is the way Jesus symbolized himself as the bread and the cup (sacrificially) and invited them to eat and drink from it (meal).³³

²⁹ Particularly insightful is how Jeremias puts together Passover, covenant, and kingdom: “Jesus describes his death as this eschatological Passover sacrifice: his vicarious death brings into operation the final deliverance, the new covenant of God. διαθήκης is a correlate of βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν (‘kingdom of heaven’). The content of this gracious institution which is meditated by Jesus’ death is perfect communion with God (Jer. 31.33-34a) in his reign, based upon the remission of sins (31.34b).” Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 226.

³⁰ Joachim Guhrt states,
 If the term covenant (diatheke) does not appear as often as one might expect, the reason is that the underlying thought has been taken over in the sayings about the kingdom of God. Linguistically we can see this perhaps most clearly in Lk. 22: 29 in the phrase diatithemai . . . basileian, appoint a kingdom, which exactly expresses the formula *diatithemai diatheken*. . . . The new covenant and the kingdom of God are correlated concepts. (Joachim Guhrt, “Covenant,” in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Moisés Silva [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014], 369)

In regard to the Jesus’ reference to “the blood of the covenant,” Guhrt writes, “This means that, in the Christian kerygma and witness, the work of Jesus was, according to his own word, a taking up and fulfilling of the covenant statements of the OT.” Guhrt, “Covenant,” 369.

³¹ Dumbrell notes,
 The kingship of God sought expression through a whole web of relationships, which successive covenants both pointed towards and also exercised over the people of God and their world. . . . In that sense, the notion of the kingdom of God, controlling as it does the whole of biblical thinking, was always a theological assertion pointing towards a future reality—the new covenant theology, which would finally bring in the kingdom of God.” (William J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: An Old Testament Covenant Theology*, rev. ed. [Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2013], 297-98)

³² See Barber, who notes the close association between the cult (the sacrificial system) and the covenant and these are inextricably united. Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 89-90.

³³ What is missing from the Last Supper is the oath taking portion of covenant making. Unlike the Israelites’ covenant, and similar to the Abrahamic covenant, the human partners do not make the oath.

First, Matthew’s reference to “διαθήκη” is univocally attested by all four traditions (Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25).³⁴ Therefore, withstanding slight stylistic variations, all four accounts agree, as table 4 shows, that Jesus identified the cup as his blood and that it inaugurated a covenant.³⁵

Table 4. Multiple attestations to the covenant

Matt 26:28	Mark 14:24	Luke 22:20	1 Cor 11:25
τοῦτο γάρ ἐστὶν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν	καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Τοῦτό ἐστὶν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν	καὶ τὸ ποτήριον ὡσαύτως μετὰ τὸ δειπνήσαι, λέγων· Τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἢ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ αἵματί μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον	Τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἢ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, ὅσακις ἐὰν πίνητε, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν

Second, Jesus identifies the cup as his blood and then interprets its significance with the explanatory conjunction “γάρ.”³⁶ This pronouncement is then followed by a genitive of product “τῆς διαθήκης,” which is further modified by two prepositional phrases

³⁴ Marshall notes that in the twentieth century a number of scholars have doubted that a covenant terminology was present in the interpretation narrative. They based their argument on the difficulty of translating the Greek syntax back to Aramaic. As Marshall ably puts it, “The argument has always been a dubious one since it may mean little more than ‘we modern scholars don’t know how to translate back into Aramaic.’” In contrast, Marshall argues that “since all our sources contain the covenant idea and since there is no good reason for denying that Jesus could have used it, we are justified in regarding it as an integral part of the saying.” Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 91. Likewise, see Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 594. Perrin also writes, “Some have objected to the authenticity of this saying on the grounds that such phrasing would be linguistically impossible in Aramaic, objections of this sort have been persuasively refuted.” Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 493-94.

³⁵ Pitre writes, Even though the adjective “new” is only found in Luke and Paul, there is no reason to hesitate in describing this as a new covenant in all four accounts, since, even in Matthew and Mark, the newness of the covenant is implicit by the fact that, unlike all previous covenants, it is made in Jesus’ blood. Presumably, this is one reason later scribes added the word “new” to certain manuscripts of Matthew and Mark; they were only making explicit what was implicit in the text, as well as (perhaps) harmonizing the eucharistic words with the Lukan and Pauline accounts. (Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 412)

³⁶ Thus, these three expressions: (1) τῆς διαθήκης, (2) τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον, and (3) εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν are syntactically subordinate to the main clause: τοῦτο γάρ ἐστὶν τὸ αἷμά μου.

(syntactically elaborating its significance).”³⁷ As table 5 shows, all three expressions put together communicate that Jesus’ blood (1) ratifies and seals the new covenant, (2) will be sacrificially poured out to redeem those who partake from it, and (3) achieves atonement; namely the forgiveness of their sins.³⁸

Table 5. Syntactical relationship of 26:28

Pronouncement	τοῦτο γάρ ἐστὶν τὸ αἷμά μου	Jesus identifies the wine as his blood
Characterization	1. τῆς διαθήκης	1. Jesus identifies his blood as ‘covenant’ blood
Characterization	2. τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον	2. Jesus identifies his blood to be sacrificially “poured out”
Characterization	3. εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν	3. Jesus identifies his blood as effecting forgiveness of sins

Third, scholars propose that 26:28 alludes to four OT texts. Most, recognize Exodus 24:8 to be the primary allusion behind the phrase “αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης.”³⁹

Besides, the thesis also incorporates Zechariah 9:11, Jeremiah 31:31-34, and Isaiah

³⁷ Charles L. Quarles, *Matthew*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert W. Yarbrough (Nashville: B & H, 2017), 317. Throughout Scripture “wine” is used as a simile for blood (Gen 49:11; Deut 32:14; Sir 50:14-15). In Matthew and Mark the wine is identified as “my blood,” whereas in Luke and Paul the wine is “the covenant in my blood.” In either case, Jesus’ blood is the point. See, e.g., Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 413. In Matthew the command to drink is then given prominence in that it is in partaking the common cup that the disciples participate in all that Jesus accomplishes for them through his death.

³⁸ More likely, Matthew spells out the nature of Jesus’ sacrificial death in these three ways to evoke multiple textual allusions.

³⁹ See for example W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 3, International Critical Commentary (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 473; Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, 631; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 994-95; Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, 302-4; Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, 57-58; Morna D. Hooker, *The Signs of a Prophet: The Prophetic Actions of Jesus* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2010); Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 380; Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 968; John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans; Paternoster, 2005), 1079; Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 560; Donald Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, The Passion Series (Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, 1985), 66-67.

53:10-11⁴⁰ and avoids a “single text” allusion approach.⁴¹ These allusions serve to cast the new covenant in the light of “the older truth-world in a ‘just-as’ pattern.”⁴²

**Exod 24:8: τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης
(Ratification of the Covenant)**

As table 6 shows, the phrase “τὸ αἷμά τῆς διαθήκης” recalls the covenant ratification ceremony of Exodus 24:8.⁴³

Table 6. ‘τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης’ allusion in Exodus 24:8

Matt 26:28	Exod 24:8 (LXX)	Exod 24:8 (MT)
τοῦτο γάρ ἐστίν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης	Ἰδοὺ ⁴⁴ τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης	הִנֵּה דָּם הַבְּרִית

Moses received covenant instructions from Yahweh, “Πάντας τοὺς λόγους” (Exod 24:3; cf. Matt 26:1), he writes them in the book of the covenant, “τὸ βιβλίον τῆς

⁴⁰ Ham employs Richard Hays’ seven criterions for discerning OT echoes and rightly argues that Isa 53:11-12 and Jer 31:31-34 (strongly conveying covenant and forgiveness of sins) meet most if not all of Hays’ seven criteria of plausibility. Whereas he finds Exod 24:8 and Zech 9:11 to be “typological applications,” presented in contrast to the “my blood” of the institution. Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 65-66.

⁴¹ See, e.g., Pitre, who rightly contends that recognizing the tendency of most Jews in antiquity in harmonizing biblical texts as a unified whole, due to their “belief in inspiration of the Law and the Prophets,” should preclude modern readers to overly limit allusion to a single text . . . for one thing, ancient Jews did not atomize texts as modern readers are sometimes wont to do, but rather tended to read the Bible as a unity.” Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 99.

⁴² Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 66. See e.g., Gundry, who also concludes, “The very fact that all the quotations can thus be classified under specific lines of interpretation constitutes the best demonstration that Mt’s hermeneutical method is not atomistic.” Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, 228. See also Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 91-92; McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 284-89; George R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988), 264-65.

⁴³ As noted, several commentators agree that the primary background for this expression is Exod 24:8. See, e.g., Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 473.

⁴⁴ Gundry notes, “The discovery that the OT Peshitta, Targum Jonathan, and Targum Onkelos to Ex 24:8 have the demonstrative pronoun (in Targums) in agreement with the NT.” Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, 58.

διαθήκης,” and reads to the people the terms of agreement contained therein.⁴⁵ He described the agreement as “the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words” (Exod 24:8). The people then agree to keep the covenant and Moses seals that agreement by sprinkling blood upon the people. Then, “Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up . . . and beheld God, and ate and drank” (Exod 24:9-11). Similarly, after Jesus finished delivering his instructions, “πάντας τοὺς λόγους” (26:1), he sits to eat the Passover with his twelve disciples. Then he evokes the words of Exodus 24:8—further suggesting Passover exists in a symbiotic relationship with covenant.⁴⁶

Second, scholars are divided over the precise relationship that exists between “αἵμα” and “διαθήκης.”⁴⁷ Put differently, does one have to choose between covenant or atonement?⁴⁸ Recently, McKnight forcefully argued in favor of atonement over against

⁴⁵ The “words\ τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ” and the “judgments\τὰ δικαιώματα” in Exod 24 are summaries of the covenant instruction given in Exod 20–23.

⁴⁶ As for the “1 + 4” division mentioned in Exod 24: (1) Moses and (2) Aaron, (3) Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, (4) 12 Pillars and (5) seventy elders of Israel, and how these correspond to the arrangement of the disciples in the gospel, (1) Jesus, (2) Peter, (3) the three, (4) the twelve and (5) the seventy. See Brant Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” in *Letter & Spirit*, vol. 4, *Temple and Contemplation: God’s Presence in the Cosmos, Church, and Human Heart*, ed. Scott Hahn and David Scott (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2008), 80-81. Similarly, Barber writes, “The connection strengthens the likelihood that Jesus saw himself as instituting the cultic rite of the eschatological age.” Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 678.

⁴⁷ Some scholars maintain the concept of sacrifice that αἵμα signifies to be original and the reference to the covenant being “a later interpolation,” whereas others contend for the reverse to be true. Consequently, the associated allusions to the new covenant of Jer 31:31 and atoning death of the servant in Isa 53 are pitted against each other. If the idea of covenant is primary in Matt 26:28, then Jer. 31:31 should be preferred since Jeremiah does not have any reference to “blood.” Alternately, if the concept of atonement organizes Matthew’s account, then Isa 53 which does not mention a notion of covenant is favored. For a detailed treatment, see, e.g., Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, 303-4.

⁴⁸ McKnight argues, The critical expression for determining whether our text appeals to Zechariah or Exodus, or not, is the term covenant. . . . The question is simple: Did Jesus use this term in the last supper? . . . If the term is *not* present in the words of institution, we must erase an allusion to either Exodus 24:8 or Zechariah 9:11. In this case, the *only* context of significance is *Pesah* and the meals connected to that week. (McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 306)

the idea of covenant in the Last Supper.⁴⁹ He takes the concept of covenant to be “anachronistic” due to the early church’s pneumatic experience and hermeneutics.⁵⁰ Notwithstanding that historical question, McKnight concedes that Matthew’s Gospel being theological literature, his reference to covenant cannot be detached from his overall presentation of Jesus.⁵¹ On the other hand, Dunn opted for the view that Matthew “strongly suggested . . . that Jesus spoke of his anticipated death in terms of a covenant sacrifice rather than a sin offering.”⁵²

Most likely, Matthew models the christological-covenant after the “covenant-making” activity of Moses.⁵³ More pointedly, as Pitre puts it, “the Passover is ordered to the covenant” just as it was “the Passover sacrifice that sets the exodus in motion.”⁵⁴

⁴⁹ See McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 293-303. McKnight writes, “When Jesus sat at table over that last supper and spoke of his blood as a Pesah-like event, it would only be a few furious months before his followers would see in that blood, as a result of their pneumatic life, the very reconstitution of God’s new covenant with Israel. That which is anachronistic is often the historic because it is hermeneutical.” McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 321.

⁵⁰ This claim is persuasively refuted by Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 512-13; Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*; and Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology.”

⁵¹ For the historical plausibility of the claim that Jesus “saw himself instituting a new or eschatological covenant” and its compatibility with his first century Jewish context, such as the DSS (CD 6.19; 8.21; 19.33-34; 20.12; IQpHab 2.3-6; cf. IQSb (IQ28b) 3.26; 5.21-23), see, e.g., Tom Holmén, *Jesus and Jewish Covenant Thinking* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2001); David Noel Freedman and David Miano, “People of the New Covenant,” in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Jacqueline C. R. de Roo (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2003), 7-26; and James D. G. Dunn, who writes, “Qumran community saw itself as participating in the ‘new convent’, so Jesus saw the group around him as anticipatory fulfillment of the new covenant.” Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 1:513.

⁵² Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 816. Again, the thesis argues that the *Passover-exodus-covenant* plot structure avoids this covenant vs atonement dichotomy.

⁵³ Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, 214; Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 66. Furthermore, just as Exod 24:8 is alluded in Matt 26:28, so Exod 24:16-18 is alluded in Matt 17 at Jesus’ transfiguration. Matthew presents Jesus as the “authoritative interpreter of the Law and the Prophets.” In Matt 21:11, after Jesus’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem in a deliberately Zechariah the manner, the crowd acknowledges him as “ὁ προφήτης.”

⁵⁴ See, e.g., Pitre, who elaborates
Indeed, a close reading of the Pentateuch reveals that, on more than one occasion, the release from Egypt (which is effected by the Passover Plague) is repeatedly tied to sacrificial “worship” (abodh) which Israel will offer to Moses in the covenant sacrifice on Mount Sinai. Consider the following: “Moses said, ‘Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?’ He said, ‘But I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you; when you have

However, even though Jesus' words over the cup—syntactically speaking—are exact allusion of Moses's words in Exod 24:8, conceptually however, there are significant transformations.⁵⁵ Stated otherwise, Sinai is transformed, and Jesus fulfills the typology of the covenant in Exodus 24:8 by way of contrast.⁵⁶ Since the covenant is ratified by his own blood, Christology and covenant are inextricably united. In his homily on Matthew, Chrysostom makes this very point. “Why can it have been that He ordained this sacrament then, at the time of the Passover? That you might learn from everything, both that He is the lawgiver of the Old Testament, and that the things therein are foreshadowed because of these things. Therefore, I say, where the type is, there He puts the truth.”⁵⁷ The new covenant cannot, in the last analysis, be divorced from Matthew's christological

brought forth the people of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain' (Exod 3:11-12). “And you [Moses] shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, Israel is my first-born son, and I say to you, “Let my son go that he may worship me; if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay your first-born son [i.e., in the Passover]” (Exod 4:22-23). “Then they [Moses and Aaron] said, ‘The God of the Hebrews has met with us; let us go, we pray, a three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword (Exod 5:3). (Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 415).

⁵⁵ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 94. Unlike Moses who sprinkles the blood upon the people, (1) Jesus invites his disciples to drink it, (2) unlike Moses who takes the blood of oxen (Exod 24:5), Jesus pours out his own blood (τὸ αἷμά μου) for the establishment of the covenant. Consistent with Mathew's use of ‘fulfillment,’ in which the reality of the OT text in question is now transformed in the Christ event, as France forcefully argues, so Sinai is now significantly transformation. See R. T. France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1989), 166-205. Just as there is a relationship of continuity/discontinuity between the prophecy of the new covenant in Jer 31:31-34 that alludes to the Sinaitic covenant and its ratification in Exod 24, so is the covenant Jesus establishes in his blood with respect to Sinai. The covenantal trajectory in Exod 24:8 “points forward to the new covenant promised in Jeremiah” and is now picked up by Matthew as fulfilled in Christ. Along this line, see Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 65.

⁵⁶ Ham thus makes “a typological application” by using similar wording but expressing “a different idea.” Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 65. It then raises the broader question: what is new about the new covenant? The “convergence” of two other OT texts (Isa 53:11-12' Jer. 31:31-34) in the cup saying clarify the discontinuity of Exod 24:8 from the cup saying. See also Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 495. Davies and Allison rightly remark, “As the first redeemer made a sacrifice for the people so that they might enter into a new covenant with God, so does the last redeemer inaugurate another covenant by offering his blood, that is, his life, 123 for the forgiveness of sins.” Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 473.

⁵⁷ John Chrysostom, *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Gospel of St. Matthew*, A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church (Oxford; London: John Henry Parker; F. and J. Rivington, 1851), 491.

focus on Jesus as both the covenant mediator as well as the very sacrifice of that covenant.⁵⁸

Another contact between the cup saying and Exodus 24 is the “images of a sacrificial libation of blood, by which the covenant relationship is established and sealed.”⁵⁹ Just as Moses offered “the blood of the covenant” on behalf of all Israel and sprinkled it upon the people, so Jesus invites his twelve apostles who are said elsewhere in Matthew to be representatives of the new People of God, to drink it.⁶⁰ Finally, “blood and the covenant” are uttered within the context of a meal.⁶¹ Jesus in characterizing his last meal as “covenantal meal,” he also alludes that the meal is an eschatological banquet, which he will one day eat with his disciples in the future kingdom (cf. 26:29).⁶²

In sum, Jesus recapitulated “the well-known covenant-making actions of Moses, but reconfiguring those actions around his own suffering and death.”⁶³ The covenantal significance of Jesus’ words is too strong—Jesus, like Moses, institutes “a

⁵⁸ Just as Moses’ life and mission proleptically capitulated the story of Israel’s exodus and the subsequent institution of the covenant at Sinai, likewise Jesus’ covenant-making words and actions at the meal recapitulates the Moses-Israel typology to bring about the new exodus and new covenant. See, e.g., Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 415.

⁵⁹ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 94. See also Barber, “The Historical Jesus and Cultic Restoration Eschatology,” 601. Particularly, Exod 24:8 “τὸ αἷμα κατεσκέδασεν τοῦ λαοῦ” is later adapted in Leviticus to the sacrificial system (cf. Lev 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34).

⁶⁰ In contrast to Moses, Jesus invites his disciples to drink his blood while his blood sprinkled upon the cross.

⁶¹ Isa 25:6-8 modeled after the covenant meal at Sinai states that Yahweh will host a feast on Mount Zion for all nations. M. A. Powell notes, “The communal meals at Qumran anticipated a banquet of the new age at which two messiahs, priestly and royal, would be present (1QS VI, 2–5; 1Q28a II, 11–22). Jesus also expected the arrival of the future kingdom to be marked by a banquet (Matt 8:11; cf. Mark 14:25).” M. A. Powell, “Table Fellowship,” in Green, Brown, and Perrin, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 925,

⁶² Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 494.

⁶³ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 95.

covenant in blood.”⁶⁴

**Zech 9:11: τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης
(Messianic Victory)**

Given Mathew’s complex scriptural tapestry and the repeated use of Zechariah in the immediate context, Zechariah 9:11 should at least be considered.⁶⁵ Perrin, following Ham, writes, “The Zecharian context serves to cast Jesus’ mission in return-from-exile terms and suggests that the cup is somehow instrumental in that restoration.”⁶⁶ In Zechariah “the blood of the covenant” is bound up with the coming of the Messiah, the triumphal entrance of the future king into the city of Jerusalem, and the new exodus of the remnant from “the pit.”⁶⁷ Then, Zechariah 9:11 describes why it is that Yahweh should act favorably toward Judah.⁶⁸ He acts on “the basis of the covenant . . . sealed by the blood of sacrifice.”⁶⁹ Table 7 displays the syntactical relationship between Matthew 26:28a and Zechariah 9:11.

⁶⁴ Gundry summarizes, “Jesus is the greater Moses fleeing the wrath of a wicked king (2:13) and returning (2:20 f.), shining with glory on a mountain (17:2), and instituting a covenant in blood (26:28).” Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, 209.

⁶⁵ Matthew already alluded to Zech 9:9, in Jesus’ triumphal entry to Jerusalem as “messianic shepherd” of Zechariah. Barnabas Lindars argues for Zech 9:11 to be the primary allusion to Matt 26:28 since allusion to Exod 24:8 would require “a typological exegesis that was not utilized at this early stage of the tradition.” Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations*, study ed. (London: SCM Press, 1973), 132-33. Nevertheless, a modest claim for allusion to Zech 9:11 can be defended when one considers how the prophecy of Zacharia has been already integrated into Matthew’s narrative and are repeatedly quoted explicitly. Likewise, see Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 494; Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 63; Matt 21:4-5 to Zech 9:9; Matt 26:31 to Zech 13:7; Matt 27:9-10 to Zech 11:12-13. In addition, Matt 26:15 alludes to Zech 11:12, and Matt 26:32 to Zech 13:8-9.

⁶⁶ Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 494.

⁶⁷ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 415. The Pit is a language used elsewhere “to represent death\ Sheol: Pss 28:1; 30:3; 143:7; Isa 38:18; Ezek 31:16; 32:24-30.”

⁶⁸ The phrase in the old Greek is “ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης,” which is a prepositional phrase that modifies the main clause. As a result, the “volume of the echo is slightly less overt.” Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 63.

⁶⁹ Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 63.

In Zechariah, firstly, the blood of the covenant is described in language reminiscent of Exodus 24, but now within the context of the arrival of the Messiah.⁷⁰ Furthermore, Zechariah 9:16-17 clarifies that the “new exodus culminates in a banquet of ‘grain’ and ‘new wine.’”⁷¹ Similarly, Jesus is already identified in Matthew as that humble king who is also a stricken and betrayed shepherd of Zechariah (Matt 26:14-16, 31; 27:3-10; cf. Matt 9:36; 21:5, 12-16; 23:35).⁷²

Table 7. τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης’ allusion in Zechariah 9:11

Matt 26:28a	Zech 9:11 (LXX) ⁷³	Zech 9:11 (MT)
τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης	καὶ σὺ ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης ἐξαπέστειλας δεσμίους σου ἐκ λάκκου οὐκ ἔχοντος ὕδωρ	גַּם־אֶת־ בְּדַם־בְּרִיתִךָ שְׁלַחְתִּי אֶסְיִיחֶיךָ מִבּוֹר אֵין מַיִם בּוֹ:

Reading Matthew 26:28 in light of Zechariah 9:11, as Wright put it, helps to clarify that “the covenant is renewed in the context of the messianic victory, which will liberate Israel once and for all from her long exile.”⁷⁴ The significance of incorporating Zechariah 9:11 with Matthew’s blood of the covenant (what is often missed by the either/or approach), is that the eschatological Passover, the new exodus, and the new

⁷⁰ The new exodus is eschatological in that the deliverance is not merely from political powers but from death itself

⁷¹ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 416. Furthermore, McKnight asserts that the blood in Zech 9:11 is interpreted in the Targum Zech 9:11 as blood of the Passover lamb. McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 291.

⁷² Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 495; Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, 173; Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 560-61; Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 63; Gundry writes, “Jesus fills the role of the Shepherd of Israel, smitten in his passion (26:31), but yet to smite his enemies (21 :44) and to become the object of Israel’s repentant mourning at his return (24:30).” Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, 209.

⁷³ Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 63.

⁷⁴ Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 561. Wright concludes, “There is no reason to doubt that he intended, in speaking of the final cup of the meal in terms of his own death, to allude to this theme of covenant renewal.” Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 561.

covenant are all integrated in the death of the Messianic-shepherd (a christological focus), who by dying for their sins brings about his people’s eschatological deliverance “from the waterless pit.” This way, Matthew’s christological concerns and covenantal focus in the Last Supper are all united in Jesus’ person and passion.

**Isa 53:10-11: τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον
(The Servant as Covenant)**

The third textual allusion found in Matthew’s cup saying is the suffering servant of Isaiah 53.⁷⁵ Having observed seven most common types of citation procedures in Jewish literature, Moo suggests that περὶ, πολλῶν and ἐκχυννόμενον “taken as a whole demonstrates undeniable verbal and conceptual affinities” with Isaiah 53:12.⁷⁶ Gundry’s analysis also confirms that Matthew’s ἐκχυννόμενον, when compared against the loose rendering of the LXX, παρεδόθη, “exactly corresponds to the Hebrew” הֶעָרָה.⁷⁷ As such, the pairing of ἐκχυννόμενον and πολλῶν, as table 8 shows, all the more “certify an allusion” to Isaiah 53.⁷⁸

Table 8. τὸ περὶ πολλῶν allusion in Isaiah 53:12

Matt 26:28b	Isa. 53:10, 12 (LXX)	MT
τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον	περὶ ἁμαρτίας... παρεδόθη εἰς θάνατον ἢ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ	הֶעָרָה לְמוֹת נַפְשׁוֹ וְהוּא... אָטָה

⁷⁵ Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, 17-22. The seven most common citation procedures are (1) linguistic influence, (2) explicit quotations, (3) implicit quotations, (4) allusions, (5) structural style, (6) conceptual influence, and (7) summaries of events. For a view against the “many” as an allusion to Isa 53, see, Morna D. Hooker, “Did the Use of Isaiah 53 to Interpret His Mission Begin with Jesus?,” in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. William H. Bellinger, Jr., and William R. Farmer (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009), 88-103.

⁷⁶ Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, 132.

⁷⁷ Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, 59.

⁷⁸ Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, 59. Perrin also notes, “Even if scholars disagree as to the significance of this identification, it would be hard to dispute, especially in view of the Matthean leitmotif of blood (e.g., Matt 23:30, 35; 27:4, 6, 8, 24-25), intimations of Jesus’ role as righteous sufferer.” Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 495.

	<p>... καὶ αὐτὸς ἀμαρτίας</p> <p>πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκεν</p>	<p>רַבִּים נִשָּׂא</p>
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First, the Servant’s song in its Isaianic context describes the work of the Servant in sacrificial terminology, whose mission was to bring about liberty and forgiveness of sins (43:22–44:23) and atonement (49:1–53:12), and thus facilitates the return from exile with language coined after the exodus.⁷⁹ This coheres well with Matthean allusion to this figure.⁸⁰ In his role as the servant, Jesus “healed diseases and proclaimed justice” (12:15–21), and as the Son of Man he gave “his life as a ransom for many” (20:28) and achieved forgiveness of sins for them (26:28).⁸¹ The verbal and conceptual similarities that exist between Isaiah and Matthew in their depiction of this figure are substantial.⁸² Equally

⁷⁹ Gentry and Wellum write that forgiveness entails that God is “dealing fully and finally with their sins and the broken covenant.” Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012).

⁸⁰ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 437-41; Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 61. Ham lists texts in Matthew that either allude to or have conceptual influence with Isa 53: Matt 2:23 to Isa 53:2; Matt 20:28 to Isa 20:28; Matt 26:24 to Isa 53:9; Matt 26:63; 27:12, 14 to Isa 53:7; Matt 26:67 to Isa 53:5; Matt 27:28 to Isa 53:12; Matt 27:39–43 to Isa 53:4; Matt 27:57 to Isa 53:9. The atoning function of Jesus’ sacrificial death is further highlighted in Matthew’s preference for *περὶ* and most probably is a deliberate choice, implying meaning, to create an allusion to Isa 53. Furthermore, Ham observes, “The LXX translates sin offering *ἁμαρτία* with τὸ *περὶ ἀμαρτίας* over twenty-five times in Numbers. See Num 6:16; 7:16, 22.” Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 59. While blood draws attention to Jesus’ violent death, “ἐκχυννόμενον” and *περὶ* carry sacrificial connotations.” Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 59-60. Likewise, Pitre concurs that “the language of his life being ‘poured out’ is a sacrificial language, just as an ancient priest ‘poured out’ blood of the sacrificial animal (Lev4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34).” Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 104.

⁸¹ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 437; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 369; Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 61. See also M. Eugene Boring, who notes the saying gains sacrificial significance since the preposition *peri* is “more common in sacrificial contexts (Cf. Isa 53:4, 10; Heb 5:1, 3; 1 Pet 3:18; 1 John 2:2).” M. Eugene Boring, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 61.

⁸² Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 494-96. In Isa 52–53, the *many* occurs 5 times, functioning as literary cue to indicate for whom the death of the servant is: “make *many* accounted to be righteous . . . divide the spoil with the *many* . . . because he *poured out* his soul to death . . . he bore the sins of *many*.” In Isaiah, the servant “pours out” his “nephesh,” but at the Last Supper, Jesus pours out his blood. Just as the servant pours out his soul to death for the sin of many, so Jesus pours out his blood for the forgiveness of sins. For more, see Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 101-2. For verbal similarities between Matt 26:28 and

significant, second, is the observation that within the narrative context of the servant's songs in Isaiah, the servant himself is given as *covenant* (διαθήκην γένους) and *light* (φῶς ἐθνῶν) for the nations (Isa 42:6 and 49:6, 8).⁸³ It is in sacrificing the servant's life as a sin offering for the many that Yahweh "establishes an everlasting covenant," a covenant that has universal significance in its scope.⁸⁴ Particularly noteworthy is the way Isaiah 49:8-12 describes the servant as covenant and simultaneously, as Brueggemann notes, as a shepherd.⁸⁵ His mission, as in Matthew, is "the *gathering of the scattered*," people who "will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God."⁸⁶ Chrysostom also recognizes the universal significance of Jesus' paschal sacrifice

Isaiah 53, see Ham, "The Last Supper in Matthew," 60. Ham states that the words πολλοῖς/πολλούς and ἀμαρτίας exhibit "verbal similarities" between the LXX and the Last Supper. Likewise, "the cup-saying also shares conceptual similarity with παρεδόθη εἰς θάνατον, although Matthew uses 'poured out' as does the Hebrew יִשְׁפָּךְ הַיַּיִן לְהַצִּיחַ."'

⁸³ Isa 42:1-7, 9; 49:5-9 states, "Behold my servant whom I uphold. . . . I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nation" "I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people" The LXX reads, "καὶ ἔδωκά σε εἰς διαθήκην γένους, εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν" (Isa 42:6); "ἰδοὺ τέθεικά σε εἰς διαθήκην γένους εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν τοῦ εἶναι σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς" (Isa 49:6); "καὶ ἔδωκά σε εἰς διαθήκην ἐθνῶν τοῦ καταστῆσαι τὴν γῆν" (Isa 49:8). See Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 102-4.

⁸⁴ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 104. The juxtaposition of the new covenant and the suffering servant "should not be regarded as a secondary development of an originally simpler interpretation of the death of Jesus." Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 104. As stated, the participial ἐκχυννόμενον is conceptually parallel to the Servant's sacrificial suffering for many. Pitre also notes that this observation implies that "that the covenant too is new. . . . This connection is to my mind decisive: there are no other text in Jewish Scripture that speak of a *person* been given to establish a *covenant*, yet Isaiah 42 and 49 and the Last Supper accounts do just that. . . . many commentators on the Last Supper seem unaware of the connections between the servant and a new covenant in Isaiah." Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 103, emphasis original.

⁸⁵ Walter Brueggemann writes, They shall now come home from everywhere they have been scattered, from all directions (v.12). The imagery anticipates the gospel announcement of the great global ingathering and homecoming soon to be enacted: "Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God." . . . The rhetoric concerns a complete reversal of fortunes for the scattered now to be gathered. It is to be accomplished by the work of the servant in the service of "the Good Shepherd." The servant figures crucially in the vision of newness here uttered over the exiles. (Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40-66*, Westminster Bible Companion [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998], 114.)

⁸⁶ Brueggemann, *Isaiah (40-66)*, 114, emphasis original.

to be the crucial difference between the two covenants.⁸⁷ He writes, “That [blood of the Passover] was shed for the preservation of the firstborn, this for the remission of the sins of *the whole world*.”⁸⁸ In light of such observations, Matthew portrays Jesus’ sacrificial death against the backdrop of “the Law and the Prophets” (thus, against the blood of the covenant of the Law as well as the suffering servant of Isaiah the prophet). In doing so, he conveyed that the covenant Jesus establishes now has continuity and discontinuity with that of Sinai.⁸⁹ That is, the reference to the blood of the covenant—a strong claim to the renewal of the Mosaic covenant—is picked up typologically and further developed in conjunction with Isaiah 53 to underscore its universal significance for “the peoples of the world.”⁹⁰ Furthermore, if the allusion to Jeremiah. 31:31 is sustained, then Sinai is further transformed into a christologically defined covenant, i.e., what Jesus achieves becomes the basis for the forgiveness of sins.⁹¹

**Jer 31:31-34: εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν
(Forgiveness as the New Covenant)**

The interpretation of the cup concludes with another allusion to Jeremiah 31:31;

⁸⁷ Contra McKnight, who views “covenant and Pesah” to be “countries and ideas apart,” in Chrysostom’s thinking, however, the two are related concepts. McKnight, *Jesus and His Death*, 308.

⁸⁸ Chrysostom, *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom*, 492.

⁸⁹ Jeremias concludes, “This is therefore what Jesus said at the Last Supper about the meaning of his death: his death is the vicarious death of the suffering servant, which atones for the sins of the ‘many,’ the peoples of the world, which ushers in the beginning of the final salvation and which effects the new covenant with God [emphasis original].” Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 231. See also Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 104.

⁹⁰ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 231.

⁹¹ In the last analysis, the reference to “forgiveness of sins,” should be read in conjunction with Matthew’s overall presentation about sin’s forgiveness in his Gospel. In Matt 26:28, Jesus’ blood achieves forgiveness of sins; in Matt 1:21 Jesus saves his people from their sins; in Matt 6:12, the plea is for divine forgiveness in the Lord’s prayer; and in Matt 9:1-8, Jesus has authority to forgive sins and so on.

namely, the forgiveness of sins.⁹² Forgiveness is “the gift of the time of salvation.”⁹³ In Jeremiah 31:31-34, Yahweh promised that he will yet cut a new covenant with the house of Judah and Israel, but it will be “unlike” the one he made at Sinai.⁹⁴ The term of the new covenant entails that the human partners will have the law written in their hearts, receive forgiveness of sins, and will know Yahweh personally. Jeremiah then contrasts this new and everlasting covenant with the one ratified at Sinai in Exodus 24:8.⁹⁵

First, as table 9 shows, Gundry observes that Matthew’s ‘ἄφεσιν’ corresponds “exactly to the meaning of נָלַח against the free ἴλεως ἔσομαι of the LXX.”⁹⁶ Furthermore, the uses of διαθήκη, ἄφεσιν/נָלַח, and ἁμαρτιῶν within the context of a covenant that is different from Sinai (both in Jeremiah and Matthew), provide further support that Matthew 26:28 has conceptual and verbal affinities with the new covenant promise of Jeremiah 31:31-34.⁹⁷

Table 9. εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν: Allusion in Jeremiah 31:34

Matt 26:28c	Jer 38:34 (LXX)	Jer 31:34 (MT)
εἰς ἄφεσιν	ἴλεως ἔσομαι	אֶלֶח לְעוֹנִים

⁹² However, several commentators doubt that forgiveness of sins in Matthew alludes to Jer 31:34. In Matthew, as argued in the present thesis, intertextual connections are only one way of drawing reader’s attention to the theme of fulfillment in Christ. Just as the new covenant that was predicated by Jeremiah was a typological fulfillment of the Mosaic covenant (Exod 24:8), so does Matthew in keeping with Jeremiah’s prophecy presents the covenant that Jesus inaugurates as the fulfillment of both the Mosaic covenant and the new covenant of the prophets. For example, see Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 147.

⁹³ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 236.

⁹⁴ Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 61.

⁹⁵ Jeremiah’s prophecy refers this new covenant as everlasting in Jer 32:40; cf. Gen 9:16; 17:7; 2 Sam 7:13; Isa 9:7; 55:3; Ezek 16:16. See Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 61.

⁹⁶ Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel*, 58.

⁹⁷ διαθήκη occurs 4 times in Jer 38:31-34 (LXX). In addition, there is a broader NT association of Jer 31:31-34 with the “shedding of blood” and “forgiveness” of sin in Heb 8:17-13; 9:10; 16-18. Furthermore, Ham notes for likely allusions to Jeremiah in Matt 11:29 to Jer 6:16; Matt 21:13 to Jer 7:11; Matt 23:38 to Jer 12:7; Matt 7:22 to Jer 14:14; Matt 23:38 to Jer 22:5; Matt 1:11 to Jer 27:20; Matt 11:28 to Jer 31:25; Matt 27:9-10; to Jer 32:6-9; Matt 26:65 to Jer 36:24. Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 60n50.

ἁμαρτιῶν	ταῖς ἀδικίαις αὐτῶν καὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν	ἁμαρτιῶν
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Second, as Matera observes, in contrast to Mark 1:4 in which John’s baptism is depicted as “εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν,” Matthew 3:4-6 lacks such reference.⁹⁸ It “is as though Matthew has withheld the phrase for the cup saying . . . [to show] the uniqueness of Jesus’ ministry and death” by reserving “forgiveness of sins to Jesus.”⁹⁹ In sum, thematically speaking, Matthew not only presents Jesus as the suffering Son of Man who dies as a ransom for many (20:29), but also as the one who has taken up the task of saving his people from their sins (1:21) and who alone has a unique authority to forgive their sins (9:1-8).¹⁰⁰ This theme of forgiveness that has a strong christological focus in Matthew is then completed at the Last Supper by explaining the question: “how does Jesus forgive sins?”¹⁰¹ God’s covenantal faithfulness to forgive his people’s sin is fulfilled in Jesus’s

⁹⁸ Frank Matera, *Passion Narratives and Gospel Theologies: Interpreting the Synoptics through Their Passion Stories* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 93. Marshall also rightly notes that the idea of “for the forgiveness of sin” with respect to John’s baptism in Matthew was not entirely removed from the Baptists ministry and appears that Matthew rephrased it so that Jesus’ preaching (Matt 4:17) would be similar to John’s. Marshall concludes, “This suggests that Matthew didn’t deliberately drop the idea of forgiveness from the story of John, but rather that he saved up the phrase and used it to indicate more clearly the effects of the atoning death of Jesus.” See also Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 100.

⁹⁹ Matera, *Passion Narratives and Gospel Theologies*, 93. Gurtner also notes, “It is not John’s baptism of repentance that is for the forgiveness of sins (Mark), but Jesus’ blood . . . a clear metaphor for his death (27:4, 24, 25; cf. 27:6, 8).” Daniel M. Gurtner, *The Torn Veil: Matthew’s Exposition of the Death of Jesus*, reissue ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 134.

¹⁰⁰ For instance, Perrin observes that the prepositional phrase ‘εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν’ functions in one of four ways: (1) it alludes to the New Covenant prophecy of Jeremiah (Jer 31:31-34; Cf. Matt 2:18), (2) further develops the programmatic statement in Matt 1:21 that “Jesus will save his people from their sins,” (3) fulfills the plea “for divine forgiveness” in the Lord’s prayer (Matt 6:12), and (4) further develops earlier Christological claims “gives significant backing to Jesus’ controversial act of forgiveness (e.g., Matt 9:1-8).” Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 495.

¹⁰¹ Jeremias helpfully writes, “Through the appropriation of the forgiveness of sins the disciples become the redeemed community of the End time. This is what resolves the remarkable contrast between the universalistic emphasis of the ‘for many’ and the restricted nature of the small group to which Jesus offers his gift. As recipient of Jesus’ gift the disciples are representatives of the new people of God.” Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 236-37.

death, and forgiveness is the *sine qua non* mark of the new covenant.¹⁰²

Summary and Conclusion

If all four OT allusions are sustained, then the statement “my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” in 26:28 assigns twofold theological implications to Jesus’ death as covenant sacrifice. First, as observations have been made, there are “striking number of contextual and intertextual linkages between Jesus’ words at the Last Supper and all these biblical prophecies of the future covenant.”¹⁰³ Matthew depicted Jesus as the messianic shepherd whose blood as covenant sacrifice ratified a new covenant (Zech 9:9-11; Exod 24:8); He is the servant of Isaiah, given as covenant for the nations, effecting universal salvation (53:10-11), and offering forgiveness of sins (Jer 31:31-33). As France puts it, in addition to “the fulfillment of the new exodus typology” (cf. 2:15; 4:1-11), Matthew adds “shocking new dimension”; namely, “Jesus is not only the new Israel . . . but himself also the sacrifice by which it is to be achieved.”¹⁰⁴ His words over the cup not only “anticipate” them but also “effect” them.¹⁰⁵ Ridderbos concludes, “The whole structure of the gospel preached by Jesus is

¹⁰² After surveying the NT, Morris also concludes that for NT authors “forgiveness of sin” is the distinguishing mark of the new covenant: “It will not be seriously disputed that the New Testament writers conceived of the death of Christ as necessary to the forgiveness of sin, so that where they speak of this forgiveness as an essential element in the new covenant they clearly make the death of the Lord integral to the process, and not merely something incidental.” Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 108.

¹⁰³ Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 99. See also Hooker, who observes the purpose for these intertextual linkages: “Israel looked backwards to the great deliverance of the exodus and forwards to the final deliverance of the messianic age. We have to interpret the action of Jesus, therefore, as looking both backwards and forwards, as dramatizing a work of God that was both past and future, and as involving the disciples in a task that had partly been completed but in part lay ahead of them.” Hooker, *The Signs of a Prophet*, 90.

¹⁰⁴ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 988.

¹⁰⁵ Ham argues, “Jesus claims that he will die and that his death brings a covenant on behalf of the many. He announces that his death fulfills his destiny, namely the forgiveness of sins. His words, however, do not simply announce what is to come; as prophetic words they anticipate and even affect what is to come. Not only do they show an awareness of his coming death, his words freely make it already a fact.” Ham, “The Last Supper in Matthew,” 67.

determined . . . the entire gospel of the kingdom can be explained in the categories of the covenant promised by God.”¹⁰⁶

Second, in depicting Jesus’ death as a covenant sacrifice, Matthew also transformed these covenantal promises in light of the new era of salvation history in Christ. In other words, yes, the portrayal of Jesus as covenant sacrifice does share key genetic materials with OT covenant terminologies and exhibit conceptual and verbal affinities with them. Yet, there is a sense in which their fulfillments seem to be transposed into a different key (into a new contextual environment of salvation history) in which Passover, exodus, and covenant are all coherently united (christologically) in the person and passion of Jesus.¹⁰⁷ As Leon-Dufour puts it, “Old vocabulary, new reality.”¹⁰⁸ His death not only “would atone for Israel’s covenantal unfaithfulness but also would seal the terms of a new covenant, affording a fresh basis for a new salvific economy.”¹⁰⁹ By drinking from the cup, the disciples entered into the new covenant.¹¹⁰ As such, Matthew’s new covenant feels different from what is expected of mere covenant renewals.¹¹¹ It is

¹⁰⁶ Herman N. Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom*, trans. H. de Jongste (Ontario: P & R, 1962), 200-201. Carson also agrees with Ridderbos when he writes, “The event through which Messiah saves his people from their sins (Matt 1:21) is his sacrificial death, and the resulting relation between God and the messianic community is definable in terms of covenant, an agreement with stipulations—promises of blessing and sustenance and with threats of cursing all brought here into legal force by the shedding of blood.” Carson, *Matthew*, 537.

¹⁰⁷ Kim Huat Tan writes, “The upshot of all this is that the open-ended covenantal story of Israel and God is completed by Jesus’ offering of his life. The new locus of covenant identity is no longer to be found in Moses but in Jesus.” Kim Huat Tan, *Mark: A New Covenant Commentary*, New Covenant Commentary (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015), 196. Similarly, Goppelt recognizes, “The typological difference inherent in all these typological relationships is obvious. There it was the blood of animals sacrificed according to God’s command; here the self-sacrifice of the Son of God. There it was an earthly people here the eternal ‘saints of the Most High.’ The Passover re-presents an event in redemptive history; in the Lord’s Supper one is present who is himself ‘a covenant for the people.’” Goppelt, *Typos*, 114.

¹⁰⁸ Xavier Leon-Dufour, *Sharing the Eucharistic Bread: The Witness of the New Testament* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 154.

¹⁰⁹ Perrin, “The Last Supper,” 494.

¹¹⁰ Leon-Dufour, *Sharing the Eucharistic Bread*, 154.

¹¹¹ See, e.g., Tan, *Mark*, 193-97. Tan is certainly right in observing the juxtaposition of the story of the exodus and the story of Jesus when he writes:

much more than that. It is christological-covenant in that the person himself is given as covenant (cf. Isa 49-55). Matthew's "blood of the covenant" is the blood of Emmanuel, who embodied the God of Israel in his person, words and deeds, and whose saving significance stretches beyond the boundaries of the lost sheep of Israel. If this is true, as Pitre observes, then

If Jesus is not only alluding to Mount Sinai, but to biblical prophecies of the new exodus, then his apparent fusion of Passover and covenant imagery makes perfect sense. By the blood of his covenant . . . he is setting in motion the eschatological exodus spoken of by the prophets. . . . In other words, *there is no need to choose between "Passover" or "covenant," for the exodus unites them both*. Jesus is performing a sign of the new Passover and the new covenant, the constitutive elements of a new exodus.¹¹²

In short, Jesus, by rescuing his people in a new exodus and by establishing the new covenant, respectively, brings about the forgiveness of sins. In doing so, Matthew's Jesus gathers God's eschatological people and reconstitutes them around the meal (26:29).¹¹³ This renewed focus on the covenant community and divine presence in the Last Supper (26:29), and the personal transformation it brings to those who participate in this new covenant will be examined briefly in the next chapter.

To understand the full importance of this, we must think of two parallel stories which are intertwined: the story of the Exodus and the story of Jesus. The Passover meal reminds the Jews of the deliverance from Egypt and the covenant at Mt Sinai that ensued. In the establishment of this covenant, the blood of an animal was shed. Hence, when Jesus identifies the cup as his blood of the covenant, he seeks to communicate two propositions. The first is that his ministry and death are connected intimately with Israel's covenant with God. Far from being a religious deviant, Jesus is actually a faithful Israelite. However, if the blood of the Sinaitic covenant has already been shed, why does blood need to be shed again? This brings us to the second proposition. What Moses originally ratified is no longer tenable, otherwise there would be no need for further blood to be shed. In other words, what Jesus is offering is either a renewal of the covenant, or a new covenant altogether. (Tan, *Mark*, 195-96)

¹¹² Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper*, 416, emphasis original. See also Goppelt, who writes, "The profound significance of what Jesus did in instituting the Lord's Supper is fully apparent when one remembers that the first Passover occurred at the time of the deliverance from Egypt and the establishment of the first covenant." Goppelt, *Typos*, 112.

¹¹³ For helpful discussion on the significance of the cup for exile-return and reconstitution of the people of God, see for example Perrin, "The Last Supper," 494. The human partners of the New Covenant in Jer 31:31-34 are the house of Israel; in Ezekiel it is established with Jerusalem, Samaria and even with Sodom (Ezek 16:61, 46); Zechariah clearly links the future covenant to God's plan to "restore" both Judah and Ephraim on the day when the covenant is established by the blood of the covenant (9:13). Perrin notes, "The Zecharian context serves to cast Jesus' mission in return from exile terms and suggest that the cup is somehow instrumental in that restoration." Perrin, "The Last Supper," 494.

CHAPTER 5
INTERIORITY AND THE NEW
COVENANT IN MATTHEW

As Jeremiah 31:31-34 demonstrates, the new covenant is not “covenant *ex nihilo*.” It is instead a *renewed* covenant, a phase II installment of the Abrahamic covenant, now that the first is broken.¹ In fact, Hahn states, “The new covenant is not a complete *novum*; it is the renewal of the Davidic covenant.”² The weakness of the mosaic covenant lies in its inability to deal with the unfaithfulness of the human partner in their hard-hearted rebellion against God.³ As Gorman puts it nicely, “The renovation [of the new covenant] is such, in fact, that it can appear that the old has been replaced by the new rather than that the old has become the new for those who believe Jesus to be God’s Messiah.”⁴ Here two points converge: covenant-plot and covenantal realities (concepts). In the previous chapters, this thesis attempted to show the Exodus-plotline to be the subplot of Matthew’s passion narrative, in which Passover, Exodus, covenant, and divine presence play a significant role.⁵ In this chapter, the attempt is to demonstrate if Matthew reflects

¹ I first heard the expression “phase II,” with respect to the new covenant, from Jason Derouchie in one of his talk on OT theology. For texts that show the former covenant was breakable, see Jer 11:10; Deut 31:16, 20; Lev 26:15; Ezek 16:59; 44:7. For a detailed survey on the new covenant text of Jeremiah, see e.g., Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, Anchor Yale Bible, vol. 21B (New York: Yale University Press, 2008), 467.

² Scott Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: A Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God’s Saving Promises*, The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 226.

³ Cf. Deut 29:19; Jer 3:17; 7:24; 9:14; 11:8; 13:10; 16:12; 18:12; 23:17; Ps 81:12.

⁴ Michael J. Gorman, *The Death of the Messiah and the Birth of the New Covenant: A (Not So) New Model of the Atonement* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 23. Gorman notes, “The difference is subtle but significant.” Gorman, *The Death of the Messiah and the Birth of the New Covenant*, 23.

⁵ Hahn observes that by identifying the cup with the new covenant “Jesus marks this meal . . . as covenant renewal meal for the new covenant, just as Passover was the covenant renewal meal par excellence of the mosaic covenant.” Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 226.

distinctive new covenant realities as predicted in the OT.⁶ One of the critical indicators of the new covenant in Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's versions is interiority: transformed heart and transcribed law, knowledge of God, and reception of the Spirit.⁷

When one turns to Matthew, there are implicit covenant realities that, as Allison writes, "The informed imaginations of Matthew's first hearers" would readily recognize and that Matthew was able to "access a common universe of meaning through connotative speech."⁸ Thus, in what follows, this thesis explores the concept of interiority and Jesus' reception of the Spirit as key covenantal concepts in Matthew.

⁶ Gorman summarizes the realities of the new covenant in nine adjectives: "Liberated, restored, forgiven, sanctified, covenantally faithful, empowered, missional, peace-filled, and permanent." Gorman, *The Death of the Messiah and the Birth of the New Covenant*, 27. See also Müller, who observes four characteristics that emerged out of the prophetic pronouncement of the new covenant into the first Gospel: (1) cleansing through forgiveness of sins, (2) internalization of the will of God with renewed heart, (3) indwelling of the Spirit of God, who creates obedience as a life-giving power, and (4) heightened closeness to God which expresses itself in a true relation to God. Mogens Müller, "Bundesideologie Im Matthäusevangelium: Die Vorstellung Vom Neuen Bund Als Grundlage Der Matthäischen Gesetzesverkündigung," *New Testament Studies* 58, no. 1 (January 2012): 37. Furthermore, Gentry and Wellum summarize the new covenant promises of Jeremiah as follows: (1) "the new covenant is the divinely promised answer to the perennial problem of Israel's hard-hearted rebellion against the Lord;" (2) in the new covenant, "the תורה ("instruction") of God will be internalised and written upon the heart, the center of one's life, i.e., the inner person where one reasons, feels, and makes decisions and plans;" (3) the covenant relationship with God "is the immediate result of God's 'writing' the divine direction for living and the instruction of the new covenant upon the hearts of believers;" (4) the inauguration of the new covenant will result in a community in which, "They will no longer teach each other, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, declares the LORD" (Jer. 31:34); and (5) the expression 'I will cut a new covenant' (kārat bērit) "shows that God is not simply confirming or reestablishing or upholding the Sinai covenant in a covenant renewal; he is initiating or inaugurating a new covenant. Therefore the new covenant is not the old covenant. It is a new covenant. This automatically renders the Israelite covenant obsolete as a code or formalised agreement." Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 503-13.

⁷ Lundbom notes, "This new relationship, which Yahweh himself will create, is anticipated in other terms by Jeremiah (24:7; 32:38-40; 50:5) and also by Ezekiel (Ezek 16:60; 34:25; 36:27-28; 37:26), Second Isaiah (Isa 42:6; 49:8; 54:10; 55:1-5; 59:21; 61:8), and Malachi (Mal 3:1; cf. 2:1-9). The new covenant forms the centerpiece of a larger hope that includes a new act of salvation, a new Zion, and a new Davidic king." Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21-36*, 466.

⁸ Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 323.

Interiority in Matthew

Noteworthy for the present thesis is the relatively extensive use of the metaphor “heart” in Matthew. For Mohrlang, the heart is Matthew’s “inner source of moral attitudes and actions.”⁹ Outward actions and behaviors are expressions of the heart (12:35); the condition of one’s inner eye is of supreme importance since “from it flow the issues of life” (6:22).¹⁰ The frequent metaphor for the condition of one’s *interiority* is illustrated by the “tree and its fruit” (3:8, 10; 7:16-20; 12:33-35). Therefore, true disciples, as Mohrlang insists, “by their own fruits” reveal “the real nature of their own heart.”¹¹ In contrast, the Pharisees and scribes were indicted for their preoccupations with the external (15:7; 22:18; 23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29; cf. 6.2, 5, 16) and their disregard for the weightiest matters of “inner righteousness, integrity, and compassion” (cf. 23:3, 23:23).¹² What defiles a person is not “what goes into the mouth . . . but what comes out of the mouth [for it] proceeds from the heart” (15:11).¹³ Here, Matthew’s addition of “ἐκ τῆς καρδίας” shows the “ultimate source” of evil and the evangelist’s particular interest in the word “heart.”¹⁴ It is possible to honor God with one’s lips while the “inner person/heart is far away” (15:8).¹⁵ In sum, the condition of one’s heart determines one’s vision of God (5:8).

⁹ Roger Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives*, Monograph Series/Society for New Testament Studies 48 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 112.

¹⁰ Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 112.

¹¹ Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 112.

¹² Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 112.

¹³ Cf. 15:17: “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”

¹⁴ Charles L. Quarles, *Matthew*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert W. Yarbrough (Nashville: B & H, 2017), 172. Matthew’s redactional addition demonstrates his theological interest on the word heart.

¹⁵ Jonathan T. Pennington, *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing: A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), 93.

Jesus as the Interpreter and Inscrber of Torah

In Matthew 5:21-48, δικαιοσύνη and τέλειος frame Jesus' discussion of the law.¹⁶ The kind of righteousness the Sermon on the Mount demands is characterized by the attitude and disposition of one's heart toward the intent of the law (5:21-5:48) and piety focused on *inward* virtues (6:1-6:18).¹⁷ Adultery is first committed “ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ” (5:28). New Covenant righteousness, therefore, is inwardly oriented, and precisely for this reason, a disciple's righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees (5:20).¹⁸ Pennington astutely describes the concept of “*teleios-ity*” in Matthew as “wholeness or singleness of devotion.”¹⁹ He writes, “The call to *teleios-ity* in Matt 5:48 and throughout the Sermon is the same call to ‘holiness’ that we see throughout the Old Testament (and the rest of the New Testament)—not moral perfection but wholehearted orientation toward God.”²⁰

All this leads to the conclusion that the programmatic statement to fulfill all righteousness in 3:15, which is further elaborated in 5:17 and further expressed in the so-called “antitheses” (5:21-48), is “Jesus' messianic duty to make the ‘heart-inspired’

¹⁶ Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 113.

¹⁷ Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 113.

¹⁸ Mohrlang writes,

The Pharisees and scribes are portrayed as those who think evil (9.4; 22.18), speak evil (9.34; 12.24, 34f; cf. 5.11), and do evil (cf. 12.34; 21.35-9; 23.13, 34f), because they essentially are evil (12.33-5; 23.25-8). Indeed, the whole present generation is said to be evil (12.39, 45; 16.4; cf. 17.17), as are some even of those among the mathetai (7.22f; 18.32; 24.48ff; 25.26, 30; cf. 22.11-14). The true ‘sons of the kingdom’, on the other hand, are likened to good soil (13.8*, 23*), good seed (13.24, 27, 370 and good servants [25.21, 23], and are called to a life of good works [5.16].¹⁴ It is not surprising, then, that Matthew speaks of the Judgement as a time when the ‘good’ are sorted out from the “bad,” the righteous from the evil [13.24-30, 36-43, 47-50; 25.14-30; cf. verses 31-46]. (Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 113)

¹⁹ Pennington, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 69.

²⁰ Pennington, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 78.

observance of the Law possible which springs from a transformation of the will.”²¹ Such is “the sign of the inauguration of the new covenant.”²²

New Heart, and the Internalization of Torah

It is precisely at this juncture, first of all, that the new covenant pronouncements of the prophets reverberate clearly in Matthew. At the risk of oversimplification, the central issue with Israel’s covenant unfaithfulness is Israel’s lack of wholehearted devotion (*teleios-ity*) to her covenant God: to love and worship him alone (cf. Deut 6:4-6).²³ Both Jeremiah’s and Ezekiel’s new covenant promises pertain to Yahweh’s gift of new (circumcised) heart and the gift of the Spirit (Ezek 11:18-21; 18:30-32; 36:24-32; Jer 31:31-34).²⁴ Gentry and Wellum sum it up: “In the new covenant, there will be no ark

²¹ Mogens Müller, “The Gospel of St Matthew and the Mosaic Law: A Chapter of a Biblical Theology,” *Studia Theologica* 46, no. 2 (January 1992): 115. Müller argues, “Salvation does not consist in Jesus’ enforcement of the law upon the people so that they, by the utmost exertion of will, may possess eternal life thanks to their good deeds; but the foundation of salvation is the new covenant, which Jesus seals with his own blood, i.e. with this his death on the cross.” Müller, “The Gospel of St Matthew and the Mosaic Law,” 115.

²² N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1996), 286. Wright understands Jesus’ ethical demand as “the sign of the inauguration of the new covenant” and concludes,

What Jesus was demanding, and by implication offering . . . was the new heart promised as part of the new covenant. In other words, in this ‘ethical’ teaching he was not criticizing Judaism for being concerned with “externals,” and focusing instead on “internals.” . . . He was carrying through the entire kingdom-agenda we have been studying, inaugurating the kingdom by calling men and women to follow him, to discover how to be the true Israel, and to become the people whom YHWH would vindicate when he finally acted. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 286-87.

²³ For the motif of the heart and its relation to disobedience and unfaithfulness in Jeremiah, see Jer 2:21-22; cf. 22:9-10; 3:17; 5:20-25; 7:24-26; 8:7; 9:12-16; 11:14; 13:10, 23; 14:11, 22; 15:1; 16:12; 17:1, 23; 18:12-15a; 19:15; 23:17, etc. As for its relation to breaking the covenant, see Jer 2:8; 5:31; 6:13, 17; 10:21; 14:18; 23:13-14; 27:16; 28:2. See for instance Scott J. Hafemann, *Paul’s Message and Ministry in Covenant Perspective: Selected Essays* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 151.

²⁴ For helpful analysis see John Meade, who observes, The heart circumcision theme introduced in the Torah undergoes development through the canon. The Prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, continue to refer to heart (un)circumcision and widen it to include the reality of heart change (e.g. Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:27). The NT confirms that this eschatological hope dawned in Christ and through him extends to the church (cf. Rom 2:28-9; Phil 3:3; Col 2:11-12).⁶⁵ The three texts within the Torah set an early trajectory that God’s people would one day experience his eternal blessing by worshipping and serving him from a devoted heart. They would ultimately have what Israel as a nation lacked—circumcised hearts. (John D. Meade,

because God’s instruction will be written on the hearts of human beings. . . . [it] will be internalized, ingrained in their thinking.”²⁵ It is noteworthy, while Jeremiah connects the *new* covenant with God’s forgiveness of sins and internalization of Torah, Ezekiel speaks of cleansing people from their impurity and idols by giving them *new* hearts and new Spirit.²⁶ That is, in Jeremiah the covenant is new, while in Ezekiel it is the heart that is new.²⁷ Thus the new covenant coincides with ‘new-heart.’ Internalization of the law is triangulated with the re-creation of the human heart and the forgiveness of sins, which is thus described as the new covenant.²⁸ Allison rightly concludes,

Now it is more than suggestive that the three forecasts of Jeremiah all find their match in Matthew: Jesus the Messiah instituted a new covenant (26:28), stressed the internal dimensions of the commandments (5:21ff., etc.), and gave his life as a ransom for many (20:28; 26:28). Moreover, most commentators have supposed that Matt 26:28 . . . alludes to Jer. 31:31 and so implicitly proclaims in Jesus’ deeds the realization of Jeremiah’s words.²⁹

The observation fits nicely with Deuteronomy 30:6-14, which describes those returning from the exile as undergoing “circumcision of the heart” (so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul) and “internalization of the law” (the word is very near you . . . in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it (Deut 30:11-14; cf. Ps 40:8)).³⁰ Hafemann notes, “The contrast between the two covenants

“Circumcision of the Heart in Leviticus and Deuteronomy: Divine Means for Resolving Curse and Bringing Blessing,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 18, no. 3 [2014]: 80

²⁵ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 507.

²⁶ Ezekiel declares, “And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules” (Ezek 36:26-27).

²⁷ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 507.

²⁸ See for example Müller, “Bundesideologie Im Matthäusevangelium,” 29; Allison, *The New Moses*, 189.

²⁹ Allison, *The New Moses*, 189.

³⁰ Allison, *The New Moses*, 189.

remains a contrast between the two *different conditions of the people*.³¹ As such, the heart metaphor remains one of the key indicators of the new covenant in Matthew. The heart is transformed, and the law is inscribed upon it.³² Jesus is its enlightener and inscriber through his authoritative interpretation and illuminations of the intent of Torah.

Second, noteworthy is how the parable of the sower (13:1-23) describes the condition of the heart as a prerequisite for one's acceptance of the message of the kingdom. When the "sower went out to sow," it is the condition of one's heart that determines its outcome. Those who fail to understand the message of the kingdom are those whom the evil one "ἀρπάζει τὸ ἐσπαρμένον ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ" (13:19). The use of Isaiah 6 in 13:14-15 precisely enforces this very point: the dullness and rebelliousness of an unregenerate heart stand under condemnation of the prophet. His disciples, however, do see and understand because their hearts are enlightened. Furthermore, in 11:29 the rest that Jesus gives is conditioned upon imitating his way of life, i.e., the condition of his heart, "πραῦς . . . καὶ ταπεινὸς τῇ καρδίᾳ" (cf. 5:5; 12:18-21).³³

Third, in the parable of the unforgiving servant, Matthew's addition "from your heart" in "ἀφῆτε . . . ἀπὸ τῶν καρδιῶν ὑμῶν" (18:35), as Müller observes, is anything but random.³⁴ Forgiveness is not a superficial act; it has to come from a transformed heart that experienced God's grant of forgiveness.³⁵ Thus, "to forgive from the heart" is a thought that runs like a red thread through the Gospel of Matthew.³⁶ As Gorman states,

³¹ Hafemann, *Paul's Message and Ministry in Covenant Perspective*, 155, emphasis original.

³² Now the mission of the church is to teach gentiles to obey Jesus' instructions (28:20).

³³ This emphasis on the heart is further described in 18:4; cf. 23:12. It is by imitating Jesus do his followers live out their new life in the messiah.

³⁴ Müller, "Bundesideologie Im Matthäusevangelium," 36.

³⁵ This way, God's covenantal gift of forgiveness in Jesus becomes an indicative for the imperative to forgive one another (as shown in the fifth petition in the Lord's prayer [cf. 6:12, 14-15]). This thesis argued extensively already that forgiveness of sin is a covenantal promise fulfilled in Jesus' blood of the covenant. Suffice here to briefly note the interrelatedness of being forgiven and forgiving others.

³⁶ Müller, "Bundesideologie Im Matthäusevangelium," 36.

“This forgiven and forgiving new-covenant community embodies, indeed fulfills, the two tablets of the law.”³⁷

Reception of the Spirit

The two Spirit references in 1:18 and 28:20 frame Matthew’s Gospel.³⁸ The Messiah to come is mightier, the Baptist declares precisely because he will baptize “ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ” (3:11). More clearly, when Jesus gets baptized “πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ” descended upon him (3:16).

The OT looked forward to an era of salvation history in which the Spirit bestows eschatological realities.³⁹ Reception of the Spirit is one of the distinguishing marks of the new covenant (cf. Isa 32:15; 44:3; Ezek 36:27; 37:14; 39:29; Joel 2:28).⁴⁰ Closely linked is the eschatological promise of a “Spirit-anointed Messiah” (cf. Isa 11:2;

³⁷ Gorman writes,

Rather, receiving God’s forgiveness is part of existence as a community of salt and light (5:13-16) that is called and empowered to practice forgiveness (5:21–24; 18:15–20) and its associated virtues, such as deeds of mercy and compassion (9:13 and 12:7, citing Hos 6:692) like those of their Master (9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 18:33; 20:34). These practices result in part from the reality that the covenant established by Jesus’ death is the covenant of peace, of shalom. (Gorman, *The Death of the Messiah*, 36-37)

³⁸ In the introduction section of Matthew’s Gospel alone, there are four references to the Holy Spirit: as agent of Jesus’ conception (1:18, 20), in John’s address (3:11), at Jesus’ baptism (3:16), and leading him into the wilderness to be tempted (4:1). Furthermore, in 10:20, when persecuted for Christ’s sake “πνεῦμα τοῦ πατρὸς” speaks through them. In 12:18-21, the Spirit identifies Jesus to be the servant of Isaiah. In 12:24, Jesus’ exorcism by “ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ” demonstrates the presence of the kingdom. In 22:43, David “ἐν πνεύματι” addresses him as Lord. In 28:20, the risen Jesus instructs his disciples to baptize in the name of “ἁγίου πνεύματος.”

³⁹ For prophetic reference to the Spirit, see Isa 11:2; 30:1; 32:15; 34:16; 40:13; 42:1; 44:3; 48:16; 59:21; 61:1; 63:10, 11, 14; Ezek 36:27; 37:14; 39:29; Hos 9:7; Joel 2:28-29; Mic 2:7; 3:8; Hag 2:5; Zech 4:6; 6:8; 7:12; 12:10. Ezekiel associates the eschatological reality of the new covenant with exile-return, obedience (Ezek 36:27), life (Ezek 37:14), and gift of the Spirit (Ezek 39:29). See, e.g., Gregg R. Allison and Andreas J. Kostenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, Theology for the People of God (Nashville: B & H, 2020). Kostenberger notes that after the traumatic event of the exile “the Spirit of Yahweh becomes the embodiment of the hope of a new creation, a new exodus, and a renewed covenant between God and his people.” Allison and Kostenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 36.

⁴⁰ As Dunn puts it, “The outpouring of the prophetic Spirit in plentiful supply upon Israel was commonly regarded as one of the chief blessings and hallmarks of the new age.” James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 47.

cf. 42:1; 61:1).⁴¹ Thus, Jesus' reception of the Spirit at his baptism in 3:11-16 and Christian's baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the *Holy Spirit* in 28:20 are parallel—inviting the reader to recognize that the Spirit's sphere of operation now extends from Jesus' messianic task to the mission of his followers.⁴²

Therefore, the Spirit's presence and activity in Jesus' ministry is both a declaration of his messianic status as well as “evidence that the longed-for Kingdom of God had already come. His exorcisms demonstrated that the last days are already present.”⁴³ Simply put, the Spirit as the blessing of the new covenant has arrived in the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

Summary and Conclusion

In sum, the enlightenment of the heart and internalization of the law are in keeping with the hallmark of Deuteronomic and prophetic hopes for the eschatological covenant. Müller writes,

The use of the heart metaphor in Matthew's Gospel is in line with covenant ideology, according to which God transforms man's mind. I believe that here we have identified a crucial aspect of the theology or Christology of this [Matthew's] gospel, namely that Jesus is proclaimed as the one who, by interpreting the law, inscribes the commandments of the law into the hearts of men, so that hearing and obedience coincide.⁴⁴

⁴¹ John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans; Paternoster, 2005), 147.

⁴² In both 3:11-16 Jesus is baptized and the Father addresses the Son, and the Holy Spirit descends upon him. In 28:20, gentiles are baptized and do so in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In this parallel, the messianic community are heirs of Spirit reception.

⁴³ Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 47.

⁴⁴ Müller, “Bundesideologie Im Matthäusevangelium,” 38. Müller's actual words in German are as follows:

Die Verwendung der Herz-Metapher im Matthäusevangelium stimmt überein mit einer Bundesideologie, derzufolge Gott die Gesinnung des Menschen verwandelt. Ich glaube, dass wir hier einen entscheidenden Aspekt der Theologie bzw. Christologie dieses Evangeliums identifiziert haben, insofern nämlich Jesus als derjenige verkündigt wird, der durch seine Gesetzesauslegung die Gebote des Gesetzes in die Herzen der Menschen einschreibt, so dass Hören und Gehorsam zusammenfallen. Denn dies ist der springende Punkt: Glaubensgehorsam in Gestalt von Gehorsam gegenüber Gottes Geboten hervorzurufen. (Müller, “Bundesideologie Im Matthäusevangelium,” 38)

The “heart metaphor” in Matthew, therefore, demonstrates that these new covenant promises have been fulfilled.

Second, precisely at this juncture, a fulfillment of the covenant construed in this manner brings focus to Matthew’s high Christology. Jesus, as the embodiment of the God of Israel, transforms the heart and baptizes in the Spirit. He is “the new lawgiver, the eschatological revealer and interpreter of Torah, the Messiah who brought the definitive, end-time revelation, a revelation for the heart, as foretold by Jeremiah’s ancient oracle.”⁴⁵ Jesus emerges in Matthew as the “εἰς . . . ὁ διδάσκαλος,” “*par excellence*” (cf. 23:8).⁴⁶ Because he is Emmanuel, he will continue interpreting the law and the prophets through the on-going teaching ministry of the covenant community and will engrave his covenant instructions upon the hearts of those who hear it. He will always be imminently and covenantally present among his community both to transform their life as they live together in community (18:20), and to empower their mission as they go out into the nations fulfilling God’s promise to Abraham (28:20).

The new covenant, as Müller states, made possible for the “Spirit that alone makes law obedience possible [to be] given in baptism, and with it also the realization of such righteousness as conforms with God’s will, and which comes from the heart.”⁴⁷ Thus, the story of Jesus in Matthew is the story of the personal coming of the covenant keeping God as foretold in Israel’s scripture. He himself achieves salvation for his people and transforms their hearts.

⁴⁵ Allison, *The New Moses*, 190.

⁴⁶ Mogens Müller, “The Theological Interpretation of the Figure of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: Some Principle Features in Matthean Christology,” *New Testament Studies* 45, no. 2 (March 1999): 171.

⁴⁷ Müller, “The Theological Interpretation,” 169-70.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

When the OT prophets looked ahead to the future redemption, they anticipated a string of redemptive-historical events to be recapitulated in the future. Such recapitulation involves a new deliverance in a new Passover, new exodus, and a new covenant. As such, the new covenant in Matthew is the climax of a narrative progression from Abraham to the Messiah. Jesus is the Son *par excellence* that both covenants with Abraham and David anticipated. *This* davidic Messiah that Matthew portrays achieves *this* salvation (i.e., the forgiveness of sins), whose gospel story is narrated within *this* framework. The Messiah is the Son of God who, like the new Moses, delivers his people in a new exodus, ratifies a new covenant, and restores God's covenant presence among his new people. Therefore, as Senior puts it, "for Matthew's Gospel, even though the 'close of the age' awaits realization, history has already turned on its axis from the age of sin and death to the age of forgiveness and new life."¹ The Messiah's death for the many is "the epicenter of Jesus' mission, and the most penetrating revelation of his identity" and "so it is at the moment of Jesus' passion that the turning point of history is most manifest."² Israel's covenantal hope for a new deliverance and a new way of relating with God has now culminated in Jesus' story. Matthew, therefore, puts forth his gospel within the conceptual framework of Passover ordered to exodus, ordered to covenant.

Finally, the new covenant is intrinsically tied to what it was designed to achieve; namely, the forgiveness of sins and the transformation of the covenant partner. In Matthew,

¹ Donald Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, The Passion Series (Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, 1985), 183.

² Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 183.

Jesus is the ideal covenant partner who is simultaneously the one who inaugurates the new covenant and the one who, by interpreting and fulfilling the law and the prophets, enlightens the heart and transforms it. His blood poured out on calvary has established the new covenant. Everything Matthew writes in his gospel, his indicatives as well as imperatives, simply presuppose the “hidden albeit omnipresent context.”³ This hidden context in Matthew is simply stated as “τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης.”

³ Mogens Müller, “The Hidden Context: Some Observations to the Concept of the New Covenant in the New Testament,” in *Texts and Contexts: Biblical Texts in Their Textual and Situational Contexts. Essays in Honor of Lars Hartman*, ed. Tord Fornberg and Lars Hartman (Oslo, Norway: Scandinavian University Press, 1995), 653.

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ABSTRACT

MY BLOOD OF THE COVENANT: REVERBERATION OF THE NEW COVENANT IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

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When the OT prophets looked ahead to the future redemption, they anticipated a string of redemptive-historical events to be recapitulated in the future. Such recapitulation involves a new deliverance in a new Passover, new exodus, and climaxing in a new covenant. As such, the mention of the covenant in Matthew, the declaration “τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης,” is the climax of a narrative progression from Abraham to the Messiah, from the Passover and the exodus to the inauguration of the (new) covenant. The present thesis aims to illustrate the significance of the new covenant for Matthew's Gospel. The core of the argument rests on Mogens Müller's observation, in his *The Gospel of St Matthew and the Mosaic Law*, that the new covenant is a “substructure underlying” Matthew's Gospel.

The first chapter situates the present thesis in Matthean scholarship in particular and covenant research in general to demonstrate the relevance of this research. The second chapter explores the covenantal significances of the titles “υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ” and “υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ.” The aim is to show that the titles evoke strong covenantal overtones even though covenant terminology is not used. Furthermore, in Matthew, these covenants are synthesized in one christological act of covenant-making.

The third and fourth chapters investigate the only and explicit reference to the covenant in Matthew's Gospel in 26:28. The question raised in these chapters is whether the introduction of the covenant was a strategically placed climactic reference. Chapter 3

is substantial since it seeks to demonstrate that Matthew, at crucial places throughout his Gospel, engages in symbolic significations and interpretations, thus building the narrative for the climactic scene at the interpretation narrative. As such, the (new) covenant has been proleptically symbolized in the feeding miracles and anticipated in the eschatological banquet, leading up to the Last Supper. To that effect, the chapter will argue that Matthew appears to interpret the meaning of Jesus' death within the conceptual framework of *Passover ordered to exodus, ordered to covenant*. The blood of the covenant in 26:28 should be seen as a climactic reference designed to provide Jesus's death its covenantal overtones.

Chapter 5 builds from these conclusions and explores the theme of interiority as a covenantal reality. Here Matthew's particular interest on the heart is examined against the new covenant realities of the prophetic promises as the sign of the inauguration of the (new) covenant. Matthew presents Jesus as the interpreter and inscriber of Torah on human hearts in fulfillment of covenant promises. Finally, a summary and conclusion are drawn in chapter 6.

In sum, chapter 2 examines the titles for their covenantal significance (de facto covenantal titles); chapter 3 analyzes Matthew's narrative for its covenant framework (Passover, Exodus, covenant); chapter 4 investigates the only explicit reference to covenant in Matthew 26:28 (blood of the covenant), and chapter 5 examines Matthew's focus on interiority (covenant reality).

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