



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

The Fulfilment of all Righteousness: Matthew's Unique Perspective on
Jesus' Baptism in Mt. 3.13-17

Pedro Antonius

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Sheffield
Faculty of Arts & Humanities
Department of History

May 2019

ABSTRACT

This research aims at relieving the apparent tension between the traditional NT claim of a sinless Jesus and the fact that the same submitted to the baptism of John. If Jesus had no need to repent because he was ‘without sin’ then he did not need this baptism of repentance as preached by John the Baptist. For this reason, the question of the meaning of Jesus’ baptism in the Matthean context constitutes the core of this thesis. The different existing scholarly explanatory suggestions on the matter seem unsatisfactory and deprived of an appropriate consideration for the specific Matthean literary context in which this baptism pericope is set.

Therefore, this thesis examines the unparalleled conversation of Jesus with John in Mt. 3. 14, 15 and interprets it in the light of the characteristic Matthean attachment to the OT with regard to supporting the messianic claims of Jesus. The exegesis of Mt 3.15 provides the means through which Matthew is understood to define the nature and purpose of the baptism of Jesus as a fulfilment of God’s requirement. This baptism is not just a water-purification ritual like for the rest of the baptised, but the realisation of the two-step procedure, washing and anointing, that constituted the consecration rite of the first ever-biblical messianic figure. The baptism of Jesus that included his water washing by the Baptist and his Holy-Spirit anointing is the anti-type of the act that took place with Aaron in the OT at his consecration as a the high priest of Israel.

Thus, in the literary Matthean context, the submission of Jesus to John’s baptism is as much a part of messianic fulfilments through typology as the rest of the actions and events identified as such. The baptism of Jesus by John at the River Jordan constitutes his official messianic consecration and it is typologically linked to the official consecration of the first high priest of Israel’s Levitical priestly history. The practical significance of such understanding is fitting with the NT identification of Jesus as the eternal high priest of the Christian faith on the one hand. On the other hand, this thought also allows a strong meaningful link between the baptism of Jesus and that of his followers in the context of the priestly identity of all of God’s children. This priestly identity in the NT is also in continuity with the model established in the OT.

Acknowledgements

I first and foremost desire to express my gratitude to God for the blessing of hopefully contributing to a better understanding of the subject matter in this research. I have been supported by his grace and guided by his providence to complete this task. This testimony is not a means to inform the ‘all-knowing’ of my sentiments at this point, but to remind myself and all that ‘in him we live and move and have are being’.

Among the many whom he used to bless me over these endeavouring years, I just pause to recognise the flawless relationship that I enjoyed with Sheffield University’s staff.

I am particularly grateful for the support, help and understanding of the faculty supervisors. I want to thank Professor James Crossley, with whom I began this journey, for his scholarly qualities, but most of all his openness. For the bulk of this research, I am grateful to Dr. Mark Finney who supervised me with enthusiasm and academic efficiency in a very friendly and supportive spirit. This is all you would wish for in your academic experience at this level.

Finally, for the host of people who daily interceded for me with love, I am grateful. I also am thankful for those on the frontline who must be named as France, my wife, Eloïka, Eliadan and Ellaïka our three children. I have no doubt that the completion of this part of my life means as much to them as to me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
ABBREVIATIONS	7
INTRODUCTION	11
1. The Synoptic Tradition on the Meaning of John's Baptism	11
2. Matthew's Unique Perspective on John's Baptism of Jesus	15
3. The Claim of this Thesis	16
CHAPTER 1. THE MATTHEAN TEXT	18
1. The Pericope of Jesus' Baptism in Matthew 3:13 -17	18
1.1 Questions about Jesus' Baptism	21
1.2 Literary Analysis	26
1.2.1 Literary Genre of Matthew's Gospel	28
1.2.2 Matthew's Biographical literary Genre, and the Baptism Pericope	30
1.3 Literary Structure	32
1.3.1 The Geographical-Chronological Structures Approach	33
1.3.2 The Topical Structures Approach	35
1.3.3 The Conceptual Structures Approach	37
1.4 Matthew's Structure, a Specific Perspective in this Research	41
1.5 Outline of Matthew 1.1-4.18 and the Pericope of Baptism	47
1.5.1 Matthew 1.1-17. Introduction to the Gospel Story through Genealogy	47
1.5.2 Introduction of the Gospel Through the Birth and Infancy of Jesus in Mt. 1.19-2.1-23.	48
1.5.3 Introduction of the Gospel through John the Baptist's Initiatory Activity, his Baptism in Mt. 3.1-4.25.	49
1.6 Summary of Chapter 1	51
CHAPTER 2. THE MATTHEAN CONTEXT OF MT 3.15	52
2. Textual Analysis	52
2.1 The Baptism Pericope in the Matthean Context	52
2.2 Macro Context of the Baptism Pericope	56
2.3 Micro Context of the Baptism Pericope.	62

2.4 Text-Critical Analysis of Mt. 3.15	73
2.4.1 Greek Text of Mt. 3.15	75
2.4.2 English Translations	75
2.4.3 Text Analysis	75
2.4.3.1 ἄφες ἄρτι	77
2.4.3.2 οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν	80
2.4.3.3 πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην	88
2.4.3.4 Δικαιοσύνη	91
2.4.3.5 The Septuagintal use of δικαιοσύνη	94
2.5 A Historical Consideration of the Concept of Righteousness	101
2.5.1 The Concept of Righteousness of the Dead Sea Scrolls	101
2.5.2 The Concept of Righteousness in the Tannaitic Literature	105
2.6 Interpretations of δικαιοσύνη in the Matthean Context	109
2.7 Summary of chapter 2	113
CHAPTER 3. THE CONCEPT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IN MATTHEW'S LITERARY CONTEXT	114
3. A Matthean Use of an OT Concept of Righteousness	114
3.1 Δικαιοσύνη In All The Matthean Passages	114
3.1.1 Δικαιοσύνην in Matthew 5.6	117
3.1.2 Δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.10	129
3.1.3 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 5.20	132
3.1.4 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 6.1	136
3.1.5 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 6.33	141
3.1.6 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 21.32	144
3.1.7 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 3.15	149
3.2 Summary of Chapter 3	154
CHAPTER 4. THE ROLE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST IN MT. 3.15	156
4. John the Baptist	156
4.1 John the Baptist and His Ministry	156
4.2 The Baptist's Backgrounds	158
4.2.1 John's Baptism Assumed Background and the DSS	160
4.2.2 The Essenes and Their Purification Rites	164
4.2.3 The Theology of Baptism at the Renewal of the Covenant Ceremony	169
4.2.4 The Theological Context of John's Baptism	173
4.2.4.1 John's Baptism and the Old Testament Precedent	181
4.2.4.2 The Washing of Aaron and His Sons	183
4.2.4.3 Exod. 29.4	184
4.2.4.4 A Semantic and Contextual Link Between Washings	196

4.2.4.5 A Common Levitical Genealogical Background Between Moses and the Baptist	202
4.3 Why Did Aaron and His Sons Need to Be Washed?	210
4.4 The Anointing that Followed the Washing of the Priests	217
4.5 The Parallels Between the OT Bathing of Aaron and the Baptism of Jesus	226
4.6 The Bathing of Aaron and the Baptism of Jesus	228
4.7 Summary of Chapter 4	230
CHAPTER 5. THE MATTHEAN PERSPECTIVE OF JESUS' BAPTISM	232
5. Context and Meaning of the Matthean Baptism Pericope	232
5.1 The Baptism of Jesus in an Initiation Context	232
5.1.1 Initiatory Characteristics of John's Baptism	234
5.1.2 Initiatory Characteristics of Jesus' Baptism	241
5.1.3 Matthew's Initiatory Perspective on the Baptismal Anointing of Jesus	244
5.1.4 Matthew's Initiatory Perspective on the Washing of Jesus	260
5.2 The Matthean Typological Perspective on the Washing of Aaron by Moses, and the Baptism of Jesus by John	262
5.3 Matthew's Understanding of the Two-Step Baptism of Jesus as for the Fulfilment of All Righteousness in Mt. 3.15	269
5.3.1 The Water Baptism as the Fulfilment of All Righteousness in Mt. 3.15	270
5.3.2 The Spirit-Anointing as Fulfilment of All Righteousness in Mt. 3.15	280
5.4 Implication and Applications of the Matthean Perspective for Christian Baptism	285
5.4.1 The OT and Matthew's Specific Perspective On Christian Baptism	286
5.4.2 An OT Inclusive Notion of Priesthood	287
5.4.3 An Extension Of the Inclusive OT Priesthood Concept in the NT Context	297
5.5 Final Conclusion of this Thesis	314
BIBLIOGRAPHY	321

Abbreviations

AB	The Anchor Bible
ABD	David Noel Freedman, <i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> (New York: Doubleday, 1992)
AT	<i>Acta Theologica</i>
ALGNT	B. Friberg, T. Friberg, Neva F. Miller, <i>Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament</i> (Grand Rapid: Baker Books, Elec. edn., 2000)
Bibl	<i>Biblica</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin For Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, F. William Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, <i>A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> , (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 3 rd edn, 2000)
BDB	Francis Brown, S.R Driver and Charles A. Briggs, <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Oxford Clarendon: Press, 1907)
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BYUSQ	<i>Brigham Young University Studies Quarterly</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CHALOT	W.L. Holladay, <i>A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Leiden: Brill NV, 2000)
CNTUOT	G K. Beale and D A. Carson (eds.), <i>Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament</i> (Grand Rapid: Michigan, 2007)
CSR	<i>Christian Scholar Review</i>
DBLGNT	J. Swanson, <i>A Dictionary of Biblical Languages Greek New Testament</i> (Logos Research System, 2001)
DHGW	J. Strong, <i>The New Strong's TM Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words</i> (Nashville: Tomas Nelson Publishers. Ed., 1996)
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>

ESV	English Standard Version
EDNT	Robert Horst Holtz and Gerhard Schneider, <i>The Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament</i> (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990)
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
<i>Fur</i>	<i>Furrow</i>
GELNT	Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i> , Translated, Revised and Enlarged by Joseph Henry Thayer, D. D, (International Bible Translators, ed. 1998)
GELLXX	Johan Lust/Erik Eynikel Katrin Hauspie, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Ed., Stuttgart. 2003)
GELLXXPP	T. Muraoka, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint: Chiefly of the Pentateuch and of the Twelve Prophets</i> (Louvain: Peeters, 2002)
GELNTBSD	Johannes E. Louw, Eugene A. Nida, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domain</i> , 2 nd Edn, (1998)
GBH	P.S. Joüon, T. Muraoka, <i>A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew</i> (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico. ed, Sudsidia Biblica, 2006)
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>IBR</i>	<i>Institute for Biblical Review</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
ITQ	<i>Irish Theological Quarterly</i>
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JSHJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman period</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>

<i>JSNTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSPP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Pseudopigrapha</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KJV	King James Version
LSJ	H.G. Liddell, Robert Scott, <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 6 th edn, 1869)
MGLNT	G. Abbott-Smith, <i>A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament</i> (Cornwall: T & T Clark Ltd, 1999)
NA-28	Nestle-Aland 28 th edn
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NET	New English Translation
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NLT	New Living Translation
<i>NT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>PR</i>	<i>Policy Review</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLJBS	SBL Journal of Biblical Studies
<i>SCE</i>	<i>Studies in Christian Ethics</i>
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SLGNT	F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, <i>Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament</i> (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press and London, 1979)
SNTNMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series

<i>Theol</i>	<i>Theology</i>
TDNT	Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (eds.) <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> (trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley; 10 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-)
TWOT	R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr and Bruce K. Waltke (eds.), <i>Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament</i> (2 vols., Chicago: Moody Press, 1980)
UBSGNT	United Bible Societies' <i>Greek New Testament</i>
<i>VE</i>	<i>Verbum et Ecclesia</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament

Introduction

1. The Synoptic Tradition on the Meaning of John's Baptism

It is noteworthy that in all the biblical reports on John the Baptist's activities concerning the performance of baptism, there is a definite agreement between the synoptists, Matthew, Mark and Luke on the meaning and reason for baptism.¹ Mt. 3.6 says 'and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.' In Mk 1.4 it is reported that 'John did baptize in the wilderness, and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.' As for the third Gospel, in Lk. 3.3, it is also stated concerning the ministry of John the Baptist, 'And he came into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins';² there seems to be no possible ambiguity in the different Gospel accounts regarding John's mission through the administration of his baptism. All the Gospel writers in their reports convey the same message in relation to the use, meaning and relevance of John's baptism as stated above.

Therefore, baptism in the Gospels is narrowly associated with confession of sins, repentance, desire to be forgiven and a renewal of being on the part of the baptismal candidates.³ John called the people to repentance, and the baptism with which he baptised all who responded to his message was focused on the one thought clearly in view in the above texts. Their baptism was the token of their willingness to

¹ Bockmuehl (2012, pp. 85–87); 'to everyone else this preparatory act was a baptism of repentance'

² All the above texts are from the King James Version (KJV), and this will be the pattern in this thesis, unless otherwise indicated. This choice is more personal than technical. The word 'remission' in the above texts are commonly translated 'forgiveness' in other versions as they are equivalent terms here.

³ In Burrows (1999, p. 100), these notions are differently expressed as, 'Total commitment', 'Complete cleansing', and 'New beginning'. These three, which are succinctly expanded upon in Burrows' view, seem to represent the main concept of the baptism of John as understood in the biblical texts and by commentators in general. See also, in Burnish (1999, pp. 378–401, 383–385), a short analysis of John Chrysostom's view, through the study of some of his 'baptismal preparation' homilies. According to Burnish, the famous fourth-century Christian teacher believed in the above idea of baptism. The view that baptism is a 'bath of grace' that brings about the regeneration of the baptised is one that may have changed in form over the years of the practise of Christian baptism, but the idea of cleansing from sin has remained consistently since it is based on biblical teachings. See, White (1960, pp. 293–94) on the importance of baptism in the process of the 'generative cause of salvation'.

abandon their sinful lives and to radically turn to a more righteous form of living. This was in accord with God's requirements and a consideration of his impending judgment upon the wicked, those who would not respond by changing their ways. The seriousness of the baptismal act is plainly evidenced by the background information recorded in two of the synoptic Gospels.⁴ In Mt. 3.12, just before introducing Jesus, who also becomes a baptismal candidate, the imagery and language used for the rationale behind the administration and reception of this rite is compelling. The separation of the good from the bad and the destructive work of the 'unquenchable fire', all of this unmistakably points to the imminence of God's eschatological judgment and the need to comply with the demands for change.⁵

In the second synoptic passage, in Lk. 3.7, there is an expression that conveys a similar eschatological judgment message that is addressed to a particular group of people.⁶ The people who came to John for baptism seemed to have understood that this act of baptism publically expressed their desire to 'flee from the wrath to come'.⁷

⁴ Although there is no doubt that the synoptic Gospels intently agree on the fact that the baptism of John was performed in strict relation to the washing away and forgiveness of sin, we find that Matthew, and Luke are somehow different to Mark on this. They clearly make this point in John's speech according to Mt. 3.6-12, and Lk. 3.7-15. The Baptist addresses the people in terms that are very evocative concerning their need of this baptism. Mk 1.4 only states the fact of this baptism is for 'the forgiveness of sin'. See, Gundry (1982, p. 46) for comments on the relationship between Matthew and Luke, and their differences with Mark on this particular aspect of John's identity as a preacher. Commenting on Mt. 3.8, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 305-7) emphasise the centrality of this baptism in salvation from the 'wrath of God' as well as the centrality of the concept of repentance in the Judaism of John's time.

⁵ The eschatological dimension of the text is emphasised by the choice of the harvest imagery combined with the notion of 'unquenchable fire' and this would have been well understood by John's audience. It is the act of God's separation of the righteous from the wicked that is depicted here as it had always been in the Hebrew Scriptures in places like Ps 1.4; Isa 30.24; 44.16; 66.24, and many more.

⁶ Here, John addresses these people who came to him in terms that, if need be, clarified the basis on which one would accept this baptism. He calls them, 'generation of vipers'. See comments on the reasons to accept this baptism even when not specifically concerned by the preceding expression, Hendriksen (1978, p. 205); 'what he said to some, he said to all' according to Plummer (1986, p. 88), and considering the comments in the preceding commentaries, the message in essence, would have been the same in both Matthew and Luke. See also, Nolland (1989, p. 147); Marshall (1978, p. 138).

⁷ It is apparent from the verses that follow this declaration that being baptised had all to do with one changing their attitude in terms of responsiveness to the requirements of God. See, Roberts (2005, p. 398). To the question asked in Lk. 3.10 by the baptismal candidates to John as to what they should do

In verses 8-15, there are additional details as to what it actually and practically meant to express repentance through baptism.⁸ They were exhorted to leave behind them their fraudulent living practices (specifically in the case of extortion by tax collectors and soldiers), and to embrace a fairer, more righteous attitude toward others. Also, Luke in verse 17 uses the same expressions as in Mt. 3.12 with reference to the separation of the good from the bad, and the ‘unquenchable fire’, just before introducing Jesus being baptised by John along with the recipients of John’s message. It is in this context that the baptism of Jesus is taking place, and more specifically, the particular conversation between John and Jesus as recorded in Mt. 3.14, 15. This report of the first canonical evangelist, Mt. 3.14, 15, regarding the baptism of Jesus is unparalleled in and outside of Bible literature. It is no surprise that these verses are considered by many as a purely Matthaean device to release the understandable theological pressure that the baptism of Jesus, by John, would have created.⁹ This ‘no small tension’¹⁰ between Jesus being baptised by John and the reason for John’s

upon hearing the message of repentance, he directs them, in verse 11, to abandon their evil practices. This is after John proclaimed the warning in verse 9 that Judgement was impending upon those of this generation, who do not bear fruit as expected by the master of the field. It is important to consider that, although Matthew does not report on these conversations, whether this may be the same event or a different one that would be standard. The focus is on repenting in order to receive forgiveness of sin, and escaping the final judgement that is mentioned in both Gospels. This notion or circumstantial element confirms the general context in which baptism took place in the Jordan.

⁸ In Lk. 3.10, 12, the same characteristic question ‘what shall we do’ is asked by two different groups of people in the context of repentance for the forgiveness of their sin.

⁹ There are many reactions on the part of commentators concerning the various possible reasons why Matthew felt the need to be more explanatory than others on this point. Although, I will be dealing in more detail with this point, here are some of the opinions available on the matter, ‘(a) he felt impelled by God to do so; (b) he was convinced of the rightness of the thrust of John’s ministry; (c) he wanted to publically identify with...’ (d) Jesus came in human solidarity...with sinners; (e) Jesus came (for a time) to join the Baptist movement...’ and several other proposals according to Nolland (2005, pp. 152–53). See also, D. Hagner (1993, pp. 54–60); Gundry (1982, pp. 49–53) for a survey of some other views, see Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 320–45) where there is an important list of comments and views that reflect the fact of a complete lack of consensus on the meaning of Jesus’ baptism in Mt. 3.13-17 in relation to the conversation between John and Jesus in Mt. 3.14-15.

¹⁰ D. Hagner (1993, p. 54). Hagner also states the Matthew through his addition ‘protects against’ thinking that Jesus actually needed this baptism. Here is a pertinent question from another scholar in the article entitled ‘Baptism’ in the Journal, *Furrow*, ‘I have often wondered why Jesus came to be baptized’ Deane (2013, p. 87). See also, Adams (2013, p. 127); Bockmuehl (2012, p. 88).

baptism as preached is even greater in the light of the other accounts of the same event that do not contain Matthew's added details.¹¹

Thus, the supplement of information in Mt. 3.14, 15 alone has generated some interest in his narrative of Jesus' baptism, and more specifically in the question of the meaning of Mt. 3.15. Many questions have been asked and there has been some consideration for explaining this oddity.¹² For instance, some have thought that the event as recorded in Matthew is not historical, but is presumably a blend of editorial, and redactional work by Matthew.¹³ Some have thought that it is evident that there is in the baptism of Jesus an uncomfortable situation, and it seems to protrude from the fact that Matthew alone tries to justify the event. For others, the exclusively Matthean nature of this conversation between the two, in Mt. 3.14, 15, functions as an explanatory device aiming at releasing the tension between the meaning of the act of baptism, and the believed sinless nature of Jesus.¹⁴ Therefore, the Matthean record of the baptism of Jesus and the extra bit of information the writer offers must be examined as closely as possible if aiming to understand its role and value. This

¹¹ Read and cf. Mk 1.10, 11; Lk. 3.21, 22; Jn 1.29-33. See the difference between Matthew and Mark for instance, on this pericope, D. Hagner (1993, p. 54); Guelich (1989, p. 35). Mark, 'does not consider it necessary to explain the evident difficulty attending the baptism of Jesus, as Mt. does', Gould n.d. (p. 10). This difference is also marked in commentaries on the other Gospels in relation to the baptism of Jesus. For a general discussion on Matthew's use of Mark, and possible reasons for differences between the two, see the particular view of D. C. Sim (2011) who is only cited here in acknowledgement of this debate in scholarship.

¹² Briefly, and I will return to this in more details, McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 3) gives a summary of some of seven different possibilities that Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 320-27) for instance, have presented as potentially in view in Mt. 3.15. While McCuiston favours the seventh point, 'Jesus was fulfilling prophecy', there is no attempt to textually and specifically identified the prophecy that Jesus would have fulfilled in submitting to this baptism. He concludes his analysis of the question on the meaning of Matthew's text by emphasising 'the ontological nature of God' in the incarnation of Jesus as being in view in Mt. 3.15. Jesus submitting to this baptism has made it 'the incarnational agency through which the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel (Rom1:16-17) is accessed by the believing world.', see, McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 8). Although there is an interest, generally among Matthean specialists, in understanding the relationship between Mt. 3.15, and the Old Testament that he is consistently referring to, there is a lack of identification of the exact OT text in view in Mt. 3.15, and this is problematic when attempting to interpret this text as fulfilling prophecy in line with how Matthew uses the OT throughout his Gospel.

¹³ Davies and Allison (1988, p. 324); 'Jesus' answer in v. 15 comes directly from the evangelist' Luz (2007, p. 174).

¹⁴ See for instance this article, Connors (2010) and also, Adams (2013).

examination of the Matthean baptism pericope is relevant in the context of seeking to ascertain the OT origin and the NT meaning of Jesus' baptism according to this Gospel's own literary and theological perspective.

2. Matthew's Unique Perspective on John's Baptism of Jesus

Since it appears that the Matthean perspective on Jesus' baptism is different from that of others, it is fitting to investigate the reasons behind that difference. This will help to see whether or not that difference is simply stylistic, or if it contains an important and far-more-reaching theological insight on this New Testament (NT) subject of baptism. If Matthew has a distinctive perspective on Jesus' baptism, this may also be the case with NT baptism in the event of a relationship between the two. Many questions raised from the Matthean text would need answers that should be provided, mostly, within the Matthean literary context. Here are some of these questions that will need to be addressed essentially, but not necessarily systematically, or chronologically. These questions are part of the process through which to accomplish the goal of this research regarding the meaning of Jesus's baptism in Matthew. Could there be more to this difference in Matthew with the rest of the Gospels about the baptism of Jesus than what is often assumed? Could this difference in the narrative be because of a theological divergence on the subject of baptism from Matthew's perspective? Did Matthew have a different understanding of baptism that caused him to use this pericope as the best of platforms to express that difference? How did Matthew himself view the baptism of the Jesus, 'the Christ'? What did he mean when he said that Jesus fulfilled all righteousness through John's baptism?

These are only some of the questions that may spring out of one's mind while reflecting on this Matthean baptism pericope for its peculiarity. These interrogation points will be addressed in this research and will certainly need to find answers in the

analysis of the passage, Mt. 3.13-17, within its own Matthean context. Although in this task I am specifically concerned with Matthew, the singularity of this Gospel is only seen in the light of the synoptic perspective that needs to be considered. Such focus on Matthew's uniqueness in relation to this part of the synoptic tradition is bound to provoke the above questions. These questions could bring more pointed and unavoidable ones to the surface, but the primary goal here is an attempt to understand the baptism of Jesus in its specific Matthean literary context through the exegesis of Mt. 3.15. This will be the main course through which I hope to bring answers that will facilitate a better understanding of the Matthean pericope of Jesus' baptism, and more specifically the concept of baptism as 'to fulfill all righteousness'.

3. The Claim of this Thesis

The course of action proposed above is motivated by the present situation in Matthean scholarship on Mt. 3.15.¹⁵ While many have commented on the possible meaning of Mt. 3.15, there has not been such a specific attempt as in this thesis to deal with the above questions. These questions, and ultimately that of Matthew's specific view of Jesus' baptism, have neither been treated within the proposed OT-fulfilment literary perspective of the book nor have they been dealt with within the typological and theological framework in which the pericope operates as claimed in this thesis. With regard to a possible connection between the baptism of Jesus and the OT, it has been said that some commentators see a typological link between Noah's flood and the baptism of Jesus.¹⁶ However, this view is not in an attempt to establish the meaning of Mt. 3.15. Rather, it is an analogical perspective that is essentially based on the

¹⁵ The situation is that those who comment on this text are usually brief and rather general in their opinions. I will substantiate this view as I analyse this passage.

¹⁶ See, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 332).

imagery and symbolism of the Spirit coming as a dove on Jesus in Mt. 3.16.¹⁷ The OT flood experience may be of some interest, but it does not provide as a direct typological link between two events that are exclusively comparable in nature, procedure, context and aim, as the one proposed in this thesis. In fact, the claim of this thesis is that there is a specific OT event that qualifies more than any other for a tangible typological link with the baptism of Jesus.

This typological link is clearly identifiable in all the above-mentioned aspects of the OT event and the NT pericope in a context of scriptural fulfilment.¹⁸ This OT element particularly fits the Matthean literary and theological context necessary to ascertain the source of Matthew's perspective on Jesus' fulfilment of all righteousness through baptism by John. From that same Matthean literary and theological standpoint, this research will endeavour to establish a single textual and typological link, beyond the current scholarship trends,¹⁹ between the OT unique priestly initiatory consecration ceremony of Aaron, and the baptism of Jesus. Eventually, this thesis will consider and evaluate the impact of such perspective on Christian baptism within the context of a consistent multi-level priesthood theme that identifiably permeates the Bible.

¹⁷ See, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 327-35). In this portion it is very clear that the typological concern is with regard to the various usages of the dove symbolism in biblical and extra-biblical literatures. This imagery being associated with the Spirit at the baptism of Jesus has caused some to see this link between the OT and the NT in this pericope, but this link is not specified as explaining Mt. 3.15 with which this thesis is essentially concern. Of all the 16 different comments on this portion, none of the views from different scholars is with the particular Matthean perspective in spite of the fact that they are looking at Matthew's Gospel in this commentary, see, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 331-35).

¹⁸ See, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 326-27).

¹⁹ As this research progresses, I will expose the fact that there is no consensual explanation in scholarship, at the present, about the meaning of Mt. 3.15. See, Luz (2007, pp. 174-75); Davies and Allison (1988, p. 323, 327). Except for some comments that highlight Matthew's presumed embarrassment at this episode of the life of Jesus and his attempt through this text to release the tension, this question has remained untouched.

Chapter 1. The Matthean Text

The aim of this chapter is to establish the Matthean baptism pericope within the specific literary features of this Gospel. The first step taken in order to achieve this aim is to present and analyse the current positions on the different literary aspects of the book according to scholarship. The analysis will lead to the proposal of the specific perspective taken in this research on the subject, and to produce an outline of Mt. 1.1-4.18 that exemplifies the point. I will then be able to establish the role and nature of Mt.1-4.25, the portion that contains the baptism pericope (Mt. 3.13-17), as introductory to the entire Matthean Gospel. This first chapter will focus on the above as necessary to progress with the claim of this thesis in trying to answer the questions that have arisen in scholarship about Matthew's peculiarity on this part of Jesus' life. All the above questions lead the main one in this thesis, the meaning of Jesus' baptism.

1. The Pericope of Jesus' Baptism in Matthew 3:13 -17

The question regarding the meaning of the baptism of Jesus *per se* is a challenging part of the Gospel story.²⁰ It is particularly difficult to understand it in the light of the general meaning that the act of baptism is said and believed to carry historically, and even today.²¹ John the Baptist himself seems to have preached more of this historical

²⁰ This challenge is evidenced by the lack of specific interest in relating Mt. 3.15 to a particular OT text or thought, see Nolland (2005, pp. 153–55) as an example, or the swiftness with which most commentators deal with the question while it seems clear on the basis of textual and historical evidence that this baptism is central to the story and to Christianity from the very beginning. For commentators' interests in the baptism of Jesus, see for instance, Albright and Mann (1971, pp. 30–32); Lachs (1987, pp. 46–47) and Gundry (1982, pp. 49–53) as their views reflect the general situation among scholars on this subject. As for the centrality of baptism in Christianity, see the various aspects of the subject from a historical, theological, and practical perspective within the multiple prisms of denominational and ministerial components of the Church in *Baptism, the New Testament, and the Church. Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O White* (1999); Murray (1980, pp. 3, 4, 31).

²¹ See, Green (1999, p. 172). From a historical perspective, many through the ages saw baptism as nothing more than 'a sign', while others saw it as something that had 'efficacious' relevance, Yates (1993, pp. 131–34); Reynolds (2012). To 'become a sharer in the life of Christ', Olden (2011, pp. 96–97) and 'one becomes officially a Christian' Cosgrave (2009, p. 224).

and contemporary meaning of his baptism.²² That is this focal notion of repentance from sin and the washing away of iniquity. These notions seem to be fundamentally attached to baptism in the whole of the NT. In the Pauline writings, for instance in Rom. 6.1-11; Col. 2.12; 3.10; 2 Cor. 5.17, this notion of repentance and newness of life is clearly central to NT baptism.²³ The same view seems to be congruent with John's proclamation about his role and activity at the Jordan River while introducing 'another one', in Mt. 3.11, another baptiser who comes after him and whose precursor he seems to view himself as. This one's mission is different, according to the Baptist, and his work seems to be of another nature also (Mt. 3.11,12). However, this one comes like John himself to administer a baptism. This baptism, according to John the Baptist, is in comparison to his own, greater, far more reaching and of a different kind because one who is greater than him administers this baptism.

Consequently, John the Baptist would have presented in this story two sorts of baptisms of which one is particularly in view in his ministry. It is the traditional and common perspective that clearly defines baptism in the NT in general, and particularly in the Pauline corpus: the notion of spiritually burying of the 'old man' in the 'watery grave'²⁴ that is conveyed at the core of the act of being washed (by immersion) in water²⁵. This baptism is that which John administered to the one who

²² Mt. 3.2 is the clear statement according to which those involved in responding to the call of John the Baptist and were baptised in the Jordan as Jesus did, did it on the basis of a repentance experience. In the synoptic Gospels there is no variation of this principle, see Mk 1.4, 5; Lk. 3.3, 7- 14. In Albright and Mann (1971, p. 31), according to these commentators, the difficulty to understand this event is specifically great when it is placed against the background of Christian baptism, while the 'key' to unlock is provided in the response of Jesus to John in verse 15. However, there seems to be in this proposal the same simplistic and unsatisfying answer that is generally provided by others. This response of Jesus would mean that this baptism had to take place because God demanded it to man, and in this respect Jesus only identified with God's people by complying. Thus fulfilling 'righteousness'.

²³ See, Hartman (1992).

²⁴ This expression can be understood from the Pauline analogy of dying and being buried with Christ through baptism, according to Rom. 6.3, 4; Gal. 2.19,20; Col. 2.11,12, see also, Cambell (1999, pp. 273-93).

²⁵ See, Murray (1980, p. 4). Mat 3.16 implies like Mk 1. 9, 10 in the synoptic tradition (and to the exception of Luke, who is too brief on the event to make this remark in Lk. 3.21) that Jesus was in the

came after him (Jesus), but who was greater than him and who in turn administered the other, the superior baptism. The characteristics of John's baptism are a difficult package to reconcile with the characteristics of Jesus' personality and mission as described, for instance in 2 Cor. 5.21; 1 Pet. 2.22; 1 Jn 3.5, and even by John the Baptist himself in the Matthean text. There is a difficulty in the fact that Jesus is baptised by John of this baptism and that causes a strain on the coherence of the Gospel story.

Thus, at the baptism in Mt. 3.13-17, this palpable theological challenge is plainly exhibited and heightened in the conversation in verses 14 and 15 between the two protagonists of the carefully depicted double-subordination scenario.²⁶ The tension between the doctrine of a sinless Jesus and the submission of the latter to the baptism of John in the synoptic Gospels appears more tangibly in Matthew's account. According to this somewhat exclusive report of Matthew²⁷, it is with resistance at

water because he states that he came out of it. Although some scholars have used this to determine the baptismal *modus operandi* from this textual difference, and other NT passages on the practice, see, for instance Murray (1980, pp. 6–30), it is important to focus on the Matthean context that combines the technical term for immersion with the depiction of the scene. This is not evidence by itself to say that Jesus was baptised by immersion, but it could be inferred until we look at this point in greater details in the appropriate section. This will be relevant to the aim of determining the meaning of Mt. 3.15.

²⁶ There have been suggestions as to why this deterrence and subordination scene is happening, but the hypothetical nature and variety of those ideas prove the uncertain, or hypothetical character of the meanings they give to the Matthean addition in attempting to explain the event in the Matthean context. See, Luz (2007, pp. 174–76) on the short survey on historical positions held in traditional interpretations of this aspect of the question of Jesus' baptism. See a similar survey of the different historical views on the question and their rationales in Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 321–23). Here, Davies and Allison, although, careful enough to remain hypothetical, has deemed the question unsolvable, and has held the view that the sinlessness of Jesus is a position that is incongruent with reality. Thus, this position provides space for perhaps, another reason for Jesus' submission to John's baptism. However, there are also other considerations that come with the fact that this event took place. The submission of Jesus to John's baptism is questionable in the light of the doctrine of the sinlessness of Jesus. See, Neville (2005); Crisp (2007) on the question of Jesus' sinlessness. Also, among the four questions that rise in the mind of this commentator, Gundry (1982, p. 51), the question of whether or not the time had come for the Spirit baptism to replace the water baptism is viewed as a possible reason for the event.

²⁷ The uniqueness of Matthew's Gospel on the baptism of Jesus is a fact that sets this baptism story apart for more examination on a possible Matthean perspective on the subject of baptism itself. It is important to recognise that this is not the only place where it happens to be that Matthew has views of his own, that he expresses through unique vocabulary and stylistic differences in comparison with the other Gospel writers. There is a textual exclusivity phenomenon to Matthew in different ways that has

first, Mt. 3.14, and then compliance that John the Baptist reacts to Jesus' insistence in Mt. 3.15. The object of the discussion, the conversation that has animated long debates with opposed views is consigned in this passage below.

ὁ δὲ Ἰωάννης διεκώλυεν αὐτὸν λέγων· ἐγὼ χρεῖαν ἔχω ὑπὸ σοῦ βαπτισθῆναι, καὶ σὺ ἔρχῃ πρὸς με; Ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν, Ἄφες ἄρτι· οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην. Τότε ἀφίησιν αὐτόν. Mat 3.14, 15.

1.1 Questions about Jesus' Baptism

The actual Baptism, the immersion event, eventually took place after this conversation between Jesus and John. Jesus who had come all the way from Galilee to the Jordan River was baptised by John the Baptist, like all the other people (Mt. 3.5, 6). Some of those people who were being baptised, importantly, were referred to as 'generation of vipers,' as they were exhorted to 'bring forth, therefore, fruit meet for repentance' (Mt. 3.7, 8). Although these expressive terms seemed to have been used for specific individuals in Matthew's text (Mt. 3.7)²⁸, repentance was still the essential reason for baptism for all who came to John according to Mt. 3.5, 6. The very apparent dilemma here is that Jesus, the Son of God in whom there is no sin,²⁹

been called 'Mattheanism', and it is prompting in this research. See, Gundry (1982, pp. 50–1); David C Sim (2011) for more details.

²⁸ The Mattheanism here is that these expressions seem to be exclusively used to identify the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, not only at the baptism scene in Mt. 3.7 (γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν), but also in Mt. 12.34 (γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν). Luke has the same saying (γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν) at the baptismal event, but it is directed to no specific individual as the crowd comes to John to be baptised, see Lk. 3.7. Contrarily to Matthew, the Lukan text places the focus on the baptism rather than the people who are addressed, see Marshall (1978, pp. 137–38). This is another piece of evidence for Matthew's interest in using the baptism pericope in a specific way, and within the larger story of the life of Jesus.

²⁹ These texts, Jn. 8.46; 2 Cor. 5.21; Heb. 4.14; 7.26; 1 Pet. 1.19; 2.22; 1 Jn. 3.5, and some others less direct, clearly infer that Jesus was not in need of repentance because he was not a sinner, in the view of those who spread the Gospel, and the Christian religion. See, Crisp (2007) for a discussion on the subject of whether Jesus was sinless and incapable of committing sin or sinless, but with the possibility of sinning. The point is that his sinlessness in key to his mission as understood by his disciples in the above texts, and some scholars' views. There are different views on the meaning of the sinlessness of Jesus, see for instance, Neville (2005, pp. 361–62). The sinlessness idea that is retained in this thesis is the one according to which Jesus did not commit any sin that would have him to repent from anything in order to be forgiven, and therefore, he would not have been in need of John's baptism at any point in his life, which would have defeated the purpose of what this baptism seemed to have stood for, that is repentance and forgiveness of sin.

and consequently from whom there was no iniquity to wash away, who had no repentance to make, no old man to bury is baptised along with other sinners, the same day, by the same preacher and in the same place.³⁰ This situation is the least perplexing and requires some investigation for an apparent lack of coherence. Some light has to be shed on this obscure corner of the story of Jesus.³¹

Therefore, some of the following questions among many more to come should be thought of while reflecting on this part of the story of Jesus in the context of the Matthean Gospel. Is not the very aim of John's baptism the expression of repentance and need of forgiveness, or is there another meaning to it? Was Jesus in need of repentance and forgiveness, or was there another application to his baptism? How applicable was this baptism to Jesus as one of the candidates at the Jordan River, or how much of it did not apply to him? Theologically, and at least theoretically, it would seem that this baptismal ceremony did not apply to Jesus given his pedigree.³² He did not seem to qualify for this baptism intended only for the common populace, in other words, sinners. This public washing ceremony seems to have given a clear testimony of a need for spiritual cleansing to all the contemporaries of Jesus, and it is still the case today, according to Mt. 3.5-10. The baptism of John was then, as it

³⁰ In the light of these elements, and others also, the baptism of Jesus is very often construed as a means to identify with human beings in their sinful condition and their need for forgiveness. This is how texts such as 2 Cor. 2.21; 1 Pet. 2.22; 1 Jn. 3.5 as well as Mt. 3.13-17 are viewed by some in scholarship because of a lack of certainty about the meaning of the latter. A good number of the theories behind the reasons for the baptism of Jesus, among which, 'Jesus came to be anointed as Messiah by one he took to be Elijah', are consigned in Nolland (2005, p. 152). See also, commentaries on the sinlessness, sin bearing, and sufferings of Jesus, and how it would all interact with his baptism in, Thrall (1994, pp. 439-44); MacArthur (2004, pp. 164-73); Bockmuehl (2012, pp. 88-89).

³¹ The difference found in Matthew's account from all the other Gospels is said to be 'his own modest contribution' to enlightening the reader concerning the reason for this baptism, see Nolland (2005, p. 152).

³² Jesus, while he is a man, or a flesh-made being, he is the Son of God in every canonical Gospel. It should, however, be noted that there has not been any argument against this general belief. The main agreement among scholars is that he did not do it for himself, Albright and Mann (1971, pp. 31-2). The point here is that this act has been interpreted by most in this way, but it still does not do away with the tension in the text, and the uncertainty among scholars about the meaning of Mt. 3.15. See, Bockmuehl (2012); Nolland (2005, pp. 154-55); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 320-45).

seems to be now, an overt sign of the acknowledgment of the sinful nature and state of the applicants and their need of absolution according to both John the Baptist's speech and other NT texts on the subject.³³

For this reason, there has been a keen interest into the question as to what really happened at Jesus' baptism, and as stated above, many have expressed various views on the subject. It is an episode of the life of Jesus that has left the discussion opened to great interest in the difficulties it awakens particularly in Matthew's account. However, there seems to have been no matching concern from many scholars for investigating Jesus' baptism beyond the received ideas, thus dismissing perhaps a specificity of the Matthean story.³⁴ This conceivably pregnant question about the meaning of Mt. 3.13-17, although looked at as important may not have been dealt with as extensively as it could be. Perhaps if a renewed interest is shown for the examination of this passage, it will yield an increase of insights on the subject and contribute to more specific a view on the meaning of the baptism of Jesus in Matthew. There should be a benefit of more clarity from a fresh investigation of this passage since the event seems still obscure on the one hand, while baptism on the other hand

³³ Bromiley (1999, p. 402) here argues congruently with the message that seems to be that of John the Baptist that baptism, 'meant both, forgiveness of sin and renovation of life.' The other most significant NT texts in view here, in terms of Christian baptism are Rom. 6.1-11; Col. 2.2.12; 1 Cor. 12.13; Gal. 3.27, 28, and according to Murray (1980, p. 3) these texts 'indicate the that union with Christ is the governing idea.' For him although there is a 'close relation' between these texts and those about the baptism of Jesus in some aspects of the rites practiced, the baptism of Jesus in Mt. 3.13-17, could not be compared to that of following Christians, Murray (1980, p. 1,2).

³⁴ One of the main received ideas that are presented by most is that of Jesus setting an example for his followers, so that they may do the same, see Gundry (1982, pp. 49–51), but there are several other suggestions such as, he just obeyed the demand of God to be baptised, or the sacrificial nature of his ministry in bearing the sins of others was in view at this event, and some other views as mentioned in Beasley-Murray (1962, pp. 45–55); Bockmuehl (2012, p. 88). However, the point that is exhibited by the briefness with which commentators generally have treated aspects of the event, Mt. 3.14, 15, shows that there is a great deal of uncertainty as to what the meaning of Jesus' baptism is. Also, the lack of consensus allows all to have their personal views on the significance of this event. See, Adams (2013).

remains a very important Christian sacrament, ‘a pledge of our adoption’³⁵ in Christianity, even today.

For this reason, in an attempt to conduct this investigation, several important impending and far-reaching questions must be asked about this part of the life of Jesus Christ upon the reading Matthew’s record of its baptismal episode. There may not be an exhaustive list of those questions to present in this research, but here are some of the most pressing ones at this time. Why was Jesus baptised by John the Baptist when according the main textual reason for John’s baptism, that is repentance, there would be no effect of this baptism on him for absence of sin in him? If we stick to the identity Jesus was attributed with and which was fully believed by his followers³⁶ throughout the historical theological developments of the Christian church to date,³⁷ he is the sinless Son of God, why would he ever want to compromise this key identity feature by submitting to this baptismal rite that is for sinners? Why would Jesus in his superiority, surrender to it and to its uncharacteristic performance director, John the Baptist? Could there be an implicit or concealed reason, other than the commonly suggested ones, as to why Jesus wanted to be baptised by John? Could it be that Matthew’s unique remark in Jesus’ dialogue with John is indicative of a perfectly understandable reason for this baptism? A reason other than what it has been convenient to give among commentators for lack of deep interest in explaining the difficulty?

³⁵ See, Bromiley (1999, p. 406).

³⁶ In Mt. 16. 16,17 there is a clear statement that evidences that they, the disciples, in particular Peter, and Jesus agreed on the understanding that he was the Son of God. Claiming to be the Son of God in the Gospel of John, in chapter 10 and verse 33 was understood by Jesus’ opponents as claiming to be God. This identity would have presumably set him above the sinful condition of the rest of them. God could not be the same as a sinful man, in need of baptism. Also, in Lk. 5.8, after the miraculous catch of fish in one of his first interactions with Peter, the latter described himself as a ‘sinful man’ in contrast to how he perceived Jesus. See, Plummer (1986, pp. 144–45)

³⁷ While this is overall true, it has been suggested that Jesus may have felt the need for forgiveness and repentance for sins of his own, see Beasley-Murray (1962, p. 47)

Furthermore, it seems undeniable on the basis of Matthew's report that Jesus viewed his baptism as *sine qua non* to his ministry and the rest of his life as the Son of God. This perspective is conveyed by his insistence on proceeding with the act of being baptised by John. There seems to be an imperative tone, according to Matthew, to the deed of Jesus being baptised by John that requires investigation beyond the grammatical aspect of the text.³⁸ What could it mean when Jesus said that his baptism, by John, is for them to 'fulfil all righteousness'? Was the baptism of Jesus predetermined, a rite of passage, and therefore, an inevitable part of the Gospel story? Did he have to be baptised by John, one who was admittedly inferior to him as John himself confessed in Mt. 3.11? Who, and what was Jesus submitting himself to in being baptised by an apparently subordinate John? What made this baptism both necessary and authoritative for Jesus? Did John and Jesus have the same understanding of this baptism? How did Matthew in particular understand this event since he is the only one to have provided the reader, at least in part and to some extent in Mt. 3.15, with a reason for this particular experience in the life of Jesus that yet seems conventionally so theologically obscure?

Also, what lies behind Matthew's notion of fulfilment of all righteousness in relation to Jesus' baptism? Most of all, how does the pericope of Jesus' baptism in Mt. 3.13-17 relate to the consistent meaning and significance of Christian baptism as developed in Paul's epistles in particular, but also in other NT texts on the subject? Could there be a conflict between, for instance, Paul's notion of baptism, and Matthew's understanding of the same? If there were, while baptism is unquestionably a very unique and important universal rite that marks one's entrance into the Christian

³⁸ Jesus uses the Aorist imperative 'ἄφεξ' followed by the adverb of time 'ἄρτι' to convey the idea that this baptism is not optional in his view and therefore, must take place immediately.

faith,³⁹ how would it affect the understanding and practice of baptism today? How would it impact on Christianity itself if there were a different dimension to the act baptism that may not have been fully considered yet? Finally, and perhaps more essentially, what is Matthew's point in this particularly unclear passage, Mt. 3.15, with regard to the reason underlying Jesus' baptism in his Gospel account? Could the answer to this last question bring to rest the preceding ones?

To begin the analysis of the text, it seems inevitable to establish first some of the parameters within which it may be more appropriate to deal with the above questions and possibly find some answers for them in due time. Such parameters include at first, the literary analysis of the text and the consideration of the different textual aspects of it that may or may not have quite readily been discussed by Matthean scholars over the years. The aim of this approach is to effectively place the text within its actual specific backgrounds. This will enable the assessment and evaluation of the relationship between the passage of interest, Mt. 3.13-17, and the rest of the Matthean work in view of a better understanding of the main point of focus, verse 15.

1.2 Literary Analysis

For the sake of communicability,⁴⁰ the necessity to, first, attempt to define the literary genre of a document before it can definitely be interpreted has long been firmly established in biblical and extra biblical studies. This would imply, theoretically, that an adequate interpretation of Matthew is inextricably related to a proper assessment and definition of its literary genre. On these premises and for similar reasons, it would

³⁹ Bromiley (1999, pp. 402–18); Yates (1993, pp. 131–34) contains a short survey of the historical views held on the importance of Baptism to the church in its nature.

⁴⁰ One important observation by Burridge (1995, p. 47) amid others, is that it would be almost impossible to find a type of literature that is not dependent to some extent on what existed before. It is valid in the present discussion on the Matthew. See discussion in the footnotes of the page indicated above in reference to the subject, in the views of other writers. See also, Fowler (1982, p. 256).

also be helpful to conduct in the same way an analysis of its literary structure. This procedure seems expedient on account of the difficulty met in Matthean scholarship in defining the meaning of ‘ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν· ἄφες ἄρτι, οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πάντας δικαιοσύνης. τότε ἀφήσιν αὐτόν.’, which is in this research the focal point of investigation in the pericope. Interpreting appropriately this part of the whole unit would imply the assessment of its literary context through that of the book. For this purpose, the exposition and evaluation of the historical discussions on the literary structure of Matthew by David R. Bauer seems convenient for a brief consideration here.⁴¹ As for the literary genre of Matthew, there will be a reflection on what different scholars have contributed to the discussion.

Therefore, the following step is to consider concisely the question of the literary genre, and the structure of the Gospel of Matthew as a background and preparatory step to the work of interpretation of the passage of interest in this research, Mt. 3.13-17. First, let me consider essentially, the literary genre of Matthew as some Matthean specialists have defined it over the years.⁴² This exercise will only relate the basics of this aspect of Matthean studies as necessary to proceed with this research.

⁴¹ Bauer (1988).

⁴² I have chosen to concentrate on this particular aspect of the literary analysis of Matthew, rather than on a broader spectrum of aspects that are important, but not essential to the focus of this research. For a wider perspective that contains other aspects of the literary analysis such as dates, authorship, audience, place...etc, see, for instance, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 1–148) which also deals with some other ‘introductory matters’ in the section of the same appellation. See also, Luz (2007, pp. 33–99); Nolland (2005, pp. 2–33).

1.2.1 Literary Genre of Matthew's Gospel

The Gospel of Matthew has historically been thought, along with the other Gospels, as belonging to the 'Gospel genre', one kind of its own.⁴³ However convenient this view might have been, it seems not to be conclusive enough to rest the case there. The symbiotic relationship between defined genre and definite interpretation is a major issue to contend with in trying to understand such document as biblical Scripture.⁴⁴ If there have been different readings of the Gospel of Matthew, which is the case, the situation is the same with regard to its literary genre. In addition to the 'Gospel genre' unique-category proposal, there have been several other suggestions for the literary genre of Matthew's Gospel,⁴⁵ but to this date, there seems to be no general consensus on the question.⁴⁶ This struggle among Matthean specialists to agree on the literary genre of this work about Jesus' life as recounted by the writer may be indebted to several reasons.⁴⁷ Most importantly perhaps, is the fact that the various views exist, because of the necessity for taking a position on this in order to interpret Matthew's rather unique perspective (the baptism of Jesus, for instance) on parts of Jesus' story.

Among some of the suggestions that have contributed to the debate, and also exhibited the challenges that they generate in Matthean scholarship, and among form

⁴³ According to Luz (2007, p. 13), by providing titles such as 'Gospel according to...' to the different books about Jesus, the church fathers 'claimed for them a generic uniqueness in terms of genre. They are 'sui generis' stories, 'Gospels'. 'They are proclamatory stories, and they are not simply to be attributed to any profane genre'. Although, this particular view has appealed to some scholars in the past, it has increasingly been challenged by others referring to it as some sort of impossibility for logical reasons such as the fact that nothing that is of human provenance is *ex nihilo*, and that the Gospels should be compared to 'the literature of its own day', Burridge (1995, pp. 47, 53).

⁴⁴ See a brief survey on the subject in, Burridge (1995, pp. 17–25, 82–106); Shuler (pp. 24–57); Guelich (n.d., pp. 173–208).

⁴⁵ Those suggestions are incorporated in the historical discussion as mentioned in the above survey concerning the genre of the Gospels. This is because all the Gospels are generally viewed in the same light in terms of their literary identification.

⁴⁶ Luz (2007, pp. 13, 14), for some others, the Gospels are 'a mixture of different genres', Hietanen (2010, p. 64).

⁴⁷ One of the reasons for this difficulty is the historical mutability that is observable in genre theories in general, according to Fowler (1982, pp. 45–48), and this argument is palpable in the above survey on Matthew's genre.

critics is that the genre of Matthew's Gospel appears to be that of ancient Graeco-Roman biography or at least shares elements with it.⁴⁸ It is even further identified by some as one particular of the several types of ancient Graeco-Roman biographies. It would be an 'encomium' or laudatory in purpose, biography of Jesus.⁴⁹ Other critics have challenged the idea of Matthew's genre being that of an encomium biography, while recognising still, that Matthew is of a Graeco-Roman biographical genre.⁵⁰ This discussion draws attention to one point in particular on this question. Whether Matthew's type of biography can be effectively identified by comparison to ancient biographical works as a Graeco-Roman type of biography, or not, there are common features between Matthew and biographies of antiquity. The telling by writing of a man's activities in life from birth to death is central to determine a biographical aspect of a literary work in modern, as well as in ancient times. Whether, or not this main characteristic can suffice to classify this Matthean work as one of any particular type of ancient biography is seemingly, subject to one's appreciation of the technical nature of the task⁵¹ and a personal perspective on the literature itself.

Whether, or not the Graeco-Roman model of telling one man's life story from birth to death actually influenced Matthew's literary style, his Gospel seems to fulfil this very errand with perhaps a more specific purpose than just that. The on-going scholarly discussion has shown the difficulty of being securely assertive on

⁴⁸ Shuler (p. 85). Stanton's history of this side of the debate retains that 'Rudolph Bultmann and several other influential form critics' have disagreed that the Gospels should be viewed as biography. For them they are of their own genre, they are '*sui generis*', and therefore, it would be inappropriate to read them as biographies, see Stanton (1992, p. 63), see also Dihle (1991, pp. 361–86), who sees no objection to reading the Gospels as biography, because they provide to some extent, 'chronologically ordered account of the life of Jesus'. However, he would not compare them to ancient Greek and Roman biographies for lack of complete resemblance in the characteristics that he considers as representative of the biographical genre of that time.

⁴⁹ Shuler (pp. 85–87). Although not specifically mentioning Matthew, Shuler applies this view to the four Gospels, according to the characteristics he understands the encomium biography of that time to show.

⁵⁰ Stanton (1992, pp. 62–66).

⁵¹ Shuler (pp. 48–49) advocates the element of variation of genre, and of generic relationships is to be carefully considered.

Matthew's specific type of biography, because of the mutability of genres, and the different features that can possibly exist within the same literary genre. Even within the same circle of categorically identified biographies of the ancient Graeco-Roman literary world, it seems that there is divergence of features from one work to another.⁵² As said earlier concerning the literary genre of Matthew's Gospel, there is no consensus, but the main trend seems to indicate that it is a biography of the life of Jesus that Matthew intended to present. Although, there is this gap between the return of the child from Egypt in Mt. 3.19, to the 'land of Israel', 21, and the time of his baptism, Mt. 3.13-17, the importance for Matthew is still the account of the life of Jesus. Consequently, in the light of these elements, there would be no solid argument to withstand the idea that Matthew's Gospel can definitely be considered as a biographical literary genre, and therefore, be interpreted from that perspective. It is then against such a backdrop that in this thesis, the passage of interest, Mt. 3.13-17, the baptism pericope, is examined in its macro and micro context.

1.2.2 Matthew's Biographical literary Genre, and the Baptism Pericope

Defining the literary genre of the Matthean Gospel as a biography in the context of a research that focuses on exploring the meaning of the baptism of Jesus in Mt. 3.13-17, and more singularly Mt. 3.15, seems relevant for at least one reason. This exercise should prove helpful in trying to understand the meaning of this passage because of how its content relates to the rest of the Gospel. It will be useful in exhibiting the relationship between the private conversation of John with Jesus at the baptismal scene, Mt. 3.14, 15, and the rest of the Matthean account of Jesus' life and activities. Stanton is of the opinion that there could not be any successful attempt to interpret

⁵² Shuler (pp. 61–76).

Matthew's Gospel or 'any writing' without first 'establishing its literary genre'.⁵³ For him, congruently with other scholars, there is an intricate relationship between the interpretation of a text, its meaning, and its literary genre.⁵⁴ If this is true, then identifying Matthew as a biography of the life of Jesus, because of the features that characterise this literary type is *a priori* essential. Whatever is being said about Jesus in Matthew must be part of the strategy that involves the telling of essential bits that build and help understand the whole story. Considering this is essential for proper interpretation of Matthew, and particularly Mt. 3.13-17, which contains the unparalleled verse 15. The unique bit of information here must be an important one in Matthew's view. Whatever the meaning of Mt. 3.15, by reason of being, in a biographical context, it would be important to the story of Matthew. It could even be a special building block in the Matthean biography of Jesus since it brings exclusivity to the synoptic tradition.

This phenomenon may point to an exclusive point being made by Matthew on Jesus' baptism, and perhaps on baptism in the NT should there be a relationship between the two. Perhaps Mt. 3.15 is simply an evasive attempt to facilitate the reader's understanding of Jesus' seemingly unfitting submission to John's distinctive ministerial activity, his inferior water baptism.⁵⁵ Whatever the case may be this part of the passage is integral to the unique messianic baptismal experience at the Jordan River. If in the carefully arranged Matthean biography of Jesus there is such an uncanny statement within the synoptic Gospels, about such an important event, there

⁵³ Stanton (1992, p. 59).

⁵⁴ Stanton (1992, p. 59). On this particular point, Stanton, importantly, directs to the source from which he seems to have drawn support for his view. See the different references in his footnotes, as it proves relevant to the position of this thesis on this point. See the survey that Stanton is referring to in Kingsbury (1986, pp. 9–13).

⁵⁵ This is a common argument, Senior (1998, p. 55) and another number of 'conjectures' on this point are found in Davies (1988, pp. 321–23). See also the position according to which there cannot be any certainty as to what Matthew is doing there, according to White (1960, pp. 90–97).

may be some fundamental values in properly understanding it for what it really is. Mt. 3.15 is part of the whole selection of words and actions Matthew made in telling the life story of Jesus. This Matthean biographical detail, placed within the strong framework of scriptural fulfilment is an argument that insistently calls for a more focussed examination than what has perhaps been done so far. The question is why would Matthew have thought it so important a detail for it to be part of his biography of Jesus. This biographical Matthean detail occurs within an undeniably permeating structural theme of OT Scripture fulfilments that begs for the pericope to be examined in this structural context.⁵⁶

1.3 Literary Structure

It seems important to pay attention to the literary structure of biblical texts for several reasons. In the case of this thesis, it is relevant to the aim of interpreting the text of interest within a specific Matthean structure. Literary criticism has increasingly shown interest in biblical studies to the point that it is thought to have ‘assumed a central role’ in this field since a number of years.⁵⁷ In this aspect of Matthean studies, scholars seem inconclusive in terms of a consensus on Matthew’s literary structure despite the resurgence of interest shown for this particular Gospel, and the panoply of existing proposals.⁵⁸ The relevance of examining this aspect of the Matthew’s Gospel in this thesis is valid since the relationship between the structure of the book and its interpretation is that of interdependence.⁵⁹ It appears that every one of the three major

⁵⁶ I will come back to this point in the study of the use of the OT in Matthew.

⁵⁷ Bauer (1988, p. 7).

⁵⁸ Bauer (1988, pp. 11–13). For a more detailed view on this aspect of Matthean studies, see the different proposals on the structure of Matthew that are available in commentaries such as, D. Hagner (1993, pp. l–liii); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 58–72); Luz (2007, pp. 35–44) and others. The overall picture that emerges out of reading scholarship on this aspect of Matthean studies is one that informs on the difficulty to find a consensus on the questions and that of the more or less attachment of modern studies to that which has been around for some time now.

⁵⁹ Bauer (1988, p. 54).

historical structures found in the book has led to emphasise the different views as to what the aim of this Gospel is.⁶⁰ This reality of the relationship between structuralism and interpretation seems to validate the interest that needs to be given to this aspect of the study here, and the brief revision of the existing suggestions. I will succinctly review some of the positions without lingering on the subject with unnecessary attention. The three broad categories of structures, which can contain subsequent variations for every one of them, are defined as Geographical Structures,⁶¹ Topical Structures,⁶² and Conceptual Structures.⁶³ Let us have a look at every one of them beginning with the first mentioned.

1.3.1 The Geographical-Chronological Structures Approach

It would seem, according to Bauer's analysis that the Geographical-Chronological Structures advocated by some, mostly before the 1930s is dismissive of the narrative aspect of the book, to the advantage of an alleged *kerugmatik* focus on the Part of Matthew. The resultant outline of the Gospel as shown in Bauer's book, and shared by a number of other scholars⁶⁴ is mainly comprised of geographical and chronological demarcating points. These points revolve mainly around Galilee and Jerusalem. For some scholars, this is what constitutes the structure of the Matthean Gospel. However, they come into dispute when seeking to agree on the actual points of division of units in Matthew.⁶⁵ Taking this approach to the structure of the book is to a great instance

⁶⁰ Here is a survey of the different structures that scholars have found to this Gospel. There also is in this passage and evaluation of the implications of their conclusions on the interpretation of the Matthean text. There is a clear connection between the methods used to establish their views on Matthew's structure, and the conclusion they reach in their understanding of the text Bauer (1988, pp. 21–55). This equation would also be applicable in the case of this research.

⁶¹ See, Bauer (1988, pp. 22–26) for a brief introduction and survey of this position on the structure of Matthew

⁶² Bauer (1988, pp. 26–45).

⁶³ Bauer (1988, pp. 45–54).

⁶⁴ Bauer (1988, pp. 23, 26).

⁶⁵ See the variety of opinions on the breaking of units in Bauer (1988, p. 23).

incongruent with the biographical literary genre of Matthew since the great number of narrative elements is somehow overlooked to the advantage of kerugmatik elements. If this structural approach was to be that of Matthew's Gospel, it may be argued that the focus would probably no longer be essentially the life story of Jesus, but the framework in which it happened.⁶⁶

This framework made of the geographical and chronological elements⁶⁷ is important since it allows the reader to identify Jesus as the awaited Messiah of the OT prophecies that Matthew sees as fulfilled in times and places. However, this could not determine the structure of his story about the life of Jesus. The redaction activities and rearrangements of the Gospel story in Matthew seem to point to his determination to do more than Mark in telling about Jesus.⁶⁸ The belief that Matthew is dependent on Mark is viewed by Bauer as incompatible with the Geographical-Chronological structures concept on account of the difference between the two.⁶⁹ The topological elements, the whereabouts of Jesus' ministry is in nowise incompatible with identifying him or recognising him as the Messiah. The question is: can this constitute the structural feature of the book? It appears that the question at the heart of the Matthean Gospel, even in its discontinuity with others is the messianic identity of Jesus.

⁶⁶ Luz (2007, p. 44) comments by interestingly saying, 'the arrangement of Matthew is determined by the Jesus *narrative*, the discourses fit into its course in suitable places.' This would mean that it could be recognised that Matthew clearly focuses on the life of Jesus first, when it comes to the structure of his Gospel.

⁶⁷ Some of the main elements in consideration would be, the teaching and work of Jesus in Galilee in Mt. 4.12-15.20, his ministry outside of Galilee in 15.21-18.35, his journey to Jerusalem in 19.1-20.34. This would be preceded by the birth and infancy narrative from chapters 1, 2, followed by 3 and 4 as the preparation-to-ministry stage, and from 21.-28 it would be the closing and last days of Jesus' life.

⁶⁸ Those in favour of the Geographical-Chronological Structures also uphold the Markan priority theory, and therefore, the dependence of Matthew on Mark for his Gospel. See, Stanton (1992, pp. 28–32).

⁶⁹ Bauer (1988, p. 25).

Consequently, Matthew's Gospel is a biography of Jesus set in a context that is composed of recognisable OT geographical, chronological, and prophetic elements, not the other way around. The baptism pericope seems to be a good example of this. The Geographical-Chronological Structures position surely brings into light elements that need to be considered in the story, but adopting this approach seems to undermine the strong narrative drive that pervades the Gospel of Matthew. Maybe for some of the reasons mentioned above and others that may exist outside of them, this approach has not been allowed to remain unopposed. This should lead us now to consider the second proposal that is the Topical Structures approach to Matthew.

1.3.2 The Topical Structures Approach

As for the Topical Structures concept to the Gospel of Matthew, there seems to be a much greater adherence of Matthean specialists to it. B. W Bacon pioneered this concept of defining the structure of Matthew on the basis of topical divisions in the book in 1930.⁷⁰ His idea, vastly supported as it is by followers, but also with variations at times can essentially be summarised as such:⁷¹ the Gospel of Matthew is essentially made of five books. These five books are preceded by a 'preamble', chapters 1-2, and followed by an 'epilogue' made of chapter 26.3 – 28.20. Every book is internally divided in two sections by elements such as a discourse, an introductory narrative and some teaching materials.⁷² This structural approach according to Bacon, is supposed to be reflective of the Pentateuch structure since he sees Matthew as addressing anti-nomianism.⁷³

⁷⁰ See, Luz (2007, pp. 35–36); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 60–61); Bauer (1988, p. 27).

⁷¹ For a survey and evaluation of the Bacon's 'Topical Structures' advocacy and some of the variations brought by his followers, see Bauer (1988, pp. 26–45).

⁷² See an outline of the Bacon's proposal for the structure of Matthew as well as the views of other scholars who have built on it, but also challenged it in, D. Hagner (1993, pp. l–liii).

⁷³ The idea in this context is that Matthew presents his Gospel as the 'New Torah' and Jesus as the 'new Moses', Bauer (1988, p. 29).

Interestingly, scholars who agree with this ‘Baconian’ Topical-Structures’ contribution to the debate have yet challenged it in some aspects.⁷⁴ It would seem that his treatment of the two first and of the two last chapters of Matthew, seen respectively as preamble and epilogue, would be problematic in the light of their importance to the whole story. Two major problems, among others,⁷⁵ seem to arise from this particular structural view, according to Kingsbury’s ‘analysis of the flow of Matthew’s narrative’ that would be impaired by it.⁷⁶ What Bacon calls the preamble or prologue of the Gospel in Matthew is seen by some of those scholars who depart from this view as the introduction that ‘provides the setting for all the subsequent events’ in the narrative.⁷⁷ This view provides a more sensible approach in considering the biographical aspect that most seem to acknowledge by seeing in Matthew a telling of the life of Jesus as pacing the story. As for the last chapters, it is appropriately remarked that in this perspective, ‘the depreciation of the passion and the resurrection undercuts the sense of history and the historical development in Matthew’.⁷⁸

Eventually, it must be recognised in this discussion on the ‘Baconian’ structural approach to Matthew and the other alternatives within it, that there seem to be no consensus among the scholars who propose them as to how it precisely works.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Bauer (1988, pp. 30–31).

⁷⁵ It seems disputable that the division of the Pentateuch into blocks of ‘Narrative-discourse’ sequences is accurate as Bacon claims. This would undermine the comparison between the Torah of Moses and the ‘new Torah’ of Matthew as presented by Bacon. Another point would be that the use of formula at the end of the books in Matthew would be more ‘transitional’ in nature, preparing for the next passage, than ‘concluding’ unlike in the Pentateuch, see Bauer (1988, p. 33).

⁷⁶ See, Bauer (1988, p. 33). Another view according to Gundry (1982, pp. 10–11) is that if the ‘fivefold arrangement in Matthew’ is well present, it is because ‘such arrangement has become customary because of the great authority of the Pentateuch.’ However, there is no ‘similarities in the contents of Moses’ five books and Jesus’ five discourses.’ His final say on the structure of Matthew is that it is the ‘chronology of Jesus’ life that determined’ the ‘ordering of some of the materials’. For him, there should be no ‘imposing of an outline on Matthew’, because he would not have ‘thought in terms of one’ while writing his Gospel.

⁷⁷ Bauer (1988, p. 33).

⁷⁸ Bauer (1988, p. 33).

⁷⁹ A survey by Bauer (1988, pp. 34–45) of most of the proposals, from the different scholars whom he brings under scrutiny in this debate clearly shows the extent of the challenge there is to the task of

Although there seem to be a good deal of positive remarks and observation to indicate that there is a careful arrangement of this Gospel, even in topical units, it seems very difficult to say that Matthew is topically structured as a whole. What seems to be the consensus, however, is that all admit the unity of the book of Matthew in telling the story of Jesus. This is so, perhaps, beyond the important discourse-narrative feature that all might have recognised in Matthew. The Topical Structures approach may have been Matthew's literary structural idea for his book. Nevertheless, if this is the case there should be no such disagreement among Matthean specialists to show the evidence for it, while they claim such a unity in this Gospel. This seemingly inconclusive situation is prompting the necessity to take a look at the other proposal, which is the Conceptual Structures Approach.

1.3.3 The Conceptual Structures Approach

The conceptual Structures idea is the theory that Matthew has one pervading theme, around which he has 'arranged his material'.⁸⁰ The main characteristic of this approach would be that of the singularity of a theological aim. Matthew had one purpose in mind that transpires and shapes the book as a whole. This approach is advocated by some scholars and supported by some others who believe that Matthew's structure is based on his understanding of salvation history.⁸¹ They differ in their actual practical presentation of how precisely this view has structured Matthew's Gospel, but agree on the main three-section view of salvation history that

defining a single *quasi* satisfying view on the structure of Matthew. The variation, for instance, in the number of divisions (for some three, others five, sixth, seven), and the indicators of such divisions marked by the use of formula as proposed by some, 7.28; 11.1; 13.53; 19.1; 26.1, some which are repeated like 4.17; 16.21; 26.16, whether these conclude, or begin a period in Matthew, only exemplify the perplexity and disagreement. This is perhaps the reason why for (Luz, 2007, p. 35), the question of the structure of the Gospel of Matthew presents 'a quite chaotic picture'.

⁸⁰ Bauer (1988, p. 45).

⁸¹ See the names of the main protagonists, proponents, and opponents of this view in Bauer (1988, pp. 45–54).

lead them to embrace the Conceptual-Structural approach.⁸² The three ‘epochs’ of salvation history proposed by the advocates of the Conceptual Structures are the OT time before Jesus, the NT time of Jesus and the ecclesiastical time after Jesus.⁸³ Although, they all present the ‘three-epochs’ underlining structure for this view, they disagree on how exactly it actually structures Matthew since they point at individual, separate understandings of the main theme. Again, as with the preceding attempts to defining the structure of Matthew, there is no consensus among scholars on this last one either.

This particular structural approach in its varied expressions seems too much dependent on the presuppositions of its promoters in many ways. All those who share in it appear to be particularly driven in their interpretation of the text to their conclusions on the basis of various assumptions about the settings of Matthew.⁸⁴ In essence, the story of Matthew would mainly be about the story of the Church after Jesus, from the viewpoint and concerns of a writer who is looking back from a distance at the time of Jesus. The ecclesiological concern would be the main one and therefore, would define the structure of the whole book. It is the story of Jesus, but the main concept in that story would be the replacement of Israel by the church mainly characterised by the mission to the Gentiles in Mt. 28.19, 20.

This Conceptual Structures approach to the defining of Matthew’s literary structure is as historical as the two previous ones and that with the same sort of lack

⁸² See the views, and their evaluation in Bauer (1988, pp. 45–55).

⁸³ Although, they do not all define salvation history in the above terms, they are consensual on that the underlining content of the event suggested structural indicators. It is Israel, Jesus, and the church. It seems that in the list proposed by Bauer, only Hubert Frankemölle seems to depart from the consideration of the past in salvation history and the severing of it as mentioned above. He emphasises the ecclesiological aspect like others, but he still agrees on the Conceptual Structures approach on the basis of the other core assumptions found in other approaches, see Bauer (1988, pp. 51–2).

⁸⁴ These assumptions involve, the time of writing, Matthew’s audience and the question of authorship. Their understanding of Matthew’s structure is dependent on their conclusions on these and also, the method employed to reach those.

of agreement among its advocates on defining how it has specifically structured the book. The lack of consensus and the diversity of opinions on the subject shows that there are many ways of looking at the question of Matthew's structure. What seems clear in the light of this survey is that the interpretation of Matthew is necessarily tied with the understanding of its structure for all those scholars. They have in various ways pointed at elements that should be considered in attempting to find out Matthew's structure. They have exhibited the fact that there is a careful arrangement of this Gospel, through the use of repeated formula such as 'Καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς' in five places. Also, the repeated use 'Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς' at least in two places and the fact that these rather Matthean features are well spread in the whole story. This survey has certainly shown that there are elements, 'Matthean literary devices' that have been suggested as being indicators of Matthew's structural activity,⁸⁵ but there still is no consensus among specialists on defining that structure of Matthew.

One observation, however, is that Matthew's pericope of the baptism of Jesus is structurally important to the big story no matter the structural concept adopted for this book.⁸⁶ Whether it is the Geographical-Chronological Structures approach, the Topical Structures, the Conceptual Structures or Bauer's own structural contribution as presented in the rest of his book, it is helpful to consider their points. These contributions exhibit analytical points that clearly show that this Gospel has been structured one way or another. One has to take their own stand because of the lack of consensus among Matthean structural analysts on the matter.⁸⁷ It is amazing,

⁸⁵ See the list of these elements in Bauer (1988, p. 55).

⁸⁶ I will elaborate on this point in the appropriate section of the research.

⁸⁷ Read the article, but particularly the conclusion in, VanderWeele (2008, p. 673) that evidences the point that structuralists may have their own opinions on how to see the Gospel of Matthew in this aspect of things.

however, that Matthew would have been so literarily crafty that there would not be enough knowledge and skills among literary critics of this age to clearly, and consensually identify his work. Could it be true that Matthew's structure is simpler than this? While it is undeniable that Matthew presents a much differently organised story of Jesus' activities and speeches than Mark, for instance; should not have the years of polarisation around its structure as a whole eased the quest? I agree with the thought that in view of the presence of clearly identified literary devices in the Matthean Gospel there must be a structure to the book. Without those literary devices, there would not be a conjunction amongst the different parts of the story producing such a historical flow as felt when reading it.

Therefore, it could be that the Matthew's structure is simply dictated and formed by his intent to present the life of Jesus in the most coherent manner that he thinks it should be presented. He certainly had in mind one particular purpose in writing his Gospel as most of the structural analysts would agree to say, but what it was can only be ascertained from what he says, how he says it and how much he says. It seems that an examination of Matthew's unparalleled, in some ways, pericope of Jesus' baptism in its immediate and larger context can contribute to a better understanding of this aspect of the first Gospel. Nevertheless, this research is concerned with the passage found in Mt. 3.13-17 and more specifically the meaning of verse 15. The discussion on the structure of this Gospel is only relevant here in this context as the meaning of the passage once ascertained can show its impact on the whole story and *vice versa* if indeed there is unity in this Matthean story of Jesus' life.

1.4 Matthew's Structure, a Specific Perspective in this Research

Regarding the structure of this Gospel it may seem trying, as argued above, to closely identify Matthew's arrangement with that of the rest of the synoptic Gospels⁸⁸ in spite of overall similarities in topological, chronological, biographical elements about Jesus' life. Some who have specifically looked at the literary structural question in Matthew have argued that it was 'methodologically unsound' to define its structure on the basis of a comparison between the Gospels.⁸⁹ Perhaps some of the reasons for the points of difference that may be viewed as structural dissimilarities, from one to the other, possibly, have to do with the personal historical backgrounds of the Gospels and individual target audiences.⁹⁰ In other words, those differences, besides authorships and formally identified target audiences, could essentially be accounted for on the basis of settings and context variables as well as different theological aims.⁹¹ The redactional activity of Matthew and his usage of intentional transitional words, expressions and short passages, more than others, seems to allow a greater fluency and concordance between all parts of his Gospel.⁹² This perhaps is prompted by the desire to exhibit a more fluent story of Jesus than other Gospel writers.

⁸⁸ Luz (2007, pp. 36–37) gives three basic reasons why it is difficult to assess Matthew's structure. The first one is that Matthew is 'highly formulaic' and repetitive in his use of some words, which makes it difficult to exploit the 'similarities in vocabulary'. The numerous inclusions and the frequent supply of 'formulaic beginnings' could be confusing. The second reason is that there are discrepancies in the intensity of his redactional activity that generate either the predominance of Markan texts and sequences and the opposite at times. The third reason is that Matthew seems not 'to value delimitations' between the parts of the story. Rather, he uses transitional words and pericopes. See also, Gundry (1982, pp. 4–5) and his opinion on Matthew's personal style and arrangements of the different materials that may or may not have been common to the sources behind the synoptic texts. The point is made of the peculiarity of Matthew's text due to redactional activities.

⁸⁹ Bauer (1988, p. 25).

⁹⁰ Whether or not commentator see similarities in the settings of the Gospels, it is clear that there are differences that have to be considered, when interpreting them, Bauer (1988, p. 47).

⁹¹ The different audiences and communities, geographical locations, times of writing, writer's aims and perhaps intended responses from the different audiences would logically result in such structural differences despite the commonality of stories with the same main character, Jesus, whose life and actions they portray in personal terms.

⁹² See the importance of these elements in linking the parts into a fluent story as it is intended to be perceived by the reader from the writer Bauer (1988, pp. 13, 14, 55).

Such words, expressions and short passages used as transitional devices between the different parts of the book permeate the Matthean story of Jesus to inevitably and intentionally structure this book to make it an ‘architectonic grandeur in its totality’.⁹³ For instance, between the introduction of Jesus in the various stages in Mt. 1-4.16 previous to his ministerial activities and the beginning of his messianic office from Mt. 4.18, verse 17 plays this transitional role. This is because of the expression *Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς* that we find again latter in Mt. 16.21 with a similar role and place in the sentence. We also find the combinations *Ἀπὸ τότε* and *τότε ἤρξατο* in respectively Mt. 26.16 and 26.74. However, the real significance of looking at these words and expression can be found in a comparative study. Matthew more than the other synoptic Gospels, and this by far, ninety times, uses *τότε*, whether combined with other words as mentioned above or alone.⁹⁴ Luz observes that more than eighty times Matthew’s use of *τότε* is redactional and comes ‘almost exclusively at the beginning of a sentence’.⁹⁵ The overwhelming use of this adverb by Matthew in comparison with Mark and Luke both in frequency and grammatical forms, perhaps is defining in identifying Matthew’s structural features.

Also, there are whole pericopes with similar transitional functions to clearly establish the cohesion of the whole Gospel as the telling of a one story. They make the link between what precedes and what follows the different parts of the whole

⁹³ See, Davies (1964, p. 14) who argues here that like for some other documents, the parts of Matthew’s Gospel are so ‘closely knit’, that they ‘can only be adequately understood in the light of the whole’. Also, see Stanton (1992, pp. 318–19), where he comments on the point made by Luz about the ‘transitional’ parts or ‘verses’ that Matthew uses, to make the point of coherence, and fluency in his Gospel. He gives in his treatment of the question a whole list of verses that function as such, and also, of material common to the synoptic tradition that Matthew has re-arranged in order to create this effect and structure his Gospel to this aim.

⁹⁴ Mark only uses *τότε* 6 times, and Luke 15 times. It could be argued that these Gospels are different in length, but the length of the books would make no difference at a statistical level.

⁹⁵ For Luz (2007, pp. 37–38) in his observations, Matthew uses *τότε* with the infinitive 65 times, while Mark and Luke do so respectively, 3, and 11 times only. Matthew also uses *τότε* with ‘historical present’ 20 times against none for Mark and only 3 times for Luke. As for *τότε* with participle again Matthew is more generously using this form, 15 times against none for Mark, and barely one time for Luke.

Gospel. In the case of the main introductory part of Matthew's Gospel, Mt. 1.1 - 4.16, it also contains a transitional pericope between the baptism of Jesus with the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in Mt. 3.13-17, and the role of the Holy Spirit in the mission of Jesus in Mt. 4.1-11, the temptation story. It seems necessary to have had the in-between-episode that links together John's speech about Jesus on the one side, and on the other, Jesus' authority expressed in his ministry. This temptation pericope is introduced by one of the transitional words, τότε, most used to this effect by Matthew. The content of it seems to be very much connected to the first part of the Gospel, in the sense that it confirms the special attributes of Jesus as presented in the first segments of the introductory section and the bigger story that follows to the end.

The temptation story of Jesus, willed by the πνεῦμα, who had been introduced in Mt. 1.18, 20 is a transition between the baptism of Jesus, with the manifestation of the πνεῦμα at the baptism, the mission of the πνεῦμα (Τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη... ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος) and the work of Jesus that is introduced by Ἀπὸ τότε in Mt. 4.17. The importance of introducing the Spirit and his role in Mt. 1.18, 20 (Jesus' incarnation, ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου) in the life of Jesus is as fundamental as the order of things in this story of the works of Jesus. This observation is clear in the sequence of events that are paramount in telling this story. In Mt. 3.16 (at baptism, [τὸ] πνεῦμα [τοῦ] θεοῦ καταβαῖνον... ἐρχόμενον ἐπ' αὐτόν) Jesus is anointed and begins his ministry. In Mt. 4.1, the role of the πνεῦμα (his taking of the lead after baptism, Τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη... ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος) is justified by his eminence in the rest of the story in places such as in Mt. 10.20; 12.18, 28, 31, 32; 28.19. It is noteworthy that the mention of [τὸ] πνεῦμα [τοῦ] θεοῦ is as much a part of the continuing mission of the disciples at the very conclusion of the Matthean Gospel as it is in its introductory part, along with the notion of baptism. It is also important to notice that at the Baptism of Jesus,

the manifestation of the πνεῦμα in conjunction with the voice from heaven is the most extra-ordinary and defining event in this life story. So that the manifestation of the Spirit of God and baptism itself are not just important thematic features, but also structural elements in the telling of the story, along with other sections, subjects of discussion and characters.

Other examples of this structural pattern are seen in the following sections of Matthew's story. Mt. 4.12-16 for instance, when the hearing of John the Baptist imprisonment and seemingly occasioning the relocation of Jesus, is a group of verses that connect different points and parts of the whole account.⁹⁶ So it is with the introduction by John the Baptist of Jesus' mission in Mt. 3.11,12, the conversation of Jesus with John before his baptism by the same in verses 13-17 and the beginning of Jesus' preaching in 4.17 taking over the message of John as found in Mt. 3.2. As for in the rest of the Gospel, Matthew keeps referring to John the Baptist in different ways, in connection with the introductory part on this character in Mt. 3. In Mt. 9.14 he mentions John's disciples in contrast to Jesus' disciples as to highlight the coexistence of the two ministries side by side with one eventually taking prominence over the other as at the baptismal scene in Mt. 3.

More remarkably, in the eleventh chapter and verses 2, 4, 7, 11-13, 18, there is a long treatment of the relationship between John and Jesus that is unequivocally enlightened by their interactions in the introductory part of this Gospel, in Mt. 3.13-17. In Mt. 14.2-4, 8, 10, the pericope about John's arrest and tragic death displays the

⁹⁶ This portion of text is the main in-between part that links the official start of the ministry of Jesus, his baptism, his active ministry and preaching to the people in verse 17. This portion is essentially made of OT references adjusted by Matthew like non-other. According to Blomberg (2007, p. 18) and concerning Mt. 4.15, 'only Matthew describes the change of residence and refers to it as fulfilling Scripture.' The information given in Mt. 4.12-16 is very important for the rest of the story and the format used to convey it is in the same way reflective of the whole account in terms of style. For a more detailed view on how Matthew has constructed this short passage, how it relates to the OT and Matthew's own perspective in the context of the whole story, see Blomberg (2007, pp. 18-19).

extent of the connection between Jesus and John in several ways, but reminiscing from the introduction in Matthew 3. In Mt. 14.2, Herod is confused and thinks that Jesus, now active in the region, is John who had come back from the dead. This confusion is based on the similarity of their ministries as he perceived it and as identifiable from the early parts of the Gospel.

Still for structural reasons, Matthew sometimes departs from the synoptic writers. For instance, in Mark and in Luke, it is the people saying that John had risen from the dead to perform the miracles Jesus was doing, but in Matthew it is Herod himself who comes to this conclusion.⁹⁷ This is not the only departure of Matthew from Mark that is relevant to notice concerning this pericope and in this discussion.⁹⁸ The next verse, 13, of chapter 14, following the end of this part on the fate of John the Baptist, the sentence is possibly, particularly structured to effect the uninterrupted flow of the bigger story.⁹⁹ Matthew links the movement of Jesus to a new location with the news of John's death by using *Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνεχώρησεν*. This is the same literary device that he used for the transition between locations in the introductory part of his Gospel, where the baptism pericope is situated. In Mt. 4.12, Jesus moves from one place to another, because *Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι Ἰωάννης*. The point here is that contrary to the possibly structuring elements found in Mark and

⁹⁷ Cf. Mk 6.14; Lk. 9.7. See other reasons scholars have provided for this departure in Gundry (1982, pp. 284–85). Luz (2001, pp. 305–6) somehow, advocates the idea of continuity and flow of the story by recognising the specific structure Matthew gives to this part of the story in comparison with the synoptic writers. He views Matthew's redactional activities as connecting the whole from the beginning to the end in appealing to the relationship between John, Jesus and their common enemy. Also, Davies and Allison D. JR (1991, pp. 467–68).

⁹⁸ Although this pericope is recorded in every one of the synoptic Gospels, it can be observed that Matthew's account is closer to that of Mark than to that of Luke, yet, it is quite Matthean still. This again suggests his determination to tell the tale in a specific manner that is proper to himself and this for the reasons already evoked. See, Mt. 14.1-12 and cf. Mk 6.14-29, and see comments in Davies and Allison D. JR (1991, pp. 464–65).

⁹⁹ This point is clearly made and sustained in several ways by Davies and Allison D. JR (1991, pp. 475–76), who also emphasises that beyond the fact that this chapter is linked to chapter 3 and 11 through the connection between the character, Mt. 14.1-12 is a link between the past, in the flow of the story, and what is coming until the end.

Luke, Matthew keeps the relationship between John and Jesus, throughout, as one that expresses the connection from the beginning between the two, by linking what precedes to what follows in the text.

Thus, there seems to be a decided effort on the part of Matthew not to delimit the stories as detached fractions of the life of Jesus so far. Otherwise, this account would only function as disconnected pieces of information that would still inform the reader, but with a different narrative effect. There seems to be a willingness to allow the flow of events to be as seamless as possible in order to view the story in its entirety as the telling of a one-multi-faceted and staged event, that is the life of Jesus. Whether or not there will ever be a formal scholarly consensus on the structure of Matthew as a whole is doubtful. Nevertheless, there can certainly be a clear sense of a structural effort. It would be due to the use of literary devices and literary techniques in Matthew's account of Jesus' life that are constant and consistent. The introductory part of the whole Gospel, which contains the baptism pericope, and the brief dialogical element, uniquely recorded in Mt. 3.14, 15 is structurally merging with the rest of the story.¹⁰⁰ Structuralists may not have focussed in detail on this aspect of things, perhaps because of spending more time on thinking about a structure for Matthew as a whole. However, another approach might be necessary to define this important aspect of the Matthean story.

Thus, because of this noticeable lack of agreement among scholars on attributing one specific structure to Matthew's entire Gospel, there is a necessity here to supply a basic outline of the introductory part of the book to see how it relates to the whole story. Outlining this part of Matthew should help perceived the pattern that possibly pervades the rest of the book. However, the main objective even in this

¹⁰⁰ This observation relates to the specific features and links that have been identified so far in this thesis concerning Matthew's willingness to make the whole story flow.

exercise remains the place and meaning of the baptism of Jesus, with its specifically Matthean note, within the whole narrative. Although, this outline that considers several passages of Matthew's introductory section might be useful in assessing the relevant points of cohesion between all the parts of the book, beyond Mt. 3.13-17, the ultimate focus is Mt. 3.15 and how it impacts the rest of Matthew's narrative of Jesus' life. It is an attempt to better understand this specific passage within a possibly new structural perspective.

1.5 Outline of Mt. 1.1-4.18 and the Pericope of Baptism

1.5.1 Mt. 1.1-17. Introduction to the Gospel Story through Genealogy

Matthew presents the genealogical tree of Jesus Christ and prepares the reader for his coming on the scene, as it would have been anticipated by the previous generations.

The mention of Israel's genealogical key figures David and Abraham signify this anticipation from verse 1 in a messianic expectation context.¹⁰¹ Following is the host of perhaps numerically coded OT intermediary names,¹⁰² strictly related by blood affiliation in verses 2-16 and that ends with 'Jesus who is called Χριστός'. In verses 17 and 18 is a summary of the above section with what seems to be a perfectly

¹⁰¹ Davies and Allison (1988, p. 149) see straight away a chiasmic structure in the mention of Jesus Christ, David, and Abraham in verse 1 as the 'front half of a chiasmus', that is reversed as it appears in Mt. 1.2-16 in this order, Abraham, David and Jesus Christ. The implication of this remark is that Matthew does pursue the course of using literary devices in his telling of the story of Jesus from the start. An interesting observation, however, is that Matthew's beginning of the story of Jesus contains choice words such as Βίβλος γενέσεως, that would definitely establish a connection between his Gospel and the story of creation in the Scriptures. The argument is that Matthew was specifically establishing a rapport with the OT through how he intended to tell about Jesus. For more details on the different textual, structural, historical, and theological implications, see, Gundry (1982, p. 13); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 153–60); Blomberg (2007, pp. 2–3); Luz (2007, pp. 103–104).

¹⁰² It is very noticeable that Matthew is extremely precise and specific concerning the numbers and the name of the people he gives in the genealogy of Jesus. There are three blocks of fourteen names from Abraham to Jesus, with the middle being David. See, Nolland (2005, pp. 85–7). These are the three names that he introduces this part of the story with in Mt. 1.1. Some have seen here the use of '*gemetria*', see, Blomberg (2007, p. 3); Davies and Allison (1988, p. 161–63, 165) on this, but in spite of the very likely focus on David by the specific means exhibited in Davies and Allison's comments, the necessity of David's name in this genealogy is theologically and historically essential to Matthew in how this part of the Gospel relates to the complete narrative. In terms of literary structure, although, this approach, the use of this particular feature, '*gemetria*' is not exclusive to Matthew in biblical and extra-biblical literatures, it is the case in the Gospels. See comments from a list of scholars on this in Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 161–65).

designed connection between the now three-key emphasised points. This genealogical piece constitutes the starting point or the beginning of this Gospel account that highlights specific OT characters, namely, Abraham, David, to ‘Jesus who is called Χριστός’.¹⁰³

1.5.2 Introduction of the Gospel Through the Birth and Infancy of Jesus in Mt. 1.19-2.1-23.

Matthew presents the coming of the baby Jesus, his infancy and prepares the reader for an expected extraordinary life story of this Jesus, who, very importantly and significantly, becomes the Christ.¹⁰⁴ This is achieved by the recounting, in chronological order, of events that are taking place as the story develops. Again, this is done through the use of suggestive vocabulary, OT connected phraseology and formula quotations that convey both the premonitory or prophetic nature of these events as far as Jesus’ life is concerned. For instance, in,

- Mt. 1.20, ἄγγελος κυρίου κατ’ ὄναρ ἐφάνη αὐτῷ λέγων· Ἰωσήφ υἱὸς Δαβίδ, μὴ φοβηθῇς παραλαβεῖν Μαρίαν τὴν γυναῖκά σου· τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου.
- Mt. 1.22, τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος·
- Mt. 1.23 καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός

¹⁰³ An additional Matthean feature to the Gospel story, of this genealogy of Jesus that is considered more artificial than historical by Davies and Allison (1988, p. 161) is the mention of specific women in the list of names. This Matthean ‘selection’ of ‘*four ancestral mothers*’ of Jesus has been deemed ‘noteworthy’, and at least three different hypothetical reasons for it have been presented by Luz (2007, pp. 109–10). As concerning this research, it is the rather the fact that Matthew is peculiar with this genealogy, more than the possible undercurrent thoughts that is relevant to the structural argument.

¹⁰⁴ Although, Mathew begins his story by using the expression ‘Jesus Christ’ to identify the main character, he presents in a unique way, for emphasis, how this Jesus becomes ‘Christ’ later, at his baptism. This is possibly the reason why his version of the baptism of Jesus is unparalleled.

- Mt. 2.5,6 οὕτως γὰρ γέγραπται διὰ τοῦ προφήτου... ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ ἐξελεύσεται ἡγούμενος, ὅστις ποιμανεῖ τὸν λαὸν μου τὸν Ἰσραήλ.
- Mt. 2.12 καὶ χρηματισθέντες κατ' ὄναρ μὴ ἀνακάμψαι
- Mt. 2.15 Ἡρώδου· ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος.

The list of such examples would be longer should the text be investigated thoroughly. However, the point that is being made is that there is a pattern according to which the events recorded by Matthew in this introductory part of his story of Jesus are woven by the use of the above-described devices.¹⁰⁵

1.5.3 Introduction of the Gospel through John the Baptist's Initiatory Activity, his Baptism in Mt. 3.1-4.25.

Matthew introduces John the Baptist and his mission on OT tone. This is how he is introduced in Mt. 3.3, οὕτως γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ῥηθεὶς διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος· φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ· ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ. Both John and his mission are effected in the life of Jesus at the baptism of the latter, in 3.13-17, as an introduction to the imminent beginning of Christ's ministry. Jesus' victory over Satan's temptations is related to the immediately preceding part of the story as the follow up on the mission and power of the Holy Spirit received by Jesus at his baptism. It is important to notice that Jesus had to submit to John's baptism to receive this power. Also, Jesus himself explains the reason for this submission to John's baptism in these terms, 'οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην' according to Jesus in 3.15. Then, Jesus commences his

¹⁰⁵ See also concerning the events of Jesus' infancy the remaining texts in the same chapter, Mt. 2.17, 18,19,20,22, 23. After the infancy chapter, comes the introduction of Jesus as an adult just before his messianic ministry following the same pattern. See, Mt. 3.3,4,

ministerial activities and introduces the choosing of disciples to minister to people he will now meet from 4.18.

In the view of this brief and partial outline, more precisely of what I have called, along with others, the introductory part of the Gospel of Matthew, the three parts as presented earlier exhibit the same structural characteristics. This structural similarity pleads in favour of the interdependence of all the parts that seen together present a relatively coherent and fluent Matthean account of the life of Jesus. This specifically Matthean baptism pericope is to be read congruently with the specific Matthean literary design presented above. This design is displayed in the willingness and determination of Matthew to anchor all parts of his view of the Jesus story in the sphere of divine predetermination and prearrangement. This is the role of anchoring this introductory part of the Gospel in the OT scriptural elements that are unavoidable from the start.

Consequently, it seems that questions regarding the actual tenets within which this pericope is formed beg for answers that should find weight in the same context of a predetermined or prearranged a plan. It is this aspect that seems to be, to some extent, unattended by most scholars when attempting to give meaning to Mt. 3.15, regarding Jesus' baptism. The outline of this part of Matthew's Gospel exhibits the need for an examination of its elements within the outcome parameters that are shown here. The baptismal pericope and the meaning of Mt. 3.15 should be studied in the light of a very clear and pervading structural element that characterises this Gospel. This is the strong Matthean focus on fulfilment of God's will as predetermined, and identifiable in the OT through the use of quotations, allusions, themes and other thematic and textual devices.

1.6 Summary of Chapter 1

While an absence of a consensus in Matthean scholarship on the structure of this Gospel was observed, it was made evident that Matthew's Gospel is not structurally void. The specific perspective established in this chapter on the literary aspects of this Gospel pointed at the fact that the Matthean story of Jesus is a unit. This Gospel is specifically structured to flow. The writer has particularly connected the individual pericopes that make the grand narrative. Not only did he carefully use a number of literary devices to do this, but also, he essentially anchored this whole narrative in the OT through the use of formula quotations, allusions, themes, and other thematic and textual devices. As said in the chapter, 'the introductory part of the Gospel, which contains the baptism pericope with the brief and unique dialogical element, in Mt. 3.14, 15, is structurally merging with the rest of the story'. The coherence of Matthew's Gospel is seen in his abundant use of connective words such as 'then'. Therefore, it is in the context of a close relationship between all parts of this Gospel that a detailed analysis of the main text of interest, Mt. 3.15, is approached in the following chapter.

Chapter 2. The Matthean Context of Mt 3.15

2. Textual Analysis

In this chapter, I will attempt to place Mt. 3.13-17 within the specific Matthean context that was established in chapter one. I will analyse the macro and micro context of the pericope it contains, and I will critically analyse (exegesis) every element of Mt. 3.15 from the Greek text. This analysis will cause me to specifically focus on Matthew's use of the word 'righteousness' that will emerge as pivotal in the passage. An assessment of the 'concept of righteousness' in what constitutes Matthew's 'intellectual milieu', the Dead Sea Scrolls and Tannaitic Literature, will lead me to consider and determine Matthew's own understanding and usage of the word and its concept in the chapter following this one. This chapter, 2, is important in pursuing the claim of this thesis because of the centrality of the word 'righteousness' in this Gospel and in the main text, Mt. 3.15, in this thesis.

2.1 The Baptism Pericope in the Matthean Context

In the preceding chapter, the position I took with regard to the Matthean literary characteristics is relevant to the following analysis. The unity of the Gospel of Matthew is particularly recognisable through the designed linkage between individual pericopes and the different sections of the book. One of those individual stories that contribute to understanding the overall life story of Jesus, according to Matthew, is his baptism.¹⁰⁶ In Matthew's account of Jesus' baptism there seems to be a deliberate effort on the part of the writer to mark a strong connection between that individual

¹⁰⁶ Although there is no exclusivity in the fact that this episode of Jesus' life, his baptism, is recorded in Matthew, the Matthean content of it is effectively unparalleled at multiple levels. See, Mt. 3.13-17, cf. Mk 1.9-12; Lk. 3.21-22; Jn 1.32-35. Although there are great similarities between these texts, there is no doubt about the major difference that exists also between the Matthean text and the rest of the synoptic Gospels and John in the report of the event of Jesus' baptism. There is no need to be reminded of the fact that it is essentially the ministry period of Jesus' life that the Gospels are singularly recording and this is what I refer to when I speak about the life story of Jesus.

event, the baptism of Jesus, and the whole of the Gospel. There are consistent redactional uses of particular words, expressions or formula that undoubtedly establish this specific theological phenomenon of Matthean cohesion.¹⁰⁷ There is evidence in support of this argument, for instance, in the number of occurrences of the verb πληρόω (to fulfill), which is found 16 times and rather evenly distributed in the book.¹⁰⁸ The use of this word, it could reasonably be argued, is pivotal with regard to establishing the relationship between the Matthean Jesus and those OT scriptures as identified by Matthew and relating to the coming of the Messiah.¹⁰⁹

The use of πληρῶσαι in Mt. 3.15 to justify from the lips of Jesus his own baptism places this baptismal episode in a position of textual and contextual continuity within the whole of the Matthean narrative. The reason for such view is that πληρόω had been utilised four times before, between Mt. 1.22 and Mt. 2.23, and then through the entire story with the same function.¹¹⁰ When πληρόω is used for the

¹⁰⁷ Senior (1998, p. 55). 'Matthean vocabulary and interest are pervasive.' Nolland (2005, p. 91).

¹⁰⁸ Friberg et al. (2000); *EDNT I* (1990, p. 108). It is conceivable that some scholars would argue that there is no such even use of πληρόω in Matthew, but this counter argument would mostly be justified if the criterion of measurement were the occurrence of this word in every chapter of the book, Stanton (1992, p. 359). However, if the perspective were that of looking at the whole Gospel as the telling of the story of Jesus, the biographical elements perceived as pre-announced, that is the prophetic aspect, would not require the material use of formula quotations in almost every chapter of the book as presently divided for one to reach the conclusion that, indeed, πληρόω is well spread in the story, both in the words and in the spirit of the writer. One of the possible meanings for it, 'to satisfy' is consistent with this overly spread usage of Matthew, it would seem, according to Strong (1996, no. G4137), but I will return to the semantic characteristics of this word in greater details.

¹⁰⁹ Although, the rest of the synoptic Gospels do not present the story of Jesus without this connection, and do use the same word, Matthew is by far the one who uses πληρόω the most (Mt. 1.22; 2.15, 17, 23; 3.15; 4.14; 5.17; 8.17; 12.17; 13.35, 48; 21.4; 23.32; 26.54, 56; 27.9). Mark only uses the word twice in Mk 1.15 and in 14.29. As for Luke, he uses it more than Mark but still only nine times (Lk. 1.20; 2.40; 3.5; 4.21; 7.1; 9.31; 21.24; 22.16; 24.44), which is almost half of the times in Matthew.

¹¹⁰ It should be noted that the use of πληρόω in this verse seems different to that of the preceding times. Here, it appears to simply qualify the act of Jesus being baptised by John the Baptist, rather than a statement in relation to a clear OT reference to validate what is taking place at this point in this story. This phenomenon triggers a reaction of the utmost importance for this thesis. A reaction according to which the question of Jesus' baptism might be seen against the same OT background in terms of the reason for it with no obvious reference, but perhaps not without a textual element to link it with, from the OT.

fifth time in Mt. 3.15, although differently here,¹¹¹ the reader is already acquainted with the term as it is attached to the many and frequent formula quotations that run through the entire Gospel. In the context, the unparalleled Matthean conversation between John and Jesus at the river Jordan is perhaps in no sense strange to the reader. That is because of the use of πληρόω at the heart of it that seems to confidently allow some textual correlations between this particular passage of the baptismal pericope, the preceding parts of the narrative and the rest of the Jesus' story that Matthew has set out to communicate with focused consistency.

Concomitantly with the use of πληρόω in Mt. 3.15, there is another seemingly very important Matthean feature that appears to also function as a synchronic element in the Gospel. Again, it would be a device that helps the contextual continuity between the preceding developments, what came before the baptism of Jesus in the story, the actual baptism pericope and the rest of the Matthean Gospel story. The use in verse 15 of the word δικαιοσύνη, 'righteousness'¹¹², that has no prior occurrence in the story is the first in a significant Matthean series of occurrences of the word that, in some ways, is unparalleled in the Synoptic Gospels.¹¹³ This aspect of the usage of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew is noteworthy, when considering the macro context of the

¹¹¹ This time it is not in the context of pointing at particular passage in the OT as in all the preceding instances, but it carries the same idea of fulfilling something that is expected to happen. I will come back to this later.

¹¹² As with many Greek words there is a range of meanings that need careful consideration in biblical interpretation and defining the proper context of the passage in which those words occur is key. This is the case that has prompted this research. For δικαιοσύνη, generally translated 'righteousness, justice, uprightness', and other expression of the same semantic field, see for now, *BDAG* (1957, pp. 247–48); *EDNT I* (1990, p. 326); Schrenk (1964a, pp. 192–210). In this discussion, in terms of its sense in Matthew, there are two main routes that can be followed as exhibited in the following references, Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988); Friberg et al. (2000); *GELNT* (1998). I will come back in due time, in the exegesis of the passage, on the details of the present arguments in scholarship about the usage of this word in the Matthean Gospel, when treating the question of the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in its seven occurrences in Matthew.

¹¹³ See, *EDNT I* (1990, p. 328). It is evident according to the ratio of 16 against 2 and 9, that Matthew has a definite need for this word that is above that of Mark and Luke in telling the story of Jesus. See, Osborne (2006, pp. 333–34).

story of Jesus' baptism.¹¹⁴ This observation, inevitably, leads to the question as to whether all the δικαιοσύνη usages have the same meaning in Matthew. The answer to it is of great importance, and consequently, is to be defined in this study.¹¹⁵ However, the point is that in Matthew the baptismal episode of Jesus' life contains this word that is overall, a rather specific Matthean feature since it does not occur in Mark at all, and only once in the Gospel of Luke (1.75).¹¹⁶

For this reason, the argument that seems to be fashioned, to a great extent by the above observation is that Matthew also records this pericope of Jesus' baptism in words that favour the textual consistency and literary unity seen throughout his whole account of Jesus' life. This sense of relationship between this part of the story and the rest is effected through the combined use in Mt. 3.15 of the unique Matthean usages of πληρώω and δικαιοσύνη. Besides the common synoptic elements of the immediate context of this baptismal event, such as the introduction to the reader of John the Baptist, his activities, speeches and the reactions of the people to his ministry, the combined and individual uses of πληρώω and δικαιοσύνη allow the baptism pericope to form of the macro context of different portions of the Matthean story. From the beginning to the end, the whole book seems to portray the use of these terms as a necessity for Matthew in the telling of Jesus' story. In Mt. 3.15, the use of πληρώω in conjunction with δικαιοσύνη intensifies this sense of cohesion and connection

¹¹⁴ This macro context is that of a preordained and traceable string of events, and this baptism in this context and with the use of this word would be viewed in the same prophetic light. Nolland (2005, p. 153).

¹¹⁵ The importance of this question is demonstrated by the interest that has been shown over the years by scholars on this point since it has great implications in understanding the Matthean story of Jesus as its flow is regulated by the multiple uses of δικαιοσύνη. One of the main works that are specifically dealing with the subject is Przybylski (1980) who surveys the developments of thoughts on the usage of δικαιοσύνη in Matthean scholarship and gives an overview of the different positions that exist. See also, Huub Welzen (2013); Wilson (2007); Piper (1983).

¹¹⁶ Matthew uses this word 'δικαιοσύνη' seven times in his Gospel, while in the other Gospels there is no such a repetitive use of this word, yet, as it appears in the synoptic Gospels and almost every other book of the NT to the exception of Romans and the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. I will also return to this point, as the treatment of δικαιοσύνη is one of the main parts of this research.

between this pericope and the whole of the Matthean piece. This is particularly observable with πληρόω. The individual sections that make the whole account are possibly synchronised in this way through the regular occurrences of these specific words.

For this reason, understanding Matthew's version of the baptism of Jesus and more specifically Mt. 3.15 requires a careful consideration of the possible textual and other connections between Mt. 3.13-17 and the other parts that constitute the whole account. If this pericope of Jesus' baptism seems well fitted within the book and appears to flow with the context that bears the entire Matthean work on the life of Jesus, then it is all the more important to uncover the rationale behind the uniqueness of Mt. 3.15 from the same premises. Such procedure will perhaps dispel the perceived eccentricity of this text and bring harmony between its distinctiveness and Matthew's consistent aim in presenting the story of Jesus. I should now endeavour to analytically establish the macro context of Mt. 3.13-17 in order to identify the underlying Matthean issues in connection with the main question of its meaning in this study. Then, this will hopefully facilitate a closer examination of this passage, which in turn should help to shed a more consistent light on the meaning of Mt. 3.15. Through this procedure I will attempt to expose what this baptism originally meant for Matthew as he committed his thoughts to writing in the manner he did.

2.2 Macro Context of the Baptism Pericope

The macro context of the pericope of Jesus' baptism, the introductory chapters, 1-4, seem to be fairly identifiable with and connectable to the entire book. It is certainly well tied to the larger story by nature and role through means of specific connective elements. There is a resurgence of themes, vocabulary and strong connector points such as the use of formula quotations in the larger narrative that are found in this

macro context of the baptism pericope.¹¹⁷ This literary, thematic, vocabulary phenomenon establishes, to a great extent, a recognisable link between this part of the Gospel story and the other sections of it.¹¹⁸ One of those vocabulary and thematic elements mentioned earlier is the frequent reoccurrence of πληρώω under different grammatical forms integrated as constructively as possible in the whole literary work. The objects of this verb are repeatedly OT texts, distinctly used by Matthew.¹¹⁹ The formula quotations seem to be a key Matthean device to account for and identify the origin and context of most events in the life of Jesus from birth to death and resurrection as he relates them. The birth of Jesus at the beginning of the book is sanctioned by the formulae τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ρηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος, at the end of the first chapter. The same is true for the end part of the story in Mt. 26.54, 56; 27.9. This creates an all-encompassing *inclusio* structure within which the rest is contained.

The rather frequent use of πληρώω appears to validate the view about a consistent pursuit of reconciliation between what is actually taking place and the

¹¹⁷ The theme of fulfilled prophecy, whether it is structurally formed with an identifiable formula or not is very present in Mt. 2, 3, and 4, around the person of Jesus as he is being introduced to the reader. The use of the OT is as strong in this introductory part of the Gospel as it is in the rest of the story. In this portion is the Messiah established as such, through the baptism pericope. See, Stanton (1992, pp. 346–63) on the use of the OT and ‘formula quotations’ in the introductory part of this Gospel and in the rest of the book. I am using the term ‘formula quotations’ from the same perspective as in Luz (2007, p. 146).

¹¹⁸ See in, Stanton (1992, pp. 18–19) the discussion on the ‘Sermon on the Mount’, and the use of these connective points, how they help to see the integration of all parts of Matthew’s Gospel into one story. The argument is transferable to the present discussion on the macro background of the baptismal pericope and the event itself. See, Luz (2007, pp. 156–64) on the use of these ‘formula quotations’ and of other OT quotations that are also introduced by other formula types in the whole of this Gospel and on how Matthew has used them in materials that are specific to himself. Also, on the aspect of Matthew’s use of ‘formula quotations’ and other OT quotations to his own needs and perspectives, see France (1981).

¹¹⁹ It is observable that Matthew has used citations from the OT in a very personalised way and scholars have struggled to decide whether they originated with Matthew or if they reflect the theoretical use of an unknown source from which Matthew drew them out, see, Stanton (1992, pp. 358–63). The question about the reasons for Matthew’s personalised use of the OT is well asked in France (1981, pp. 236–37). Here is an example of the fact that Matthew is perceived in scholarship as doing so for reasons that are various, but understandable in the present discussion on the literary aspects of the book and the relations between parts of it and a common OT background for everything including this pericope.

reason why it is happening. Those events could well be perceived as simply isolated parts of the story of the life of Jesus, but this determination to identify OT references as the origin or precursors of what is taking place in most of the whole story could also suggest another function for πληρόω. This regular use of πληρόω acts as an underlying link between individual parts to eventually form one relatively complete picture of Jesus' life.¹²⁰ It is through this device that the individual stories, together, paint the Gospel according to Matthew.¹²¹ This is why it can positively be argued that the use of these formulae in Matthew is rather well distributed in the whole story.

Furthermore, the case with πληρόω is made through the following references identified in Mt. 1.22; 2.15,17, 23; 3.15; 4.14; 5.17; 8.17; 12.17; 13.35, 48; 21.4; 23.32; 26.54, 56; 27.9.¹²² The introduction to Jesus' ultimate mission in Mt. 3.11,12 that directly leads to the explicit revealing of Jesus' superiority over John the Baptist in character and role, carefully follows Jesus' introduction as a special child over whom men and divine beings had carefully watched from birth, Mt. 2.11-23. The passage of the infancy of Jesus itself is preceded by a well-crafted and unique Matthean first-time introduction to Jesus through the specifically and carefully designed genealogical tree of Mt. 1.1-17.¹²³ It is in fact, the commencement of

¹²⁰ The expression 'numerous catchwords' is used by Luz (2007, p. 129) to tell about how the different parts of the story are linked together. Although, Luz is being particular in saying this about sections of the first two chapters, the same applies to the whole of the story in the way he uses πληρόω, for instance. The 'fulfilment of God's purposes in Jesus,' as expressed in the use of this πληρόω is the 'controlling motif in the Gospel generally' according to D. Hagner (1993, p. 14).

¹²¹ According to Stanton (1992, pp. 358–59), scholars have 'keenly debated' the origin of the formula quotations as they all seem to have such a personalised touch from Matthew. In the same context, Stanton declares that 'the evangelist's own phraseology and emphases are so pervasive in his Gospel that if we did not have Mark and Luke we should find it difficult or even impossible to unravel his source.' The point in this argument is once more to show how parts of the Matthean story such as the baptism pericope fit in the larger context of the whole story.

¹²² It has been argued that the distribution of this particular formula is not even, but this remark seems only forceful on the basis of where the references are found, not on the how they bring together the bigger picture when all the parts come in place to make the Matthean Gospel. See, Stanton (1992, pp. 358–9).

¹²³ Scholars have long treated the Matthean genealogy of Jesus as an artificial way to bring into focus the identity of Jesus as seen by the narrator, see Stendahl (1995, pp. 69–71) and Albright and Mann

everything, the genesis of this life story of Jesus. From the very beginning of this Gospel account, with the genealogical list of chosen names, there is a strong sense of determination on the part of Matthew to root the story that he is about to tell in a firm and well-prepared OT foundation.¹²⁴ It is in this literary and historical context that we see the first occurrence of πληρόω that acts as a device that brings literary consistency to a number of different developmental stages of the complete narrative.¹²⁵

The ‘prologue’ of Mt. 1-2, the account concerning the genealogy, birth and infancy of Jesus contains element that clearly and straightforwardly identify Jesus as the much-awaited Christ in the context of OT prophecies and narratives.¹²⁶ In Mt. 1.16 the link is readily made between the list of names that has just been given, and Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός. This is a perhaps a probing textual element about Matthew’s consistency in how he intends to tell the story of Jesus. There is to this Gospel of a methodological *fil conducteur* that is set from the start in terms of identifying and qualifying different events, people and places as specifically within the context of OT prescriptions. Matthew does not wait for the public declaration of

(1971, pp. 5–6). A comparison with the only synoptic ‘alternative’ to Matthew’s genealogy in Luke shows the extent of the difference in purpose between the two in providing the information on the origin of Jesus, see Lk. 3.23-38.

¹²⁴ See, Stanton (1992, p. 346) and also previous remarks on this subject in the preceding chapter. Luz (2007, p. 107) remarks that for ‘many interpreters’, Matthew has personally constructed this list of names and is therefore, mixing ‘tradition and redaction’ in this genealogy. This could again be viewed in the context of Matthew’s focus in terms of telling a story with details that only him provides for specific reasons that may be made plain if investigated by the reader in the light of the book’s own perspective. As it is said ‘Matthew, ... is the best interpreter of Matthew’, see Davies and Allison (1988, p. 6). See also, Gundry (1982, p. 13); Blomberg (2007, p. 2).

¹²⁵ See, Stanton (1992, pp. 347–9) on ‘fulfilment formula quotations’ as ‘fulfilment’ that has been viewed by scholarship as ‘the most striking feature of formula quotations in Matthew’.

¹²⁶ The term ‘prologue’ is used to identify the beginning of the book, but it may be appropriate in this thesis to take it in its etymological sense since it may sound as a part that does not really commence the story with full force. See, D. Hagner (1993, p. 45). I refer to this part as introductory, which may not sound too different, but my perspective is that the story is told from there, and to a great extent, the whole is understandable in the light of this part. ‘The data is important in providing the vehicle for the initial presentation of Jesus as the fulfilment of the promises to Abraham and David’, D. Hagner (1993, p. 12). Any part of this Matthean story of Jesus that contains similar expression, words or thoughts should indicate the same spirit underlying the passage that is concerned. Whether there is a deformation of the historical data or not, like in the case of Matthew’s genealogical tree of Jesus, the principle applies.

Jesus' messianic identity and mission by John the Baptist in Mt. 3, prior to his baptism, to make this point clear to his audience. There seems to be a will to provide this story of Jesus including his baptism, with an unequivocal OT context against which to view it from the beginning. The macro context of the baptism pericope is in this respect and to that effect, that of the whole story of Jesus according to Matthew. Whether Matthew is dealing with geographical, anthropological, theological or doctrinal points concerning Jesus, he deliberately uses OT elements as in Mt. 2.15, 17, 23; 5.17; 26.53, 54 to put these points into perspective. This argument is evidenced by the fact that this *fil conducteur* is palpable from the introduction through to the conclusion of the book, because of the Matthean redactional formula quotations and other forms of quotations identifiable at every stage of this Gospel.¹²⁷

Also, it is noteworthy that there is a relatively concentrated use of these formula quotations in the introductory part of Matthew's Gospel, Mt. 1.22; 2.15, 17, 23 and also in 4.14.¹²⁸ The use of πληρόω in these texts allows the introductory sections of this Gospel to blend with the other portions that have Matthean formula quotations and other formulae, Mt. 26.54, 56, as in all the above-identified texts. There are only four texts, Mt. 3.15; 5.17; 13.48; 23.32 where πληρόω is employed without a quotation attached to it or in a formulaic way. However, in at least two of these texts, Mt. 3.15; 5.17, there is still a significance to its sense that is noteworthy in

¹²⁷ Matthew uses a variety of ways in his determination to substantiate his story of Jesus with an OT scriptural background. This can be seen in the recurrent use of specific words to introduce OT passages that he adapts to the need of the event that is to be identified as OT-announced. This is specifically the case in Mt. 1.22; 2.15 with the words ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ¹ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου, λέγοντος, and with variations to these in other places like in Mt. 2.23; 12.17; 27.9, but with the same essential functional elements.

¹²⁸ This concentration of the formula quotations is found particularly in the infancy account of the life of Jesus. This is probably to show the divine nature of the origin of this story and solidify the point that it is under God's control. Its content is in harmony with his pre-announced will that is sanctioned by the Jewish scriptures. This characteristic point about the introductory chapters of Matthew is essential for the rest of the story. See, France (1981); Rooy (2015) for a more technical view (sources, languages, text) of how Matthew may have used the OT in the particular case of the ten formula quotations that appear in his Gospel. This is helpful in observing Matthew's possible strategy in writing his book and pursuing his idea of how to convey the messianic character of Jesus' life.

the Matthean context of its usage. This *fil conducteur*, the vocabulary, thematic and theological use of πληρόω with and sometimes without a quotation possibly points to Matthew's own way of establishing the cohesion between all the parts of this long story about Jesus. Thus, Matthew is creating a unique context against which almost every segment of his Gospel is placed and should consistently be interpreted.

Although, there is a lesser degree of concentration of the formula quotations in the rest of the Gospel, parts other than those introducing Jesus, their use by Matthew is still quite regular as in 8.17; 12.17-21; 13.35; 21.4, 5; 27.9. It is striking that these references show a more or less evenly spread use of the formula quotations after the introductory parts. Although, there is only one formula quotation at the end of Matthew's Gospel, Mt. 27.9, the use of introductory formulae in Mt. 26.54, 56 keeps the passion scene in the OT fulfilment tone as the final scenes of Jesus' mission are introduced leading to the epilogue.¹²⁹

Consequently, it would not be ill judged to see in Matthew's well-proportioned use of the formula quotations and in the other usages of πληρόω at times, an attempt to place the entire Jesus story in the framework of OT announcements that find their realisations in this Jesus he presents to his audience. Therefore, the baptism of Jesus in this context, according to Matthew and specifically Mt. 3.15, could have possibly been announced in the OT since it takes place in this general and specific framework. Attributing this background to the baptism pericope would not be farfetched if that is clearly the case for the whole story of Jesus' life in this Gospel. If this is true, in the same way that the whole Matthean story would have

¹²⁹ It has been argued that the reason for Matthew to be so scarce with the usage of formula quotations in the passion narrative is because he knew that Mark had placed this portion of the story 'against the backdrop of scripture' and perhaps needed not to do this again. See, Stanton (1992, p. 359). Taking this view on things would possibly undermine the recognition that Matthew must interpret Matthew, and therefore, this is not consistent with the view of this thesis, even though it is clear that Matthew has possibly considered the Marcan *opus* in general and made his own contribution. See, Gundry (1982, pp. 1-5) who reflects the position of most Matthean specialists on this point.

been framed by the OT elements used in the text, there should also be a link between the baptism pericope and the OT as it relates to the whole story. If Matthew intends to have his story of the life of Jesus rooted in the OT textual background, then the baptism pericope (part of the OT-saturated introductory section of the Gospel) is also to be rooted in the same OT background. This may possibly be the case that Matthew is making here, but until the baptism pericope is analysed in its immediate context, there should not be any further inference along this line. Therefore, I will now attempt to establish the micro context of the baptism pericope as in Mt. 3.13-17.

2.3 Micro Context of the Baptism Pericope.

In view of the above discussion on the macro context of the baptism pericope, there are important elements of which to take note while attempting to contextually situate and understand Mt. 3.13-17. There is a case, with regard to what has already been mentioned about Matthew's literary, textual and theological structure, to expect that this short portion, Mt. 3.13-17, of the larger Jesus' story be placed in the context of the whole. Although, Matthew is not directly responsible for the actual form of chapter and verse divisions as it stands in his Gospel,¹³⁰ it is noteworthy that chapter 3 is the shortest of all the chapters in the book. The underlying reason for this might be the fact that although there are several characters involved in this chapter, the focus seems singular and quite narrow. In this sense its contours seem clearly defined by the nature of the event in this part of the narrative. It becomes one distinct portion of the story that needs to stand separate from the others, yet, on common ground with the preceding and following chapters.

¹³⁰ Stephen Langton only introduced chapter division of the Bible at the beginning of the 13th century with the need of better ways to study the Bible. This means that before that, there were natural pauses that regulated the flows and structures of the biblical text as intended by the writers. It is in most cases the defining elements that shaped the actual divisions and it might well have been the case for this passage.

Thus, this structure is for exhibiting cohesion and continuity in Matthew with regard to the place and role of this pericope in the larger narrative. It begins with Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις παραγίνεται Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτιστής, and ends with Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα. Readers are introduced in the first verse of this chapter 3 to one of the main characters, namely, Ἰωάννης, in this portion, and importantly, for the rest of the story. Simultaneously, the reader is introduced to his specific function in this part and in the whole through the attributive use to his name of ὁ βαπτιστής.¹³¹ There are only three instances of this combination in the seven times Matthew identifies John's activity in the book (the two others are Mt. 14.2; 16.14). Incidentally, this use of ὁ βαπτιστής is never with another proper name than that of John anywhere else in the Gospels. This first mention of John the Baptist under this construction is possibly significant in the Matthean context, and more so in the micro context of the baptism pericope.

The introduction of Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτιστής along with a report of the essence of his message in Mt. 3.1, 2 is sandwiched between the last verse of chapter 2 and the third and fourth verses of chapter 3. This is significant in this introductory section in the sense that those outer parts of the structure (Mt. 2.23 and Mt. 3.3) contain several OT references¹³² and one precise use of Matthew's formula quotations.¹³³ Ἰωάννης ὁ

¹³¹ Matthew consistently naming John 'the baptiser' from the Greek ὁ βαπτιστής is noteworthy (Mt. 3.1; 11.11-12; 14.2, 8; 16.14; 17.13) since in the synoptic Gospels both Mark (6.25; 8.28) and Luke (7.20, 33; 9.19) have him as such. But also, Mark (1.4; 6.14, 24) has him as John, and then define his role and function in the story by using the present participle [ὁ] βαπτίζων 'the one baptising'. It has been argued that this difference in Matthew has theological implication in the idea that by using ὁ βαπτιστής rather than [ὁ] βαπτίζων it is an attempt to reconcile to some extent, and in terms of the Matthean theology of baptism, this introductory part of the Gospel and the conclusion of it. See Gundry (1982, p. 42). This argument is relevant here in the sense that it shows Matthew's focus on consistency in linking all parts of the story. For other observations that do not support this idea, see, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 288-89).

¹³² It has to be noted that it is rather difficult to identify the OT source of Mat 2.23. Nevertheless, it is the explicit ὅπως πληρωθῇ τὸ ρηθὲν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν mention of the expression that gives it its OT dimension according to Matthew. See a discussion on the different possibilities proposed for the OT elements of this text in Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 276-81); Stanton (1992, pp. 360-63).

βαπτιστής at the start of this section is clearly introduced against the OT background that permeates the whole Jesus story in Matthew as already established.¹³⁴ Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτιστής, being one of the main protagonists in this chapter, and being introduced in this manner leaves enough room to question Matthew's intent concerning the subject of the authority of John the Baptist there. The other main character in this chapter is Jesus as this can be determined by means of recognising the emergence of this chapter's focal point, which is the actual baptism of Jesus. This baptism is also wrapped in this atmosphere of pre-determination of event that is recognisable in various OT sources. The baptism theme comes into the narrative that introduces Jesus as a one with whom the practice becomes a centre of attention for the two main protagonists in the pericope.

The quick and bold emphasis on this topic of 'βαπτίζω'¹³⁵ seems to become rather obvious for several reasons. One of them is that chapter 3 alone contains five of the six occurrences of βαπτίζω in Matthew with the same and consistent meaning to the word in all the following instances, Mt. 3.6, 11, 13, 14, 16; 28.19.¹³⁶ While it could certainly have been possible for Matthew to use this word in a different context,

¹³³ 'the OT is woven into the warp and woof of this gospel', Stanton (1992, p. 346). According to Albright and Mann (1971, pp. LIV–LXXV), the OT background of the Gospel of Matthew is clearly identifiable in the features that have structured the writing of the book in its *quasi* totality. This point is unanimous among Matthean specialists even though there might be some dissensions as to how exactly Matthew forms his distinctive-at-times uses the OT passages. This is a separate question into which details we need not to go at this point.

¹³⁴ John is introduced to the reader by Matthew, as well as his mission and ministry, in the light of Isaiah's pronouncements in his chapter 40. Even the details of John's attire are to be identified at this point as referring to the OT prophet Elias who wore one of the articles mentioned, namely, the leather girdle. This detail is only significant here because of the determination of Matthew to draw the reader to the OT background of his story of Jesus from the start. Later on, in Mt. 17.10-13, there is an unequivocal identification of John the Baptist with Elias the OT prophet. Also, scholars perceive the presence and influence of other OT texts in this passage, see Albright and Mann (1971, pp. LXI–LXV)

¹³⁵ See general meaning in Friberg et al. (2000). There will be a contextual analysis later in this thesis to determine the exact meaning of the word in the passage.

¹³⁶ Mt. 3.6, 11, 13, 14, 16; 28.19 contain all the occurrences of βαπτίζω, and the word is exclusively used by Matthew to define the same action in nature and context, while in Mk 7.4; 10.38, 39 and Lk. 11.38; 12.50, βαπτίζω is also used, it seems, in other contexts. See, *EDNT I* (1990, pp. 192–93); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 164–65). This remark seems to highlight the particular interest that Matthew might have wanted to attract in his Gospel on this topic of the baptism of Jesus.

like in the other synoptic Gospels, he refrains from it, most likely because he sees some interest in pursuing this course. In Mathew's parallel of Mk 10.38, 38 and Lk 12.50 about the incident regarding the request of the two disciples to be seated on either side of Jesus, there is no mention of βαπτίζω in Mt. 20.22 as in the others.¹³⁷ Thus, this third chapter of Matthew not only starts the use βαπτίζω, but it does it with the meaning of βαπτίζω there sets the precedent for and exclusive usage if it in Matthew (I will return to this word for a detailed examination). The word βαπτίζω is also clearly introduced along with John the Baptist in a tight OT context that is palpable through the above-mentioned elements. The micro context of this pericope of the baptism of Jesus involves the usage of the OT to set the background of it.

Another defining micro-contextual element for this baptism pericope is that in Mt. 3.1, 11-12, John the Baptist introduces Jesus to his audience as mightier than himself. Jesus is the one to perform the 'baptism of the Spirit and fire,' αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρί. By inference, this baptism of the Spirit and fire administered by Jesus is according to John's statement a better baptism than the one of water that he performs. It is a baptism that is administered by the same who 'will thoroughly purge his floor' διακαθαριεῖ τὴν ἅλωνα αὐτοῦ. This is done with the eventual effect of gathering the 'wheat in the garner' and burning 'the chaff' with 'unquenchable fire' τὸ δὲ ἄχυρον κατακαύσει πυρὶ ἀσβέστῳ. It would seem that John's baptism of water simply leads to repentance, and according to him, that would not be enough to meet eschatological requirements since those on whom it is performed would still need the baptism of the Spirit. However, there is no indication that his baptism of water is unnecessary or unimportant. It seems that each has its place in the story, and perhaps, they are even interdependent. We might need to return

¹³⁷ Although this reference in Luke does not fully follow the sequence of events as reported by the two other evangelists, the saying in relation to the topic is the same.

in greater detail on the seemingly interdependence between these two at an appropriate time.

Therefore, in the immediate context of this baptism pericope, Mt. 3.11-12 is a clear emphasis on the part of John the Baptist on the preparatory and transitory nature of his ministry, the baptism of people with water. It is presented as a step toward that which should affect the goal of his discourse in verse 7, a shelter from destruction and a necessary step for the salvation of sinners. This salvation also requires the baptism of the Holy Spirit that he does not perform, but that Jesus does. This is introduced as not only the concept of the awaited ultimate ruler, but also as that of the nature of the ultimate mission of this other baptiser, Jesus.¹³⁸ That mission begins right at the time of the water baptismal event that is about to take place in the narrative to culminate with that final closing act of the fearful and long awaited judgment day of the Lord. These words in chapter 3 seem to be introductory not just to the scene that follows in Mt. 3.13-17, but also to the rest of the book in its various components. Verses 7-10, 12, clearly relate to the different parts of the book and the people involved more widely and their attitudes toward the main character of the whole story.¹³⁹ Thus, although they introduce the baptism pericope, these verses constitute a part of the macro context of the salvific ministry of the Matthean Jesus. This shows how linked together the individual stories are, including the baptism episode. These introductory

¹³⁸ See, D. Hagner (1993, p. 46) on the view of Matthew's portrayal of John and Jesus as parallel characters in terms of the message they both preach. This preaching happens before the baptism of Jesus and also after the baptism of Jesus. This preaching of repentance by both is one that is part of the micro context of this pericope. It is then important to notice that since this is John's role and mission in the Gospel, anytime he is referred to in the rest of the story, chapters 11, 14, 16, 21, it entails a reference to this part of the story. Thus, making the connection between those parts inevitable.

¹³⁹ The people in view here are all the people to whom Jesus will relate to in his subsequent Gospel ministry. In Mt. 3.5, it is noteworthy that Matthew speaks of the people in terms of the regions from which they came, 'Jerusalem, and all Judea, and the all the region round about Jordan' (KJV). This is a combination of Mk 1.5 and Lk. 3.3 that has its significance in the sense that Matthew almost prophetically covers the geographical field of Jesus' ministry in the story that follows. See, Gundry (1982, pp. 45-46) for further details on the 'Mattheanism' of this passage along and beyond the present observation.

words, in Mt. 3.11-12 while eschatologically sounding, they, within the context of baptism seem to point to the significance of Mt. 3.13-17, Jesus' baptism by John. This observation about the immediate context of the baptism pericope could possibly house the reason for Matthew's unparalleled declaration in verse 15.

Also, the focus on βαπτίζω¹⁴⁰ at this introductory point in Matthew 3 seems to unequivocally indicate that there is a connotation of salvation in John's water baptism that is at least practically understood in this way by the Baptist's audience. This is why in Mt. 3.5-7, the popularity of this baptism is expressed by the coming of the whole region about the Jordan to John and they are willing to take part in this baptismal experience. Even the leaders of the main religious groups are counted among those desiring to be baptised by John, thus making *anyone* eligible for salvation. In this third chapter of Matthew that focuses on baptism, but also on salvation, Jesus meets for the first time with John the Baptist and takes part in what seems to be a crucially important event for almost everyone who is one way or another spoken of or active in the rest of the story. We are introduced to the Pharisees and the Sadducees with whom the story of Jesus in terms of the opposition to his ministry and eventually his death will come as the story unfolds and concludes. They, all classes of people who may have a role to play in the rest of the story come to John the Baptist to be baptised, to obtain salvation through 'βάπτισμα'¹⁴¹ and that seems to include even Jesus.

However, according to John in Mt. 3.11, this salvation through the action of βάπτισμα is only effective in Jesus, the one who eventually and exclusively dispenses the baptism of the Spirit through the same act of βάπτισμα, but one of a different

¹⁴⁰ I will return to the word when exegeting the passage. For now it is only important to note that this verb occurs for the first time in Mt. 3.6 in the context of the Baptist's activity and ministry. This is part of the immediate or micro context of the baptism pericope.

¹⁴¹ I will also deal with the noun, βάπτισμα, at the appropriate time.

nature. There is a clear focus on the importance of this act of βάπτισμα in both the stages that are being set here, in a salvation context.¹⁴² One is John's βάπτισμα and the second is Jesus' βάπτισμα. There seems to be in this case here, a distinction to make on the subject of βάπτισμα whatever the nature of it, and whoever administers it. This micro-contextual part of the baptism pericope seems to exhibit the prominence of βαπτίζω and βάπτισμα in the passage and the relevance of the act for both the baptised and the baptiser. In this context, βαπτίζω and βάπτισμα is the ultimate and sole means of salvation and both characters, John the Baptist and Jesus, the baptiser and the baptised are involved.

It is in the present textual context that John's mission of water-baptising people is painted as essential. This baptism of John seems transitory in nature. The people who came to him, but it is seemingly in close relation to Jesus' experience and mission.¹⁴³ Such a focus on the transitory nature and limited power of John's baptism of water is contrasted in this same passage with the baptism of the Spirit. The baptism unto repentance that is performed by John in Mt. 3.11 is distinguished from the ultimate necessity of Jesus' baptism of the Spirit unto the heavenly realms in Mt. 3.12. The micro context of the pericope of Jesus' own baptism is also the establishment of the inadequacy and limits of water baptism on the one hand. Yet, on the other hand, it establishes the absolute necessity for John to actively perform what the people came to him for, this water baptism. It is in this context of stark contrasts that Jesus came to

¹⁴² Other commentators like Luz (2007, p. 172); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 310–13) and those whose views they relate may choose to focus on the judgement aspect to this passage and make it key to the context here, but this is not the focus of neither Jesus nor John the Baptist here or in the rest of the story. The evidence is that both preached the same message of repentance unto salvation as it has been noted, and the whole story of Jesus is about salvation as indicated from the beginning in Mt. 1.21 that unambiguously sets the ultimate keynote of the story. This is again textually emphasised in Mt. 18.11. D. Hagner (1993, p. 46) states that 'John's announcement is readily intelligible to his listeners, who eagerly await their God to act'. See also, Skeener (1993, vv. 11–12).

¹⁴³ It seems obvious for some commentators that there is in Mt. 3.11,12 an intention on the part of the Gospel writer to contrast the two main characters here in their personalities, missions and importance in the Gospel story, see Senior (1998, p. 55); Harrington (1991, pp. 60–61).

the Jordan to meet John the Baptist. It is there that the Baptist announces a Baptist other than himself and even one who makes him almost irrelevant while he seems to be central to what is happening with people all around Israel. A most peculiar scene it seems even to the Baptist is taking place here: Jesus coming to John for his baptism of water and insisting for it after John's objection. Jesus' compliance with John's water baptism unto repentance from sin takes place in this very context as far as the preceding verses to the pericope are concerned.

As for the verses that immediately follow the pericope, they are consigned under the following chapter. Chapter 3 ends with the baptism pericope, thus making Chapter 4 or at least the first part of it, an element of the immediate or micro context of the baptism pericope. This situation seems quite clear in reason of the content of what actually follows immediately after the baptismal event. In Chapter 4 there is an unavoidable sense of continuity in spite of a clear sign of entering a new pericope. Matthew uses here one of his favourite transitional words, τότε,¹⁴⁴ as he continues the narrative, but begins a new episode of the life of Jesus. The baptism pericope ended with the manifestation of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus, which seems to have been the direct outcome of his baptism. The beginning of Chapter 4 and of the new pericope is the control of Jesus' movements by the same Holy Spirit who was plainly introduced by John in his introduction to Jesus in Mt. 3.11, 12 and manifested in Mt. 3.16 upon Jesus at his baptism. It is impossible not to take note of the progression of the story on the basis of the clear link between what is happening and what immediately took place before.

¹⁴⁴ In the vocabulary list of words preferred by Matthew in Luz, (2007, p. 69), it is noted that this one occurs 90 times in this Gospel, whereas it is only used 6 and 15 times in Mark and Luke respectively. It is also considered as a keyword. This point is congruent with the view of Matthew seamless style and in this present case it shows how chapter 3 and 4 are linked, but most importantly, the two pericopes. See, D. Hagner (1993, p. 69).

So, this new pericope not only immediately follows after the baptism pericope, but it is built upon it.¹⁴⁵ The description of the Holy Spirit's action in Jesus' life is a major feature of this new episode in the Gospel. This ministry of the Holy Spirit is the outcome of the event that took place at the baptism of Jesus, and consequently, this new development is very much part of preceding one, the baptism of Jesus. This connection makes the whole temptation pericope part of the micro context of the baptism. If the temptation story is indeed part of the of the micro context of the baptism pericope, then it is a reinforcement of the sense that the Matthean Gospel is made of interdependent parts that together make a coherent narrative about the life of Jesus. It would perhaps mean that every part of that story has a bearing on, and constructs the meaning of the whole. Such an influence would have the baptism of Jesus on the whole Gospel of Matthew in its many parts, including the specific text of Mt. 3.15. It also means that there would be a consistent contextual element that would define the background against which to read this whole account of the life of Jesus according to Matthew. This would be the case even at the micro level for individual passages.

Therefore, to consider Mt. 3.1-12 and the temptation pericope in Mt. 4.1-11 as the micro context of Mt. 3.13-17 is all the more natural. It is certainly the micro background in which this baptism pericope, and specifically, the actual meaning of Jesus' baptism is intelligible. This present delimitation is not only biological according to the position of these texts around Mt. 3.13-17, but also the undeniable theological flow that characterises the story contained within the whole passage. All the sections that compose it seem to focus on the goal, meaning and effect of the baptism subject, and singularly, that of Jesus in this Gospel. The case is that two

¹⁴⁵ See, Luz (2007, p. 186) on the relationship between the two pericopes.

different baptisms are introduced before Mt. 3.13-17 and their individual natures seemingly defined. This is the water baptism and the Spirit baptism that after the performing of one, the other is overtly exemplified in the life of Jesus. This again emphasises the relationship between the two baptisms. They are textually presented in a context of hierarchy, contrast and at the same time they are necessarily congruous. If this is really the case, then it is understandable that there seems to be a theological tension within the actual baptism of Jesus, and that this tension is to be released through a careful exegesis of the passage and a thoughtful enquiry into Matthew's intention in thus telling this story. Understandably, at least for today's readers, this Matthean portion of Jesus' life should be elucidated with regard to what his perspectives were on the meaning of Jesus' baptism in Mt. 3.13-17. All the different aspects of micro contextual and literary elements as above and in the following developments must be carefully considered regarding this passage in order to achieve this goal.

Furthermore, and very importantly with regard to the immediate context, these verses of the baptism pericope at the beginning of chapter 3 and at the end of it, that is 3, 4, 17, are identifiable in relation to the OT scriptures as, for example, in Isa. 40.3; 2 Kgs. 1.8, and Ps. 2.7.¹⁴⁶ In Mt. 4.4-11, an integral part of the micro context of the baptism pericope, every answer given by Jesus to the 'tempter' is directly connected to the OT through the use of quotations from Deut. 8.3; Ps. 91.11, 12 and Deut.

¹⁴⁶ In the case of 2 Kgs. 1.8, there is a compelling analogy that is made between John the Baptist and Elijah the OT prophet, through their similarity in dressing and the sort of mission they fulfilled. Besides, there was the tradition according to another one of the synoptic Gospels that 'Elias', who is the NT form for Elijah, was expected to comeback before the coming of the Messiah. It is Matthew who identifies John as such in Mt. 17.11-13, whereas in Mk 9.11-13 we are only told about the prophecy without that identification.

6.13.¹⁴⁷ This strong OT presence within the micro context of the baptism of Jesus opens the possibility for a treatment of this baptism with or from a perspective of a definite OT influence on this particular event. It seems rather difficult not to regard this whole baptism passage as wrapped in the OT ‘*emballage*’ as is the whole Matthean story of Jesus, with cautious consideration for the reason for it. The textual evidence for a study of an OT context to the baptism pericope, of which it seems to be the fabric at both micro and macro levels, should be seriously taken into consideration in every step toward understanding it. It would make sense in fact, in light of this specific feature, the anchoring of this pericope in OT scripture, to particularly investigate the link between the OT and the actual baptism of Jesus in search of its meaning.

Thus, after defining the macro and the micro context of the baptism pericope, and recognising the nature of it, we can proceed with a more focussed analysis of Mt. 3.13-17. The language and material used in Matthew partly in isolation from the rest of the other Gospel accounts are to be closely analysed in an attempt to elucidate and release if possible, the ‘*dit*’ tension between the rationale behind Jesus’ baptism of water performed by John, and what John himself conceivably thought baptism meant, what it was for, and eventually, who qualified for it.¹⁴⁸ The way forward in attempting to understand the so far relatively obscure meaning of the scene in this pericope may come from a detailed analysis and interpretation of Matthew’s unique contribution to the story. After all, it is Mt. 3.15, ἄφες ἄρτι, οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν

¹⁴⁷ For some commentators, not only the OT is clearly identifiable in this passage in textual terms, but there is also the use of Mosaic typology that was there before this section and continues within it. See, Blomberg (2007, pp. 14–18); D. Hagner (1993, pp. 63–70).

¹⁴⁸ A survey of the various reasons thought about by commentators can range from any perhaps-reason for it, to a complete lack of interest in finding out. See some of the explanation from Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr, Jerome and Joan Taylor in her quick assessment of the question Taylor (1997, pp. 262–63).

ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην that makes a difference within the synoptics on this episode of the life of Jesus.

Therefore, I now turn to this particular part of the pericope for a detailed analysis to find possible answers to the questions that were posed at the beginning of this study. There should naturally be a consideration of the elements that surfaced when identifying the contexts of the passage. This enterprise will in due time call for an examination of the text in conjunction with the elements of influence that are implicitly external to the text, but not explicitly extra-biblical. Consequently, I will first begin by looking at the textual characteristics of Mt. 3.15 through a text-critical analysis of it.

2.4 Text-Critical Analysis of Mt. 3.15

Within the parameters of text-critical analysis, there seems to be very little in terms of textual complexities with this verse. Mt. 3.15 seems to be consistently present in all the Greek manuscripts with only minor variations. According to Nestle Aland 28 (NA28), there are three variant readings of this verse. Here the textual-critical situation of this passage is as follows, [αὐτῷ P B f 844. 2211 | txt P x C D (K) K P W Γ Δ f 33. 565. 579. 700. 892. 1241. 1424 M sy^h. This first variance would only be constituted of a change in the case and number of the personal pronoun αὐτόν in the above manuscripts, while the majority of the manuscripts support the reading in the text. This alternative reading does not affect in any way the content and intent of the text as it stands in NA28, and in particular the fact that this conversation of Jesus with John in verses 15 is consistently recorded in all the Matthean manuscripts.¹⁴⁹

The second textual issue is the presence of a variant reading according to the Syriac versions sy^{S.C} in which the word βαπτισθῆναι is inserted into the text. Here, as

¹⁴⁹ NA28, n.d. (2012)

in the first instance of variation, there is no alteration of the text neither in content, nor intent. Another variation is found in some Latin manuscripts, and has to do with the insertion of additional information at the same place according to NA28 that reads as follows in (g¹), *et cum baptizaretur lumen ingens circumfulsit de aqua, ita ut timerent omnes qui advenerant* a. This additional information that is provided at the end of the verse, describing the scene of the baptism of Jesus with more details than in the Main readings of the text is unimportant in this discussion. It consists of describing ‘a great light’ that ‘flashed’ at the time of Jesus’ baptism that brought fear on all those who were gathered there at that occasion.¹⁵⁰ This piece of information may be relevant in a different context to the one in this research, but here we need not spend time on it since it affects in nothing the present subject of interest.

Whatever the variants offered by these manuscripts, they are of no consequence on the integrity of the text in this literary analysis as relevant here. The conversation between John the Baptist and Jesus is consistently recorded in all manuscripts without any alteration. Therefore, the textual- critical analysis aspect of this verse requires no further investigation at this time in this study. The point to remain is that text-critically, Mt. 3.15 is unchallenged with regard to the short dialogue that was recorded between the two protagonists, John and Jesus. While there is no text-critical challenge whatsoever, as to reconciling the manuscripts on this verse, this uniformity is a fact that makes it even more important to exegete. Through this step and some more in the process, I will hopefully uncover the textual and theological meaning of this text within the Matthean baptism pericope. To fully establish this text, I should now continue the analytical process in addressing the English translation of Mt. 3.15 from the original Greek language.

¹⁵⁰ See, Metzger (1994, p. 8).

2.4.1 Greek Text of Mt. 3.15

‘ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν· ἄφες ἄρτι, οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην. τότε ἀφίησιν αὐτόν.’ (NA28)

2.4.2 English Translations

‘And having answered Jesus said to him; permit now, because thus fitting it is for us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he permitted him.’ (KJV)

‘But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness." Then he consented.’ (RSV).

Since a translation of my own would be the same as the above, because of the straightforward nature of the Greek text, there is no need for one. I will therefore, refer mainly to these above when dealing with the English translations found in the Bible.

2.4.3 Text Analysis

2.4.3.1 ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν

‘ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν is the end of a sentence that started in Mt. 3.14, but that is part of 15. The reading of this verse brings in itself an expectation of such textual construction, as Jesus is about to respond to John’s remark. This use of ἀποκρίνομαι by Matthew in mood, tense, case and number is standard in the whole of the NT corpus under similar condition.¹⁵¹ The use of the participle in this context would indicate the background against which the situation is developed. It simply highlights with some degree of significance that John had first engaged in that exclusive and very brief conversation that was about to take place at the baptism according to Matthew. It is noteworthy that with the first occurrence in Matthew of

¹⁵¹ See the different usages and meanings of ἀποκρίνομαι in *EDNT I* (1990, pp. 133–34) and the observation according to which the middle form of the verb, as in this passage, ‘add to this the dialogical character of conversation and debate’. See, Swanson (2001); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 113–14) and Davies and Allison (1988, p. 324) on the Matthean use of ἀποκρίνομαι in conjunction with εἶπεν.

this rather frequent word, this construction is seen along with the verse as unparalleled.¹⁵² Also, ἀποκρίνομαι is used rather evenly in his Gospel and more than in the other synoptics.¹⁵³ It is said to be used in these conditions ‘to control the flow of discourse’¹⁵⁴ as it seems to be the case here. These elements could be indicative of one aspect of this Gospel’s literary nature that fits the remarks already made on the genre and structure of the book. The fact that these characteristics are present right in this key passage of the pericope is very relevant to the discussion in progress.

Besides, ἀποκρίνομαι is used in Mt. 3.15 in conjunction with εἶπεν, which makes it of interest in this analysis, because it is recognised as a ‘common Septuagintism’.¹⁵⁵ The combination of these two words is not automatic, although very frequent in the Gospels, and for this reason, possibly overlooked in terms of significance here in the context of Matthew’s OT anchorage. It is helpful to point out to the fact that this construction with the two words, most frequent in Matthew among the synoptics, is identified as ‘Hebraistical’¹⁵⁶. This could suggest the will of this writer to keep continuity in the text in the fashion of the OT stories from which the introductory formula is certainly borrowed.¹⁵⁷ It is no surprise that Matthew would want to do just that in telling the story of Jesus’ baptism with this very clear OT sense

¹⁵² Although, the use of this word is characteristic of NT narratives and therefore mostly frequent in the Gospels and the book of Acts, Matthew in which the number of occurrences is not the highest (49 times, while John is with 78) still demarks himself in using it here in a way that calls attention when comparing it with other usages in, and outside of Matthew. See, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 324) comments and comparison list as he shows the difference with the usage in other texts, and *EDNT I* (1990, p. 134); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 113–14).

¹⁵³ Matthew more than the two other synoptic Gospels uses this form of language in his account of the life of Jesus. While Mark and Luke use respectively this Hebraism 30 and 46 times, Matthew uses it 55 times. This choice is as careful as the plan of this writer to present a story that is built on a relevant-to-the-whole strategy of parts arranging in order to make this book a true unit.

¹⁵⁴ Friberg et al. (2000)

¹⁵⁵ Davies and Allison (1988, p. 324); *GEL LXX* (2003); *BDAG* (1957, p. 113); T. Muraoka (2002, p. 55).

¹⁵⁶ Friberg et al. (2000)

¹⁵⁷ Hence the term, ‘Hebraism’ as it is known in terms of the style in which the NT writers would write. For Matthew this may be more than identifying himself as a Jew, but emphasising the connection between his story telling style and the Jewish source of his inspiration. See *GELNT* (1998); *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar* (1910, p. 1047).

of identity that he gives to most parts that compose the whole. So, in this peculiar conversation as a part the baptism story, Jesus speaks in Matthew his very first words of many more to come, from this textually, historically and theologically relevant point on. The reason for this sentence is that John had verbalised his reticence to baptising Jesus in the first part of the now dialogue that began in verse 14. This dialogue is very short and concise. The point is to come to what follows the statement in 14, and that is the main statement of interest, Jesus' rationale for his baptism, in 15. This is indicated by the change of tone that is perceptible in the grammatical characteristics of the sentence that comprise Jesus' answer to John, beginning with ἄφες ἄρτι.

2.4.3.1 ἄφες ἄρτι

Here is the direct speech that usually follows the common 'Hebraistical' use of ἀποκρίνομαι that Matthew makes of the word to introduce Jesus' answer to John. The usage of the Aorist imperative for ἀφίημι,¹⁵⁸ combined with the adverb ἄρτι is unequivocal, 'to permit, allow, not to hinder' 'now, at once, or immediately'.¹⁵⁹ This combination conveys the sense of authority that Jesus is exerting in this conversation with John, over what is to take place at the moment. Although, it is John who initiated the conversation with Jesus, the syntax here helps clarify the point about whose is the dominant voice and the direction of what is to take place. There seems to be a real contrast between the scene that is being observed by witnesses on the periphery of the

¹⁵⁸ The different usages of this verb in the Gospels well exemplify the general meaning that it has here, although, it has a 'wide variety of meanings in the NT' according to *EDNT I* (1990, pp. 182–83); Swanson (2001); Schrenk (1964b, p. 509); *BDAG* (1957, p. 156).

¹⁵⁹ *GELNT* (1998); D. Hagner (1993, p. 55); *B(DAG)*, 1957, p. 136). Interestingly, according to Davies and Allison (1988, p. 324), this 'idiom of permission' is 'not found in the LXX.' It is Matthew's concoction in the context of this special conversation between the two characters in this particular event. This among other elements in this conversation has led them to think that everything in this text is redactional. All it says is that Matthew is very specific about this event and this must relate to the rest of the story from the beginning.

event and the actual record of what is being said, perhaps audibly only to John, but significant enough to Matthew that he seeks to record the specific detail. There is a sense of appropriateness of time that is to characterise the response that is demanded of the recipient of this command, who is John the Baptist.¹⁶⁰ There is a sense of duty and obligation that seems to be expected by Jesus of John concerning the fact that he came to him for the baptism.

It is through the choice of these words spoken by Jesus, ἄφεξ ἄρτι that Matthew begins to convey the point he wants to make in this short, but revelatory and pointed conversion. Although, ἀφίημι is well used and has a wide semantic range¹⁶¹ in the Gospels, the meaning of ‘allowing’ or ‘permitting’ that is known as part of its semantic range is very clear here. The adverb of time that accompanies the imperative mood in which Jesus employs the verb makes it an unequivocal command that must be obeyed at the specific point in time. Matthew only uses this combination of the two words once in the entire book, while using them separately multiple times.¹⁶² In the light of the observation according to which Matthew is meticulous with the choice of his vocabulary and syntax in his account of Jesus’ life, this observation would be significant in the context of this synoptic unparalleled conversation at the scene of the baptism. The widespread and rather even use of ἀφίημι in Matthew somehow draws a contrast in strength between all the uses of the word in the book and its use in Mt. 3.15, since it is only there that it is combined with the adverb of time, ἄρτι.

¹⁶⁰ An appropriate introduction to John must be made later in this research for a clearer understanding of his role in the Matthean story of Jesus in the context of this thesis.

¹⁶¹ Rudolf Bultmann (1964, pp. 509–512).

¹⁶² The use of ἀφίημι is frequent in Matthew’s Gospel. Some 47 times he uses the verb, and as for ἄρτι, some 7 times. Although, it has been argued that Matthew likes to ‘place adverbs after imperatives’, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 324), it is only here that these two words are put together, and this is a significant point in the present conversation. Gundry (1982, p. 50) in commenting on the use of ἄρτι here, rightly recognises the emphasis on the importance of the baptism through this construction, but he would differ on the reason for this importance.

This emphasis on time through the use of ἄρτι is significant in this verse for several reasons. ἄρτι is not the only adverb of time that Matthew uses in combination with ἀφίημι in his Gospel. In Mt. 4.20, 22 there is such a use of an adverb of time with this same verb, but this time it is εὐθέως that conveys the sense of immediacy in the narrative.¹⁶³ Matthew seems to be using εὐθέως quite consistently in all the thirteen places where it occurs in the book.¹⁶⁴ It is an adverb of time that he appears to use to define sequences of events. As for the use of ἄρτι in Matthew, it occurs seven times and seems to be consistently used with the sense of the fitness or suitability of the time.¹⁶⁵ Certainly, in the context of Matthew's constant theme of fulfilment of scripture in the life of Jesus, the combined use of ἀφίημι and ἄρτι seems to convey a sense of fitness of time and event in Mt. 3.15.¹⁶⁶ In this sense, the first words of Jesus in his answer to John the Baptist's opposition to the baptism, ἄφες ἄρτι, are very significant in the context of Matthew's perspective on the story. Jesus would have been telling John that the act of baptising him, the one greater than the baptiser, must take place because it is fitting in time. This would be a chronological element that would make this baptism, according to Matthew, something that was predetermined and therefore, it had to come to pass in due season and place. These first words introduce the notion of fitness of time for this event, before the event itself can be dealt with in terms of its appropriateness *per se*.

¹⁶³ Friberg et al. (2000); *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, p. 405).

¹⁶⁴ See the following texts, Mt. 4.20, 22; 8.3; 13.5; 14.22, 31; 20.34; 21.2; 24.29; 25.15; 26.49, 74; 27.48.

¹⁶⁵ See Mt. 3.15; 9.18; 11.12; 23.39; 26.29, 53, 64.

¹⁶⁶ Although this adverb is much like the other one, this one has the general meaning of temporal immediacy. Also, there is a figurative aspect to it in the sense of appropriateness and fitness that might not be as pronounced in the other one, see *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, p. 136). See also D. A. Hagner (1993, pp. 55–6).

2.4.3.2 οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν

The following part of Jesus' answer to John the Baptist is οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν. The vocabulary used by Matthew in this part of the sentence seems rather plain in terms of the meaning of the individual words that form it. However, it is noteworthy that this choice of words, although seemingly simple, is of great importance. It is one word in particular that seems to compel the reader to pay attention to this section of Jesus' answer to John, according to Matthew. He has Jesus using πρέπω, a *hapax legomenon*, not just in the confines of his book, but also in the entire synoptic tradition. Only in the Pauline corpus does this word seem to be used, and sparingly still, in the rest of the NT. Therefore, because of its very rare occurrence in the Gospels, the use of this verb here marks a point of interest and perhaps a bold focal point in the Matthean passage. If Mt. 3.15 is viewed as unique in terms of the message that it conveys, any unusual use of vocabulary that it exhibits should call for particular attention. If οὕτως γὰρ are very much standard words in this half sentence, and can be neglected in the process, this is not the case for πρέπω.

The semantic range of πρέπω is as restrained in comparison to some other words as is the use of it in the canonical Bible.¹⁶⁷ Of all the times that it is used, it has been translated as 'fit, proper, sound' all pertaining to the semantic field of describing adequacy.¹⁶⁸ It has been noted that its occurrence in the NT is very scant as it is found only in six places outside of our text of interest for this study.¹⁶⁹ It would also be relevant to notice that the usage of this verb is even more limited in the Greek OT, the LXX. Indeed, because of the strong connection that has been establish between

¹⁶⁷ Friberg et al. (2000); *EDNT I* (1990, p. 147); Swanson (2001).

¹⁶⁸ *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, p. 861).

¹⁶⁹ The other places where this verb is being used are in the Pauline first epistle to the Corinthians chapter 11, and verse thirteen, and in Eph. 5.3, 2 Tim 2.10, Tit 2.1, Heb. 2.10; 7.26. See, *BDAG* (1957, p. 861).

Matthew and the OT, it is somehow interesting to see that *πρέπω* occurs only 3 times in the LXX and all in the book of Psalms. In Pss. 32.1; 64.2; 92.5, the semantic field is the same as in the NT texts and in Matthew in particular.¹⁷⁰

Also, it is noteworthy that these LXX references do not only exhibit a correlation with the particular Matthean text under investigation regarding the use of *πρέπω*, but also through some other elements that they seem to have in common. In Ps. 32.1, 5 for instance, there is a possible literary connection with Mt. 3.15 through the use of two other words. In the fifth verse of this Psalm, we find the words *ἐλεημοσύνη*, and *πλήρης*.¹⁷¹ These two words are undeniably close to those we find in Mt. 3.15, *δικαιοσύνη*, and *πληρόω*, which I will return to in the appropriate section in this thesis. In Ps. 64.2, there is another connection with Mt. 3.15 although possibly indirect. It is the use of *ἀποδίδωμι* that is also present in Matthew. What is perhaps of interest here with this verb is its semantic range.¹⁷² While it is most often translated as ‘pay, repay’, and ‘render’ in Matthew and elsewhere in the Bible, it is also sometimes translated as ‘fulfil’.¹⁷³ This is the case in Mt. 5.33, where in a number of English texts it is rendered either ‘perform’ or ‘fulfil’.¹⁷⁴

Thus it is the rarity of the combination of these two words carrying the idea of adequacy and fulfilment that is striking and somehow relates these texts. In the

¹⁷⁰ See, *GEL LXX* (2003).

¹⁷¹ On *ἐλεημοσύνη*, see *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 315–16); *GEL LXX* (2003); T. Muraoka (2000, p. 174) and as for *πλήρης*, see Friberg et al. (2000); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 826–27); *GEL LXX* (2003); T. Muraoka (2002, p. 463).

¹⁷² To have a more precise view of the semantic range and the various ways in which this verb has been used in the Greek NT, as well as the different translations that have characterised the above point, see (Friberg et al., 2000); (Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, 1988), and perhaps in greater details, see *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 109–10).

¹⁷³ See Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988), *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, p. 109).

¹⁷⁴ Look at the difference between ESV, KJV, NAS, NET, RSV that use the translations ‘perform’ and ‘fulfil’, while another English version such as NLT would use a different word ‘carry’, but all expressing the same basic idea.

remaining LXX text that contains *πρέπω*, that is Ps 92.5,¹⁷⁵ there seems to be no other link with Matthew than this one. The point that could be made with regard to the use of *πρέπω* in Matthew is that it makes this particular verse 15 even more unique. It is not just the fact that there is no parallel to the conversation between John and Jesus, but it is also that the choice of language has an unparalleled flavour to it in comparison with the rest of the Gospels. However, Matthew in this verse, through semantic mechanisms is still in a close contact with the OT as in using such a scarce word as *πρέπω* in this verse. In the light of a so carefully crafted account of the life of Jesus, this aspect of the text must be considered and examined for possible indications on how to interpret the verse, and give meaning to the action taking place in Mt. 3.15.

As for the last part of the above section of the phrase under investigation, it is not the least in consideration. Jesus according to Matthew says *ἐστὶν ἡμῖν*. There seems to be a designed emphasis in this part as it is often the case when *εἰμί* is used while the simple use of the dative form of *ἐγώ* would have sufficed to convey the message. This is the case, for instance, in five of the other six places in the NT, where *πρέπω*, the verb upon which *ἐστὶν ἡμῖν* is contingent.¹⁷⁶ The use of this combination is consistent in this sentence with the tone and the context of the conversation, and perhaps the aim sought after by Matthew. It is palpable both in the immediate and larger context of this event that Matthew wants to focus on these two main protagonists, here, Jesus and John. The aim is to link together what might be viewed as isolated stories in the whole of the account. This point made previously in this

¹⁷⁵ It should be noted that there is a difference of number or reference concerning this text, between the LXX and the English Bibles. For the same text in LXX, see Ps. 93.5 in the English versions. Incidentally, one may see in the this Psalm the reference to waters, and the mention of ‘testimony’ (KJV, NAS) as a possible connection point, but it would be difficult to sustain the argument that there is in this a theological relationship with the baptism of Jesus at the River Jordan, where came the divine testimony of his Sonship.

¹⁷⁶ It is only in 1 Cor. 11.13 that this combination is used apart from the Matthean text. In that text, it is used in the context of a question asked by the writer to his audience, and the use of *ἐστὶν* seems more necessary there than it is Matthew.

thesis resurfaces here in this particular part of Jesus' answer to John's remark. Jesus clearly includes the part played by John in this baptism; that is to preside over the performance of the baptismal rite with his submission to it into one and the same unavoidable and seemingly pre-ordained act.

Thus, Matthew in this syntactically complex sentence is indisputably making one of the pivotal points in this episode and perhaps the whole Gospel. It is important to consider some of the elements that may support this argument at this point. Of the synoptic Gospels, Matthew more than the others maintains a regular presence of John the Baptist in his account of Jesus' life. While Mark and Luke have limited, regular and concordant mentions of John, it seems that Matthew goes beyond this profile.¹⁷⁷ This phenomenon has caused those involved in the quest for the historical John the Baptist to ask the question as to why Matthew is different from the others in his treatment of the Baptist in his story of Jesus.¹⁷⁸ Without any attempt to address this question here, the point is made that in verse 15, Matthew gives supporting evidence for this argument by recording Jesus' statement to John. The fulfilment of 'all righteousness' according to Jesus is not simply the fact that he has to be baptised, it is also that John has to baptise him.¹⁷⁹ In other words, not just Jesus, but both of them are fulfilling all righteousness in their individual parts taken in this baptism. This is the argument made by Matthew in this sentence using ἡμῶν, the first person plural of

¹⁷⁷ This is one of the reasons why there is this conversation between the two that is unique to Matthew.

¹⁷⁸ The first chapter of Garry Yamasaki (1998) is dedicated to a history of research on John the Baptist in the past 200 years. It effectively points to the emphasis made on Matthew's Gospel, because of the depth that he seems to grant to the connection between John and Jesus. This is in contrast to the rest of the synoptic Gospels.

¹⁷⁹ Only few commentators remark on this point that is well addressed by Davies and Allison (1988, p. 325) who see it as plain as it is. Both men Jesus and John are concerned in this statement. Gundry (1982, p. 52) as an example among many others, only retains Jesus as the fulfiller of righteousness. Not only Luz (2007, pp. 177–79) focuses on Jesus alone in this aspect of the text, but he clearly blurs the actual textual element, *πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῶν*, by saying that 'all righteousness does not *consist* in the baptism of John, but the latter belongs to it.' From the rest of his comments on the subject, it is evident according to him, that while the baptism of John is somehow included in this fulfilment of righteousness, John is not specifically a part of it.

ἐγώ. Thus, it is crucial in this analysis to recognise that the fulfilment of all righteousness in Mt. 3.15 is not just with regard to Jesus being baptised, but also the baptism of Jesus being actually presided over by John the Baptist. John is an integral part in this concept, and consequently, he is a major character in the whole. At this instant in the conversation, by using ἐστὶν ἡμῖν, Jesus seems to do something with regard to John's place in this story that he will repeat later according to Matthew's Gospel.

Therefore, Matthew has Jesus in this exchange, personally securing the integration of John in this specific part of the event at more than the common level perceived in the other Gospels.¹⁸⁰ He does it through the strong Matthean sense of divinely appointed events. These are scripturally determined, hence expected to occur for the making and legitimacy of the story. The other instances where this pattern can be detected are in the interactions of the two in Mt. 11.2 - 6, when John seems no longer sure about Jesus' identity. Potentially, and at least seemingly, he is confused about his very understanding of whom Jesus is (as outlined in Mt. 3. 14, where he does not think that he should baptise Jesus). Jesus in this episode of Mt. 11.2-14 reassures John, according to Matthew, in sending a message that is a report of his messianic activities. This report is a prophetically sounding message about what is actually happening with Jesus' daily activities. The response of Jesus in Mt. 11.5 is a blend of OT elements with current happenings, and therefore, a confirmation of prophecy because of its close textual relation with Isaiah's words in Isa. 42.18; 29.18;

¹⁸⁰ This specific relationship between John and Jesus according to Matthew as already said, prompted the desire to investigate the historical John the Baptist, and has usefully produced 'the redaction-critical studies on John in Matthew's Gospel' by Garry Yamasaki (1998, p. 2). Two questions have shaped his work on the subject and evidenced the point that is being made here. 'Why does Matthew keep coming back to John?' 'What role does Matthew have for him in this Gospel?' An important determining factor for this investigation is the observation that Yamasaki makes with regard to how involved John is in the making of the Gospel. According to him, 'John is referred to no less than seven times in the story-line' of Jesus' life in Matthew, apart from the baptism event. This seems significant in comparison to the other Gospels.

35.5; 61.1. Mt. 11.5 is a composite of elements found in these OT passages by this particular prophet, Isaiah, to whom Matthew referred just before introducing John the Baptist in the third chapter.¹⁸¹ John being particularly attached to the book of the prophet Isaiah, no doubt would have made the suggested connection between Jesus and the prophetic words. This connection to Isaiah's words in Jesus' strategy to answer John's question would have rested the ambiguity.

Thus, the contact between Jesus and John is marked here by Jesus' determination to keep John within a framework of a prophetic relationship between the two of them, and especially, when there were doubts and questions about the nature of that relationship. Another instance where Jesus operates in a similar fashion is when the disciples of John appear confused about the fate of the Baptist. Having been arrested, imprisoned, and therefore silenced as a prophet appointed and announced by God and whom they believed, he was in a strange situation. Jesus again restores their confidence in John's work by positively comparing him to the greatest prophets of Israel, in Mt. 11.7-10. Again, Matthew records it with the same type of prophetic tone as with the preceding times. Jesus according to Mt. 11.9, 10, gives a very strong testimony of the divine nature of John's prophetic identity in terms of his ministry. He says that John is even more than a prophet; he is the 'messenger' announced as the one to be sent to 'prepare the way before' the Lord.¹⁸² Thus,

¹⁸¹ In Mt. 3.3 it is not by name, but through identification with the text of Isaiah ('Esaias' in the NT) that reference is made to John the Baptist using the personal pronoun 'he'. See, Mt. 3.3, 10, 12; cf. Isa. 40.3; 41.16; 5.24.

¹⁸² This testimony of Jesus is recorded in Matthew with a blind of OT texts, Exod. 23.20, and Mal. 3.1 and the whole introduced by the formula 'it is written'. On this blind of OT texts and Matthew's relationship with the synoptics here, see, Blomberg (2007, pp. 38–39); D. Hagner (1993, p. 305); Luz (2001, p. 138); Davies and Allison (1991, pp. 249–50).

through the OT, Jesus deals with the appropriateness of John even though the circumstances are unfavourable to him and his disciples.¹⁸³

This composite statement can be clearly identified as relating to a great extent to a statement found in the books of Exodus and Malachi.¹⁸⁴ There is a definite attempt on the part of Jesus, according to Matthew,¹⁸⁵ to interlink the life of John and that of Jesus by means of OT prophecy. It is noteworthy that while there is a parallel to Matthew's record in chapter 11, found in Lk 7.18- 23, 27 concerning Jesus' testimony about John, only Matthew, from the lips of Jesus, unequivocally identifies John as the OT Elijah (Elias) by name in 11.14 in the context of that conversation.¹⁸⁶ Also, it is important to consider that while Mk 9.13 and Mt. 17.12 have Jesus confirming that Elias had come in the days appointed, only Matthew has again this identification of Elias being John the Baptist.

This Matthean Baptist, from the time he is introduced in the immediate context of the baptism pericope of chapter 3, is a fulfilment of OT prophecy. The description of his outward appearance as identifiable with that of OT Elijah, alongside the mention of the prophet Isaiah, occurs only in Matthew to form consistent OT focal points in the Matthean story of Jesus. Nowhere else in the synoptic Gospels do we have this combination of John the Baptist being identified by name as Elias, and the

¹⁸³ This blind of OT texts is used by all the synoptic writers, but it is important to notice that only Matthew and Luke use it in the same context. The point might be that it fitted in more than one place, and therefore, this OT-based record of John's part in the story is very palpable in the Gospel tradition. Matthew is making the most of it in his whole story, perhaps, because of the baptism pericope and the role it plays in the whole.

¹⁸⁴ For more details on the hermeneutical, and theological use of the portions of Exodus and Malachi in this Matthean text, see, Blomberg (2007, p. 40).

¹⁸⁵ In this case, it is not just Matthew who has recorded this connection between the event and the OT scripture. Luke has the same report in Lk. 7.27. For more details on the contexts and specific aspects of Luke's usage of the OT texts, see, Pao and Schnabel (2007, pp. 300–3); Watts (2007, pp. 113–20).

¹⁸⁶ It is noteworthy that this passage in Matthew has a synoptic parallel only in Luke, and that although they seem to follow a close line of textual similarity, Matthew is more explicit in his provision in support of John's legitimacy as the OT prophet who was to come at that time. Matthew identifies him as 'Elijah' in verse 14, after making him in verse 13, a clear marker of the time according to which he, Jesus, is to begin his messianic ministry with the sanction of two OT prophecies. See, Plummer (1986, pp. 202–4); Nolland (1989, pp. 325–39); Bovon (2002, pp. 277–79); Hendriksen (1978, pp. 392–97).

fulfilment of the mission of the messenger of the Lord sent to do what John did.¹⁸⁷

Matthew seems to have taken the approach that consists in making John the Baptist as much a fulfilment of OT prophecy as Jesus is in his Gospel. Matthew constantly maintains John in that prophetic picture that defines the story of Jesus in his Gospel, rehabilitating John if necessary when there is any doubt about his place in the expected developments.

Therefore, with Mt. 3.15, very appropriately and because of the nature of the event, the possible surprise that it could provoke, there is a similar element that is to be considered with ἐστὶν ἡμῖν. Even John the Baptist at the river Jordan in Mt. 3.13, 14, seems confused by what is happening when Jesus comes to him to be baptised. That confusion is only understandable against the backdrop of the preceding verses 11-12, where he has openly declared his inferiority to Jesus in both nature and ministry, and now he is about to administer his inferior water baptism to this superior Spirit baptiser, Jesus.¹⁸⁸ This is the reason why he attempts to resist him in verse 14 and makes the pronouncement of a role reversal that would seem fit to make at that

¹⁸⁷ Although, in Luke the disciples must have understood it this way, through the relation of the personal pronoun used in 7.27 within the context of this conversation, the point is that only Matthew spells it out unequivocally because of his treatment of John's relationship with Jesus in the context of the OT sanction of his account at every stage. The same deduction is valid for Mk 1.1-4 in this discussion. Cf. Watts, 2007 (pp. 113–20); Blomberg 2007 (pp. 38–40); Pao and Schnabel (2007, pp. 300–3) on the use of Exod. 23.20; Mal. 3.1, and the wealth of OT texts, and particularly, the 'Isaianic' ones that affect the picture in this part of the Gospel. It is undeniable that the Gospel tradition saw John the Baptist as this 'messenger' the one to 'prepare the way' of the Lord, but the point is that Matthew specifically and particularly makes it impossible for the reader to underestimate the importance of this character who is announced in OT as essential to the story of the Messiah. This is by name, John the Baptist, who in his first encounter with Jesus at a crucial point in the story of the life of Jesus, hears Jesus make such a remark as in Mt. 3.15.

¹⁸⁸ Garry Yamasaki (1998, pp. 95–97) comments on the difference of the 'ideological point of view' of the people involved in this portion of the narrative, including that of the 'narratee' are of precious help in terms of the expectation raised by the narrator, who has his own as well. However, the major contribution that he makes along with few others is to understand the importance of ἐστὶν ἡμῖν in this sentence, concluding that both men are fulfilling all righteousness at this baptism. He goes further to declare a major point; he speaks about John as the 'way-preparer of the Messiah' in other words of 'the Anointed one'. In this context John would be acting as the anointer and the baptism would then be the anointing ceremony of Jesus for 'his ministry as the Messiah'. If this point is correct from the interpretation of ἐστὶν ἡμῖν, it is not at all obvious how John is as much as Jesus one who was to do this from a prophetic view point as Matthew may have seen it, though. This point needs to be demonstrated from the text.

point. His confusion should be dispelled by this part of the sentence in verse 15, ἐστὶν ἡμῖν. It is not just Jesus who fulfils righteousness according to Jesus' words; it is John the Baptist too. The statement is rather clear from the lips of Jesus, according to Matthew. Both of them through this act of baptising and being baptised are fulfilling 'all righteousness' whatever this may in effect mean. One thing seems to be posted to the reader through the statement, and that is possibly, there needs to be a baptiser according to prophecy in order to have a prophetic Messiah. This is the sense and the function of ἐστὶν ἡμῖν in the whole sentence and it is a major point in Matthew's understanding of this baptism. There would be no explanation for such act, and in this context, the rest of the verse is understandable. This is to 'fulfil all righteousness'.

2.4.3.3 πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην

This last part of the sentence is the end of the whole matter and the very essence of what Jesus is saying to John the Baptist in that short mysterious Matthean conversation. It is grammatically composed of the verb πληρῶω and of its direct object δικαιοσύνη that need both to be analysed and discussed separately, but considered together. Looking at πληρῶω in this sentence and in general in the NT, it is obvious that the suitable choice of meaning for it here would be appropriately defined as 'to fulfil'. Although, it has a rich semantic range capable of several possible meanings, most English versions translate this text as I have in this thesis.¹⁸⁹ One of the major characteristics of the Matthean Gospel in relation to this word is that it is used no less than 16 times in Matthew, while only 2 times in Mark and 9 times in Luke.

This statistical difference must be of some importance in the present analysis. It is noteworthy that of the 16 times that Matthew uses πληρῶω, in only 3 occasions it

¹⁸⁹ See KJV, RSV, ESV, NAS, NET and others.

is not directly in connection with a reference to the OT scriptures. In the vast majority of the other instances apart from Mt. 3.15; 13.48; 23.32, πληρόω is part of specifically Matthean formula quotations, Mt. 1.22; 2.15, 17, 23; 4.14; 8.17; 12.17; 13.35; 21.4; 27.9. In the remaining places, it is twice in association with γραφή (Mt. 26.54, 56) and once with νόμος and προφήτης in Mt. 5.17. In all of these instances, the use of πληρόω aims at identifying the action described in the respective verses as a fulfilment of OT prophecy according to Matthew. Only Matthew in the synoptic Gospels makes such use of πληρόω, which causes him to be identified as one who is heavily involved in redactional activities in this Gospel.¹⁹⁰ No one else, for instance, has John and Jesus fulfilling anything by going through this baptismal act as they did. The use of this word here, in the context of a pre-ordained act, must be of a very great importance and significance. The choice of usage here must have been determined in the same way or for the same reason for such a spread of it.

The reasons for this seemingly disproportionate use of πληρόω in Matthew in comparison with Mark and Luke have already been noted in the treatment of the context of the baptism pericope. Nevertheless, I will reiterate the point by saying that it is essentially because of Matthew's determination to situate the story of Jesus within a prophetic OT context. However, there is still more to be noted here about the usage of πληρόω in Mt. 3.15. While the use of πληρόω in this verse falls outside the list of those clearly referring to prophecy, along with Mt. 13.48 and 23.32, it seems that in Mt. 3.15 the usage of it is syntactically similar to that of the vast majority of prophetic texts, and in contrast to Mt. 13.48; 23.32. The aorist infinitive form that conditions it in Mt. 3.15 expresses the same idea for which it is used most of the time

¹⁹⁰ For a list of some of the ‘redactional vocables’ of which πληρόω is part and contained in Matthew, see, Luz, 2007 (pp. 52–70). This work also indicates that the use of πληρόω is 13 times redactional in Matthew. This piece of information is very useful in understanding Matthew's vision of Jesus' messiahship and how it should be related to the reader. See also, Osborne, 2006 (pp. 333–34).

in Matthew. This infinitive form, ‘probably of Hebraistic origin’, communicates and indicates the purpose of the action of being baptised.¹⁹¹ This purpose is then complementarily expressed in the object that is attached to the verb. Matthew in other words is not using πληρόω in Mt. 3.15 any differently from how he uses it in all the passages that point to fulfilment of prophecy, of scriptures or of the Law and the Prophets.¹⁹² This brings πληρόω as placed in Mt. 3.15 in terms of the syntax of the phrase, on the same functional level as all the other instances of occurrence with the exception of Mt. 13.48; 23.32, where it could in fact easily be translated differently than ‘to fulfil’.¹⁹³

Thus, πληρῶσαι has the same role in Mt. 3.15 as in other places where the particular Matthean formula quotations are used. Places that in actual fact determine the context of the particular baptism pericope and therefore, the very text under examination, Mt. 3.15. This reality as expressed in the introductory part of the Matthean Gospel, Mt. 1.22; 2.15, 17 and 4.14 of which Mt. 3.15 is part, consolidates the case for the proposed role of πληρῶσαι in Mt. 3.15. It would be possible to state without a stretch, in view of these elements, that although there is no mention of any OT prophecy in connection with the use of πληρῶσαι in this verse, the idea of an OT reference for the action of baptising may have been implied by Matthew. This is the reason why it is of uttermost importance that the next word, δικαιοσύνη, the object of πληρόω must be very carefully examined within the specific Matthean context established above.

¹⁹¹ See, Burton (1893, no. 375), according to whose remark, this infinitive would be ‘used to define more closely the content of the action denoted by a previous verb or noun.’ In this case, the verb would be the main action in view here, that is βαπτίζω.

¹⁹² See, Mt. 1.22; 2.15, 17, 23; 4.14; 8.17; 12.17; 13.35; 21.4; 27.9 and Mt. 5.17; Mt. 26.54, 56. It should be noted that this verb is not exclusively used under the same grammatical form in all these references, but in every case there is this element of purpose or result that is expressed either by the use of the subjunctive Aorist passive, indicative Aorist passive or the infinitive Aorist passive.

¹⁹³ See, Nolland (2005, pp. 568, 942); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 827-29); Liddell and Scott (1869).

2.4.3.4 Δικαιοσύνη

While the number of occurrences for δικαιοσύνη is relatively substantial in the NT corpus,¹⁹⁴ it is much scarcer in the Gospels.¹⁹⁵ As a matter of fact, there are only eight instances in the synoptic Gospels in which this word occurs, and two others in the fourth Gospel, Jn. 16.8, 10. The overwhelming majority of texts in which δικαιοσύνη occurs in the Gospel tradition is found in the Matthean context, Mt. 5.6, 10, 20; 6.1, 33; 21.32. Seven times out of eight it is Matthew who uses this word as Luke only uses δικαιοσύνην once in Lk 1.75. The statistical difference between Matthew and the other Gospels regarding the use of δικαιοσύνη leaves no doubt about how significant this word is in the telling of the story of Jesus in the Matthean context.¹⁹⁶ In Mt. 3.15, as in all the other passages that contain the word, δικαιοσύνη, it has consistently been translated as ‘righteousness’.¹⁹⁷ One of the principal questions in view of these statistics would probably have to do with the reason for Matthew’s departure from the others on the point in the context of this baptism. This position is even more striking considering the often closeness with which Matthew follows Mark in telling his account of the life Jesus.¹⁹⁸ Yet, there is a complete absence of the use δικαιοσύνη in

¹⁹⁴ δικαιοσύνη is quite commonly used in the NT and particularly in the Pauline corpus. It occurs 92 times all together in that part of the Bible, with a disproportionate number in the epistle to the Romans compared to the rest. While this element makes it relevant in choosing Paul as a comparative figure to Matthew in dealing with the meaning of the word in the NT in general, the other books should also be consulted in this debate. See, Schrenk (1964b, pp. 198–210); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 247–49).

¹⁹⁵ The disparity between the Gospels and the rest of the NT seems to be a significant point to consider in the light of the irregular distribution of the word among the Gospels. It is also important to remember that while δικαιοσύνην is not used in some books of the NT, it is not to say that the ideas conveyed by the word are not present in those books. See, Schrenk (1964b, pp. 198–201); Luz (2007, p. 178).

¹⁹⁶ See, D. Hagner (1993, p. 56); Nolland (2005, pp. 153–54); F. P. Viljoen (2013, pp. 1–3) and others who recognise δικαιοσύνη as ‘a key concept in Matthew’. See also the position of Overman n.d. (pp. 91–92) in terms of Matthew’s statistical use of the word.

¹⁹⁷ Schrenk (1964a).

¹⁹⁸ David C Sim (2011, p. 178). This point on the difference cultivated by Matthew in telling the story of Jesus is also well underlined in the whole article of McCuistion et al. (2014) that particularly focuses on the meaning of Mt. 3.15.

Mark's Gospel.¹⁹⁹ It is in this particular context that Matthew, in Mt. 3.15, introduces for the first time this word, δικαιοσύνη and the important concept of righteousness that will subsequently characterise, to some extent, this Gospel.

In Mt. 3.15, δικαιοσύνη is the object of the verb πληρώω and so constitutes the essence of the one-sentence-long conversation between Jesus and John because the subject of πληρώω is ἡμῖν. Whatever the meaning that is to be attributed to δικαιοσύνη in this sentence, the aim of Jesus' words in Mt. 3.15 is to validate and qualify the action that is about to take place as fulfilling 'all righteousness' for both Jesus and John.²⁰⁰ In other words, it is not the narrator who is this time certifying the event through the use of πληρώω as the coming to pass of a predetermined action, but Jesus himself. This view is evident by means of the OT-prophetic-realisation context in which this conversation is taking place.²⁰¹ This would be the first impression made by this statement of Jesus if considered against its natural backdrop as already defined. The actual meaning of 'all righteousness', only then, would need to be determined according to how Matthew, in his Gospel, uses δικαιοσύνη.

Therefore, it would be judicious in all respects to consider the meaning of δικαιοσύνη within the OT scripture and perhaps intermediary literature in order to properly assess the meaning Matthew is ascribing to it. This is particularly important

¹⁹⁹ This element re-enforces the point that Matthew has a particular view about the story of Jesus that he consistently and carefully sets out to tell in a specific context that must be taken into consideration in all attempts to interpret the various pericopes that constitute the whole and in particular the baptism pericope. See, Overman, n.d. (pp. 72–150), although he is dealing with the 'social development of the Matthean community' in this chapter of his book, he nevertheless, demonstrates the peculiarity with which Matthew relates his story of Jesus in comparison to the other Gospel writers. This is applicable to the pericope of the baptism, and therefore, it is relevant to the present discussion on Matthew's perspective on the use of δικαιοσύνη in this verse.

²⁰⁰ Stanton (1992, p. 81) views John the Baptist, and Jesus as 'together they carry out God's saving plan' on the basis of this conversation and particularly Jesus' answer to the Baptist in Mt. 3.15. This is because the action of the verb is inclusive of both as we already have established it in this discussion.

²⁰¹ It is important to remember that this part of the Gospel is a constituent one of the introductory section of the Matthean Gospel that is loaded with formula quotations and OT references of other sorts. See, Overman, n.d. (pp. 74–78), and the belief among scholarship that this Matthean OT-structuring of the Gospel that is clearly evident in this introductory section, but not only, 'reflects a sophisticated understanding of Scripture.'

since there is a clear intention on Matthew's part to make the story of Jesus intelligible in the OT scriptural milieu. There is no doubt among many, but not all specialists of the Matthean Gospel, that the writer drew on the LXX for the writing of his Gospel and that the vocabulary link between the OT and the NT is evident.²⁰² For these reasons, any attempt to adequately define the meaning of that specifically Matthean contribution to the synoptic tradition must be duly controlled. This endeavour must be in consideration of the point of departure for Matthew's story of Jesus and his constant point of reference. This reference point is the OT text and context, and in terms of the Matthean usage of δικαιοσύνη in this Gospel, it would also come from there. However, this textual and contextual relationship between Matthew and the OT does not automatically express that the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in his Gospel is derived from the OT use of the word. For historical causes such observation would not be conclusive without investigating the possible different connections.

For this reason, it has been argued that some biblical literary developments took place between the time of the OT writing, and the writing of Matthew's Gospel, through the emergence of literature such as the Dead Sea Scrolls and Tannaitic writings.²⁰³ The later bodies of literature would have, for some scholars, such as Benno Przybylski constituted the 'intellectual milieu' in which δικαιοσύνη is understandable within the Matthean context.²⁰⁴ It is by virtue of this claim that

²⁰² It seems evident that there is a strong link between Matthew's OT usage and the LXX, and this has caused many to conclude that the LXX is the main OT scriptural source of this Gospel. See, Ziesler (1972, p. 52); Stanton (1992, p. 353); Luz (2007, pp. 49–50); Osborne (2006, pp. 323–24). However, this conclusion that Matthew's Bible was the LXX has been challenged by others such as Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 29–58); Blomberg (2007, p. 2), who basically argue that Matthew has used the LXX as much as he has done with HB.

²⁰³ I will return in more details to these in the appropriate section.

²⁰⁴ Przybylski (1980, p. 4); F. P. Viljoen (2013, pp. 3–5) and the assessment that is made of the possible developments on the use of δικαιοσύνη that may have taken place at various times, and within different settings such as in 'early Judaism', in the Damascus document', the Tannaitic Literature' and

attention must be given to the use of this word in Matthew, the DSS and TL in order to properly define its meaning in Mt. 3.15.²⁰⁵ However, this study is far more concerned with the internal evidence of an undeniable connection that is forcefully emphasised between the Gospel and the OT through the literary devices that seem to support the claim of a rather consistent OT influence.²⁰⁶ If there is an ‘intellectual milieu’ of that nature in which the Gospel of Matthew was written, whether influential on the text or not, there must also be a source from which that milieu draws its inspiration and that controls its flow and consistency. There must be a textual background against which the intellectual milieu is assessable.²⁰⁷ So far, it must be said, the obvious elements employed in the writing process of this Gospel seem to come from the OT in general. Thus, I will now investigate the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in the LXX before I can look at other possible centres of influence and define Matthew’s concept of δικαιοσύνη.

2.4.3.5 The Septuagintal use of δικαιοσύνη

In the LXX, δικαιοσύνη is variably, but very consistently the Greek rendering of the Hebrew words, צְדִיקָה, צֶדֶק, הַצְדִּיק, and a list of others word, from arguably perhaps,

in ‘the Hebrew Bible’. It is important to note that the work of Przybylski on the subject of *The Concept of Righteousness in Matthew* in 1980 has been widely used in scholarship in this discussion since its publication. See, Luz (2007, p. 177); Davies and Allison (1988, p. 327); D. Hagner (1993, p. 56); F. P. Viljoen (2013). As for a further discussion that seeks to balance the argument among scholars on the use of the LXX by Matthew, see Stanton (1992, pp. 353–63).

²⁰⁵ The review of Przybylski’s work on this subject and in the context of examining Matthew’s intellectual milieu has brought some to conclude that he ‘has done an excellent job in bringing together the material from the Scrolls and other relevant literature’, and the point is made in terms of the relevance of his work today in this concluding remark, ‘his conclusion will have to be taken into consideration in future work on this perplexing topic.’ Fenton (1982, p. 248); Piper (1983). Also, this work has been qualified as ‘a full study of the subject’ in (D. Hagner, 1993, p. 56), and this would explain an intense reference to it by major commentators, and also here.

²⁰⁶ See the different identifiable literary devices used by Matthew to emphasised this connection as identified in the first chapter of this research. Also, see Culpepper (2015) on an impressive list of those that Matthew uses to this aim and particularly the OT scriptures.

²⁰⁷ It is reasonable to think that the OT is the source and inspiration of this ‘intellectual milieu’ since the OT text is logically the support from which the DSS and the TL would have developed. This is in a sense the argument that Przybylski (1980, p. 4) seems to present.

the same semantic field at times, as for instance, דִּקְלָה, טִפְשָׁה, and even טֹב.²⁰⁸ In the sight of the versatile use of δικαιοσύνη in the LXX for the rendering of the above Hebrew words, it is apparent that frequency and consistency are decisive criteria in choosing the exegetical path to pursue in the OT-related study of δικαιοσύνη in the Matthean Gospel context. It would appear that the Hebrew word most frequently translated by δικαιοσύνη in the LXX is הִלָּלָה, (134 times, according to Quell)²⁰⁹. This comparatively high number for הִלָּלָה is followed in the statistics by δικαιοσύνη being 81 times the Greek translation for the word קָדַשׁ which grammatically is only the masculine form of the latter Hebrew word.²¹⁰ It is understandable that these two words are considered as ‘synonymous’ and what they represent is dealt with as a ‘single concept’.²¹¹

Although, there are other words in the Hebrew Bible that are translated by δικαιοσύνη in the LXX, it seems appropriate to focus on these two at this point,

²⁰⁸ According to Gottfried R Quell (1964, pp. 174–75) all these Hebrew words are at some point translated δικαιοσύνη in the different LXX references he provides. There are plenty of different nuances that need observing in the way these words are used in Hebrew and in the LXX, but it seems that those Hebrew words consistently revolve around the concept of the law. In fact they are according to Quell, ‘the most important normative terms for the concept of law’ as such. See the footnote of this article on the specific main meanings for every one of these words. See also, *GEL LXX* (2003); *GELNT* (1998). While it is acknowledged that the ‘broader sense of the Hebrew words’ ts-d-q translated by δικαιοσύνη is narrowed down’ in the Greek, the main aspect that is apparent in the LXX context of its usage is ‘faith, and faithfulness’ according to F. P. Viljoen (2013, p. 4). Cf. Gottfried R. Quell (1964, p. 174) for the observation on the challenge of translation from the Hebrew to the Greek.

²⁰⁹ Gottfried R. Quell (1964, pp. 174–75). In this article, Quell presents a relevant analysis of the translations of the above Hebrew words into the Greek with their respective derivatives and how they relate. While it would be of interest to consult the information given in that article for a better grasp of the technicalities and sometimes complexities of the relationship between the HB and the LXX on these particular words, the focus in reference to Quell’s work is on his explicit treatment of δικαιοσύνη as a translation for הִלָּלָה and קָדַשׁ (81 times, the second highest) in this article. See the complete statistical figures in *GEL LXX* (2003) also, Huub Welzen (2013, p. 90) in terms of the main Hebrew word for it.

²¹⁰ It would be logical to think that the gender case difference is technically of no consequence on the meanings attributed to the words, nevertheless, there have been discussions on this point that illustrate the difficulty posed by dealing with such, possibly, intricate words. See Przybylski (1980, pp. 10–11).

²¹¹ Przybylski (1980, p. 11)

mainly by reason of the statistics and also for the scholarly semantic analysis available.²¹² The larger number of occurrences of δικαιοσύνη for these two is more compelling in terms of the consistency they seem to establish with regard to the use of the adjectival form of the nouns than for the other words.²¹³ The general notion attached to צַדִּיק, the adjective, 186 times in the OT qualifying the noun ‘man,’ is 108 times that of an upright conduct, behavior and attitude of conformity to expressed requirements.²¹⁴ Almost half of the 108 occurrences are said to ‘specifically’ occur in the context of stipulations concerning the keeping of the covenant.²¹⁵ In the light of this, it can be inferred, irrespective of gender in this case, that an adjectival use of the noun reveals the essence of it in terms of its meaning.²¹⁶ Thus, when the use of the words is relative to the relationship between man and God, it is generally understood as the appropriate response of man to God’s requirements as expressed in God’s demand upon individuals. This appears to be mainly the concept encapsulated in the word ‘righteousness’ that is defined in the Hebrew Bible as צַדִּיק or צִדְקָה, and rendered δικαιοσύνη in the Greek OT.²¹⁷

²¹² The points made by Quell are representative of the scholarly spectrum on the subject. There is no need to contrast opinions on the question.

²¹³ Among those other words there is צַדִּיק which is mentioned above, and that is translated 8 times in the LXX by δικαιοσύνη. Of this one it is said that it denotes ‘always a volitional attitude orientated to the concept of the law’. See Quell’s footnotes on the word for the different renderings of this word. There is also a six-time occurrence of δικαιοσύνη in the LXX for the adjectival form of צַדִּיק, that is צַדִּיק.

However, it is this adjectival form that is the more effective in revealing the most basic and common ideas attached to the nouns. The statistical figures are provided by the assessment of Przybylski (1980, pp. 9–10) as he reviews the work of some scholars who have looked into the matter.

²¹⁴ This adjectival form of the nouns occurs 208 times in the OT, 186 times in reference to man, and 22 times it refers to God, according to the above sources.

²¹⁵ That is said to be 51 times, according to Przybylski (1980, p. 10)

²¹⁶ See ts-d-q in its different forms in Holladay (2000, p. 303). Also, on the relationship between the noun and the adjective, see *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar* (1910, p. 222); Joüon and Muraoka (2006, p. 217).

²¹⁷ *GELNT* (1998); Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988). See how the adjective is used to express the meaning of the noun in *TWOT* (1980) also, Holladay (2000). See the analysis of the discussion among scholars on the subject and how the above conclusion can be reached according to Przybylski (1980, pp. 8–12).

This usage of צִדִּיק or צִדִּיקוּת in the HB or $\delta\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\upsilon\eta$ in the LXX with the above connotation is fairly consistent within the OT.²¹⁸ The meaning of צִדִּיק or $\delta\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\upsilon\eta$ in the context of a relationship between man and God is thus conveyed to the English reader through the first occurrence of the word ‘righteousness’ in Gen 15.6.²¹⁹ The conformity of Abraham to the request of YHWH, through ‘πιστεύω’²²⁰ is said to be ‘counted’ to him as ‘righteousness’. The fact that Abraham believed and obeyed YHWH constitutes the first clearly-stated-in-this-term act of righteousness in the OT. It is noteworthy that in this first-of-its-kind biblical record on the subject, the context is that of the God-to-man dialogue, and more particularly, man’s response and acceptance of God’s terms and directions. This initial occurrence of a concept of righteousness can be identified as fitting within the context of a covenant-keeping relationship between God and man in this chapter of Genesis. As noted earlier, this, the covenant-keeping relationship between two parties is the case in about half of the occurrences when the adjective qualifies ‘man.’²²¹ In this case it is a covenant between God and Abraham.

²¹⁸ See, Gottfried R. Quell (1964, p. 175) who remarks that ‘there is no discernable shift of meaning between the masc. and the fem.... צִדִּיק is favoured as a gen. epexegeticus in the sense of צִדִּיקוּת ’. According to Przybylski (1980, pp. 10–11), and as said earlier, some scholars have tried to differentiate meanings for the two Hebrew words on the basis of the gender difference that they grammatically present, but this is proved inconclusive in the light of an analysis done by others which seems to be more probing. See, Ziesler (1972).

²¹⁹ According to Ziesler (1972, p. 43), Gen. 15.6 is one of the ‘two notoriously difficult passages’ in the context of this discussion. However, it is clear that this relationship between Abraham and God is a covenantal one since it is on the basis of obeying God’s command that is belief or trust in God is recognised.

²²⁰ This is the LXX translation of the Hebrew word אָמֵן that is commonly translated in English ‘to believe’, see Friberg et al. (2000); *GELNT* (1998); Brown (1907). According to the relatively frequent usage of this Hebrew word in the Bible, there is an important range of meanings that are determined by the context in which it is found. In the case of Gen. 15.6, where it is preceded by the preposition בְּ in the context of a relationship between God and man, the most common meaning is the above-given one.

²²¹ See, Ziesler (1972, pp. 32–36) and the statistical tables that he presents in support of the argument according to which he qualifies, in the summary of his analysis, the type of relationship that is in view most of the time in the OT when the noun and the adjective regardless of gender is used. ‘They denote rather, activity within a relationship’.

As for the context in which δικαιοσύνη is used for the second time in the HB, it is again covenantal. A covenant is made between two men within the business and family setting of a relationship involving Jacob and Laban in Gen. 30.33. Jacob refers to his personal attitude as δικαιοσύνη because he did not deviate from the terms and conditions that had been agreed between the parties. It can be confidently suggested that the usage of תָּקַן in the HB or δικαιοσύνη in the LXX is largely, although not exclusively, set in a similar frame of thought as these first two occurrences.²²²

The vast majority of usages of תָּקַן in the HB or δικαιοσύνη in the LXX follow the pattern set by the first two examples mentioned above. Also, the use of תָּקַן or δικαιοσύνη is in clear connection, in most cases within the texts, with an expressed command of God to people or knowledge of his will that they should live by as a response to his demand. It is also in this context that we find the other interchangeable Hebrew words such as צָדִיק, טָהוֹר and others that are sometimes translated by δικαιοσύνη in the LXX. As for the word צָדִיק, which is the masculine form of תָּקַן, there are numerous cases that substantiate the observation discussed. For example, Lev. 19.15; Job 29.14; Pss. 4.5; 9.5, 8; 15.2; 17.15; 23.3; 40.9; 45.7; 51.19; 94.15 and many others.²²³ It is noteworthy that the majority of these texts are

²²² A list of texts that demonstrate this can be provided with an important number of references that stretch from the beginning of the HB to the last book of it, for example, Gen. 30.33; Deut. 6.25; 9.4, 5, 6; 1 Sam. 26.23; 2 Sam. 22.21, 25; 1 Kgs. 3.6; 8. 32; Job 27.6; Ps. 11.7; Ps. 106.3; Prov. 10.2; 11.6; 13.6; 14.34; 15.9; 16.8, 31; Isa. 5.7; 32.16; 32.17; 33.5; 46.12; Jer. 22.3, 15; 23.5; Ezra 18.5, 19, 21, 27; 33.14, 16, 19; Hos. 10.12; Amos 5.7, 24; 6.12; Zech. 8.8; Mal. 3.3. It is in the covenantal aspect of a relationship between the two sides, this can be between the humans or between God and people, that ts-d-q in the HB and δικαιοσύνη in the LXX is used to define the behaviour of the people involved with regard to attitudes towards each other within the covenant. See, Ziesler (1972, pp. 93–94); T. Muraoka (2002, pp. 127–28) who records the use of δικαιοσύνη as defining, 1. ‘*Conformity to the dictates of the religion of Israel*’, 2. ‘*uprightness and righteousness: as an attribute of God’s*’, 3. ‘*divine justice: as manifested in God’s salvific acts*’, 4. ‘*proper conduct*’, 5. ‘*fairness and conformity to moral and ethical codes*’.

²²³ There are other texts that can be added to the above list since some of these are also found in parts of the OT such as in the book of Proverbs (Prov. 1.3; 2.9 and more), Ecclesiastes (Eccl. 5.8) and we can find a good number of them in the book of the prophet Isaiah (such as in Isa. 1.21, 26; 11.5),

contained in the Psalms, where, it may seem that some of the most expressive accounts of intricate relationships between God and man are exhibited. Some of these texts, unequivocally, reveal the common underlying thought behind the general use of קָדַשׁ in the context of responding and acting according to God's requirements. It is, however, fair to point out that this OT thought is not exclusively conveyed by the use of the words קָדַשׁ , קָדַשׁ in the HB or of $\delta\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\upsilon\eta$ in the LXX.

The use of קָדַשׁ , קָדַשׁ in the Hebrew and $\delta\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\upsilon\eta$ in the Greek is also found in connection with a rule of conduct that is previously defined as to regulate transactional relationships between men before God. It seems not necessary to elaborate on this point, but it does exhibit a certain codification of the relational aspect conveyed by these words in a context of responsibilities, and conformity to a two-party agreement.²²⁴ Another example of this can be found in 1 Kgs. 8.32, where Solomon in his prayer of dedication calls upon God to judge the righteous according to his righteousness, that is according to his keeping of the requirements as defined earlier in the same chapter.²²⁵ Thus, according to the above observations, it is not impossible that the NT writers have borrowed this particular meaning of the OT words קָדַשׁ , קָדַשׁ from the HB or of $\delta\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\upsilon\eta$ from the LXX. Since they use the same Greek word, it is possible that at least in parts of the NT, there have been the same conceptual elements attached to the word $\delta\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\upsilon\eta$ than in the OT. It would not be so strange to conclude that there could be no need to investigate the meaning of

Jeremiah (22.13; 50.7), Hosea (2.21; 10.12) and in Zephaniah (2.3). In all these texts we see the Hebrew קָדַשׁ being translated $\delta\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\upsilon\eta$ and this in relation to behaving according to the requirement of or in response to doing the right thing or having the attitude that God expects from individuals. In some of these texts, it is the conduct of God that is being qualified as righteousness because it is adequate to the moral expectations that God himself has set for the people in his requirements from them.

²²⁴ See, T. Muraoka (2002, p. 128).

²²⁵ In 1 Kgs. 8.32, both the adjective and the noun are used in the HB and the LXX, and according to the chapter's content, the righteous is the one who obeys the rules, and that is righteousness.

δικαιοσύνη in Matthew on the assumption that it is coherent with the main LXX meaning of the word. The same would be applicable with the Hebrew קָדַשׁ , קִדְשׁ as shown in the above OT texts.

However, it has been argued that this reasoning is a ‘pitfall’²²⁶ in which too many scholars have fallen. This supposed continuity or coherence could be imposed by reason of a lack of consideration for the time elapsed between the writing of the two sets of texts, the OT and Matthew. For those who have thought this way, this situation may also have been on account of the same mistake with regard to literary and theological developments that may have taken place in between.²²⁷ Therefore, there may be a completely different understanding of the concept of righteousness between the OT period and Matthew’s time because of the possible semantic changes brought about by the bodies of literature that filled the gap between the two. It is with reference to the use of δικαιοσύνη in the DSS and in the TL that the argument of divergence is proposed. Therefore, a succinct look at the two specific literary bodies that separate the OT and the book of Matthew is now necessary. I will not be detained by details pertaining to an in-depth study of the concept of righteousness in the DSS and the TL. I will only examine the most relevant information to the question of whether or not the concept of righteousness in the DSS and in the TL could be the same as in the OT.

The goal of this procedure is not to review and analyse in depth any specific work that has been done on the subject in order to refute or uphold the argument. It is simply to weigh the idea according to which the use of the concept of righteousness in

²²⁶ Przybylski (1980, p. 4).

²²⁷ The argument made by Przybylski (1980, pp. 4–5) is that the meaning of a term may change or diverge from what it was at some point to what it may become at a different time in a different milieu. In this case the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in the OT may not be the same as in Matthew because of the contemporaneous situations. This argument is sensible, but does not necessarily preclude continuity between the two end-sides.

the book of Matthew is reflective of the intellectual milieu in which it was written. Since it has been argued that these periods, DSS and TL, must be taken into consideration when attempting to deal with this subject, this is an attempt to conform to this particular argument, using one of the main sources that deal with it. This is a brief analytical look at the intellectual milieu in which Przybylski believes this Gospel emerged and from which the Matthean concept of righteousness is intelligible.

2.5 A Historical Consideration of the Concept of Righteousness

It is appropriate at this stage to briefly consider a historical background that might be useful to possibly understand the Matthean use of this word that is so prominent in his story of Jesus. I will succinctly examine this concept in the three different backgrounds that may be the most relevant to the aim of this part of the research, because of the temporal aspect of Matthew's writing. This is a brief look at this concept in the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) and the Tannaitic Literature (TL) as it has been specifically looked at in some focused scholarly monographs. This is only to give a wider perspective to the question since the real focus of the study is in the OT background of Matthew's story.

2.5.1 The Concept of Righteousness of the Dead Sea Scrolls

One key aspect of the main piece of information that seems relevant to understanding the specific question of the meaning of 'righteousness' in these writings is found in the picture of the diverging perspectives on the literary features of the DSS in general.²²⁸ It is of first importance to consider that there is a variety of opinions that

²²⁸ One of the questions that needs consideration in this study has been asked among scholars, and the answer to it defines the outcome of the investigation into question of comparison between types of literatures. Can the DSS be compared to the book of Matthew? Here is one principle that some have advocated with a degree of reason that will affect this research. 'It is of utmost importance that the methodological principles be applied to bodies of literature which represent compatible literary categories.', Przybylski (1980, p. 13). This remark is appropriate in the context of a comparison between Matthew and the DSS with regard to the meaning of righteousness in both literatures that have

characterise scholarly conclusions on the unity of the DSS. A brief survey of commentators' observations on the concept of righteousness in the DSS reveals a lack of consensus among specialists on this concept, thus reflecting points of disagreement on the literary 'homogeneity' of the DSS.²²⁹ It has been argued by some that this body of literature is the work of a single redactor, while others have pointed at elements of complexity reflecting an opposite position on the question.²³⁰

Consequently, on the question of the use of righteousness in the DSS, this means that there may be different meanings attached to it at times. The sense to be given to this concept of righteousness would be contingent upon the individual books and their literary specificities.²³¹ Comparative studies with regard to the meaning of קִדְּשׁ and הַקִּדְּשׁ in the DSS, and in the OT seem to reflect in their conclusions this divergence of opinion on their possible similarity in use.²³² For this reason, it seems appropriate to briefly mention the different positions on the meanings of קִדְּשׁ and הַקִּדְּשׁ as they have been construed in the DSS. This exercise only aims at

a common usage of the word. See also, the points made in this discussion by the scholars whose views are evaluated the 2nd chapter of Przybylski's monograph.

²²⁹ In light of the different discussions pertaining to the historical literary context and composite nature of the DSS, it is understandable that there may be divergent scholarly views on the meaning of some texts and concepts such as the one of interest in this thesis. For a brief overview of the different issues surrounding dates of writing and composition of the different components of this body of literatures, see Przybylski (1980, pp. 13–17); Geza Vermes (1962, pp. viii–xxxv).

²³⁰ Not only has it been argued that there are 'different stages' of belief developments transpiring through a synoptic view of those documents, but also, it has been mentioned that there is a possibility that there are more than one community unit forming the main Qumran community. This conclusion is made on the basis of a comparative analysis of the books and particular usages of some same words with different meanings. This phenomenon would possibly convey changing in concepts and evolutions in different beliefs, Przybylski (1980, p. 15); Huub van de Sandt (2005, p. 191).

²³¹ The difference in nature and content of the different books of the DSS such as The Manual of Discipline (1QS), The War Scroll (1QM) and The Damascus Document (CD) would possibly account for the literary differences they show. For instance, it is possible to divide and put together in groups the vast majority of accessible manuscripts on the basis of the content and nature of the writings. See Geza Vermes (1962) in his table of content, and about the different time periods that he suggests for the writing of those documents, in pp. 32–40, 95. See also, Florentino Gartiá Martínez Julio Treballe Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, pp. 52–3) for similar historical information, but with slight differences that illustrate the possibility of other perspectives. This shows a lack of absolute preciseness that should characterise attempts to comprehensively define this aspect of the studies of the DSS, although much work is still in progress.

²³² Przybylski (1980, pp. 16–17).

acknowledging the present state of diverging views and standpoints on the question, and the necessity in this research to give preeminence to the Matthean literary context as already established in the previous chapter. However, a consideration of these writings possibly shows why some scholars may have identified Matthew's usage of a pre-existing concept of righteousness with the DDS writings rather than with the OT.

In exploring the question of the concept of righteousness in the DDS, some have examined the meaning of רָצוּן and its cognates in relative isolation and in the individual books of that corpus. Also, others have opted for a consideration of its meaning as in the whole of the DDS.²³³ Since the present aim is to simply show some of the different methodologies and outcomes that exist on the question, it should be sufficient to exemplify the point by stating some of the positions held by some commentators. In Przybylski's assessment of some of the views on the meaning of righteousness in the NT as related to the same in the DDS, he presents diverse conclusions and gives his own thought on the question.²³⁴ Irrespective of the methodologies²³⁵ used by those he mentions, the outcome for them is that this concept of righteousness in the NT and in Matthew is derived from the OT use of רָצוּן and

²³³ See the 'homogeneity' question and the different outcome possibilities suggested, depending on the commentator position, according to Przybylski (1980, pp. 16–17). Also, see the analysis of Ziesler (1972, pp. 85–94) on the usage and meaning of righteousness in 'intertestamental writings' as integrating all the books of the DDS and Sirach.

²³⁴ Przybylski (1980, pp. 16–7), here refers to the works of several scholars for their understanding of the concept of righteousness in the NT and in Paul particularly, as compared to the same concept in the DDS in the context of the homogeneity of the DDS, and he disagrees with their methodologies and to some extent with aspects of their conclusions. This is to definitely mark the importance of recognising the value in acknowledging the literary specificities within the DDS that can change the outcome or better inform the comparison between Matthew and the DDS on the concept of righteousness. Hence his choice for analysing and to take into account 'not only the meaning of the various words connected with the root the root *ts-d-q*, but also their overall significance within the thought expressed by the individual writings.'

²³⁵ By methodologies, I mean whether they consider the meaning of 'righteousness' in individual books and separately or in the whole of the DDS without distinction between what characterises the different books and makes them perhaps different altogether.

הקדושה.²³⁶ They have generally concluded that righteousness is sometimes the gift of God to man, and at other times, the demand of God upon man as in the OT.

For Przybylski, the use of the concept of righteousness has a ‘provisional’²³⁷ function in the Gospel of Matthew. He states the obvious by emphasising that δικαιοσύνη is only used by Jesus in Matthew in contexts of ‘polemical situations and/or’ when he teaches ‘non-disciples or audiences comprising both disciples, and non-disciples’.²³⁸ This in essence would mean that the use of the word intended to address a connecting issue with those who had not become disciples. This observation might be relevant, but it seems somehow weak to determine the reason behind the use and role of δικαιοσύνη in the Gospel of Matthew, and therefore, to determine the meaning of it in the book. However, the main conclusion at which he arrives, and what concerns my interest the most is that in Matthew, the concept of righteousness is reflective of the main meaning of the same usage in the DSS.²³⁹ It is the demand of God upon man that is consistently in view in this Gospel. Although, he clearly identifies passages in the DSS²⁴⁰ where קדושה and הקדושה are interchangeably used, as in the OT, and referring to ‘God’s saving, gracious activity’,²⁴¹ the argument is that these are only exceptions. The primary meaning of קדושה, he argues, in the DSS, ‘refers

²³⁶ For Przybylski (1980, pp. 16–7) these conclusions are due to a failure on the part of these scholars to ‘grasp the contextual meaning’ of קדושה and הקדושה in the DSS.

²³⁷ ‘The concept of righteousness is used as a teaching principle leading from the known (contemporary Jewish teaching) to the unknown (the teaching of Jesus).’, Przybylski (1980, pp. 116–23).

²³⁸ This would imply that the real target is not the audience as it is, but those who had not yet become disciples, Przybylski (1980, p. 116).

²³⁹ There are, however, some instances as he mentions where this is not always the case, but the inconsistency observed in some passages of the DSS seems consistent with the usage of קדושה and הקדושה in the OT itself as he demonstrates it, Przybylski (1980, p. 120).

²⁴⁰ 1QS 10:11; 1QH 11:18; 1QM 18:8.

²⁴¹ Przybylski (1980, p. 120).

to man's conduct' and this is reflected consistently in Matthew in the usage of δικαιοσύνη.²⁴²

2.5.2 The Concept of Righteousness in the Tannaitic Literature

As mentioned before, the consideration of the TL in this research is based on formally acknowledging the fact that they have been part of the conversation on the subject. It is a brief consideration of the arguments that have been studied, but the depth that the discussion could reach will not take place here. Any extended examination of those writings would be beyond the scope of this research, and inconsistent with the direction in which it is going. Nevertheless, it could be argued that the TL, from an historical perspective, is an important body of writing which can be used in attempts to identify a variety of literary and historical contexts in the elucidation of certain NT texts as some scholars have done.²⁴³ The Gospel of Matthew in this case would have been written at some point within the period believed to be that of the 'Tannaim', between 'A.D 10 and A.D 220'.²⁴⁴ As with the DSS, there has been an attempt on the part of Przybylski to analyse and try to understand the meaning of Matthew's concept of righteousness in the light of the TL.

In his treatment of the concept of righteousness in the TL, the methodology he used was however, slightly different to the one used with the DSS.²⁴⁵ Again, we need

²⁴² Przybylski (1980, pp. 120–21), 'man's conduct' is in response to the demand of God upon man. It is one and the same idea that according to him is consistently meant by Matthew's use of δικαιοσύνη.

²⁴³ See, the analysis of F. P. Viljoen (2013) on the subject as he tries to understand the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in relation to the pre-existing sources that used the word an concept before Matthew.

²⁴⁴ For a detailed list of the books that compose these writings as for the time period of their writing, as well as some of the literary aspects attached to them, see Przybylski (1980, pp. 40–42).

²⁴⁵ As mentioned by the writer, he in fact, followed the same methodology of looking at the concept of righteousness in individual books of the Tannaitic corpus in his doctoral dissertation, but based on his conclusions, he decided that in this present volume, it was best to consider the question differently. He has looked at the concept of righteousness as in the whole of the Tannaitic literature. That is different from looking at individual books as he did with the DSS.

not be detained by the details of this study in terms of procedures,²⁴⁶ but we should rather go to the conclusion of it. The aim for bringing the issue of the TL being contextual information into the question of the Matthew's use of δικαιοσύνη is mainly pedagogical. As the defining of the micro and macro context of a text within a book is vital, so it is with the defining of the historical and literary context of a book within a library. The necessity of investigating the meaning of צדק and צדקה in this corpus cannot be ignored in any attempt to understand Matthew's concept of righteousness for these reasons. Again, this important work that was done can be consulted in full in Przybylski's monograph on the subject in all the details pertaining to an adequate study on the subject. It is not my intention to repeat the process in this thesis.²⁴⁷

Therefore, going to the conclusion of Przybylski's detailed study of the meaning the nouns צדק and צדקה in the TL, the similar points made earlier concerning the meaning of the same words in the DSS are raised. While 'at times' there is an 'overlap' of the meaning of צדק and צדקה in the TL, Przybylski says that this 'overlap should not be viewed as significant in determining Tannaitic usages' of these terms.²⁴⁸ He further concluded that in the whole of the TL, as exemplified in Tannaitic passages, such as in Sifre Deut. 277 on 24.13, where both צדק and צדקה occur, the meaning pertains to that of man's conduct.²⁴⁹ This would be the overall

²⁴⁶ This aspect is important, but it is not absolutely necessary in this research, which will not draw its conclusion from this writer's opinion on the subject. However, his work has been reviewed, and by many as mentioned before, who endeavour to tackle the subject of interest. See, Fenton (1982).

²⁴⁷ See, F. P. Viljoen (2013); Przybylski (1980); Fenton (1982).

²⁴⁸ Przybylski (1980, pp. 74–6).

²⁴⁹ Although, there some nuances (tsedeq-tsedaqah-tsaddiq) that need to be taken into consideration in this analysis of Przybylski from his own admission, which however, are not contradictory in essence, 'the righteousness terminology (tsedeq-tsedaqah-tsaddiq) is used to denote conduct which is properly religious.' (Przybylski, 1980, p. 76)

meaning attached to the concept of righteousness in this corpus.²⁵⁰ This overall meaning characterises the behaviour of man in response to the command of God. Righteousness, in the Tannaitic literature, according to Przybylski is ‘concerned with maintenance of a relationship based on the gift of God, but it is not the gift of God *per se*.’²⁵¹ In the Tannaitic literature, the concept of Righteousness would be essentially about the demand of God upon man.

In conclusion, whether it is in the DSS or in the TL, the overall meaning of righteousness is the same, according to Przybylski. It is the demand of God upon man or the response of man to God’s requirements. In both the DSS and the TL, according to Przybylski, this is the basis for understanding the meaning of the Matthean concept of righteousness. There is however, an element of contextualization that took place between the two writings. It is that Matthew would have only used the intellectual milieu of his time to give meaning to Jesus’ use of δικαιοσύνη and his instructions on righteousness.²⁵² This would allow the concept of being righteous before God as understood in the context of the Tannaim to find its equivalence in the Christian concept of being a disciple of Jesus. Thus, the Matthean δικαιοσύνη is a bridge that facilitates the understanding of the concept of righteousness for his readers who would have been part of the intellectual Tannaitic milieu. Whether this conclusion is accurate, and shared consensually with the rest of scholarship, or not, is a possibility to be considered. Whether it is reflective of the reality behind Matthew’s ideas or not does not constitute the main point that is to be made by this discussion. The main

²⁵⁰ There are numerous passages that are quoted and analysed in the third chapter of this volume that quite clearly expose the case that he is making for his understanding of the question here, see Przybylski (1980, pp. 39–76).

²⁵¹ Przybylski (1980, p. 76), here, the writer carefully reminds the reader that ‘the righteousness terminology’ in the Tannaitic literature is ‘concerned with behaviour rather than soteriology.’ This according to him is not to say that there is no rapport between the gift of God and the term righteousness in this body of literature.

²⁵² Przybylski (1980, pp. 116–23).

feature that appears from the depiction of the state of scholarship on this subject is that there is more than one understanding from which to draw a conclusion on the question.²⁵³

The various studies done on the meaning of צדק and צדקה in these bodies of literature simply acknowledge that there are two options from which to choose to determine their meanings. These two possibilities are drawn from the pre-dating OT usages of these words, and the contemporary DSS and TL understanding of them, which in fact might not be any different one from the other in essence. For argument sake however, and in case of any possible significant difference between the two, it is fairly possible that one option is favoured over the other for some reasons. This could be the case with regard to Matthew's intellectual milieu as defined, since the writings in question have a definite mutual historical chronological context. However, does it mean that Matthew could not have used the other possibility as a direct influence on his use of the concept of righteousness if it suited better his purpose? Besides, whether the Matthean δικαιοσύνη is about God's gift to man or God's demand upon man, both usages are identifiable first in the OT, then in the DSS and the TL. It could be inferred even at this stage, in view of the findings, that taking the perspective of an OT background for the concept of righteousness in Matthew, does not separate the text from its intellectual milieu. This position is the reason why I would prefer a decision on this matter to be made on the basis of an individual textual analysis of the Matthean δικαιοσύνη passages. One element that is clear already is that these passages are placed within the OT biblical background that seems to emerge out of the textual analysis conducted in chapter one of this thesis.

²⁵³ This fact is very clear in Przybylski treatment of the topic as he constantly mentions the different positions that provide alternative conclusions to his at every stage of his development of the question.

It is therefore now, a necessity here to examine the Matthean concept of righteousness, where δικαιοσύνη occurs in order to determine the meaning of it within the passage. It will be then decided on whether, or not Matthew has a concept of righteousness that is congruent with or different to either or both possibilities as established above. It will be clear whether the OT, the DSS or the TL influenced Matthew in his usage of this word. Although, the goal of this procedure is to establish the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew, it should primarily and ultimately help to expose the role of the same word in Mt. 3.15. This should in turn serve to shed light on the extent to which this verse has possibly shaped a specific Matthean context for the baptism pericope, as well as the meaning and significance of the baptism of Jesus. If the general consensus on the significance of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew is well established, the question of its provenance and meanings are far from being unanimous among scholars.²⁵⁴ I will now investigate to see whether or not δικαιοσύνη is consistently used with the same meaning in all of the Matthean texts, and what the meaning is in every specific instance. This is in view of establishing any possible pattern with this word in Matthew that will help to ultimately understand its usage in Mt. 3.15, and consequently, the meaning of the verse. This in turn should clarify the Matthean view on the question of the meaning of Jesus' baptism.

2.6 Interpretations of δικαιοσύνη in the Matthean Context

Δικαιοσύνη, which occurs seven times in Matthew, divides opinions in scholarship on the meaning or meanings it conveys within its immediate and larger contexts within

²⁵⁴ Piper (1983). See also the introductory part of this article that clearly states the point of the importance of this concept of righteousness in Matthew, according to scholarship, but also the difference of opinion expressed on the meaning and use of it in this Gospel, F. P. Viljoen (2013); Przybylski (1980, pp. 78–98). The views of leading contributors to the whole discussion on the concept of righteousness in Matthew, its meaning and significance represent the contemporary scholarly climate. The views, and methods of scholars who are referred to as thoroughly dealing with the subject are examined. Przybylski provides a broad spectrum of scholars who disagree in their conclusions on the question of the contextual aspects and origin of the Matthean concept of righteousness.

the Matthean Gospel.²⁵⁵ It has been argued for various reasons that δικαιοσύνη in all its seven occurrences in the Matthean context has consistently been used with the same meaning, on the one hand. On the other hand, there are those who think that the meaning is different at times, with both camps readily supporting their respective views.²⁵⁶ At the ends of the spectrum are two groups of which one claims that Matthew's concept of righteousness is that δικαιοσύνη is the 'gift of God to man'.²⁵⁷ The other group believe that righteousness in Matthew's view is 'the demand of God upon man'.²⁵⁸ A suggested reason for this mainly two-camp division is perhaps necessary to be quickly mentioned for the sake of clarity. This is without expanding on it, since there is no need for dealing extensively with this aspect of the question here, in terms of scholarly opinions.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁵ F. P. Viljoen (2013, p. 1). For some commentators, the interpretation spectrum is so large that Matthew's audience was supposed to find their own meaning to this word, according to everyone's understanding and abilities to connect with the pre-dating biblical usages of the word such as in the number of texts cited in the following commentary, Smith (1989, pp. 56–57). It is relevant to notice that the use of the adjective δίκαιος is also more prominent in the Matthean Gospel than in any of the synoptic ones. δίκαιος occurs 17 times in this Gospel. According to Piper (1983, p. 410), there is 'no exceptions in the use of *dikaioσύνη* and *dikaios* in Matthew to designate a norm for behaviour.' While the relation between the noun and the adjective is acknowledged and evidently helpful, and that the prominence of both in Matthew is an argument in favour of Matthew's particular attachment to the concept of righteousness more than others, the main focus in this study is the noun. There is here a justification for the interest of scholarship in Matthew's use of the concept of righteousness in his Gospel, even from socio-political perspectives, see this article, Wilson (2007).

²⁵⁶ See, Luz (2007, p. 56); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 326–27) as they expose a variety of views from others as well as their own, giving the impression that it would be difficult to clearly define without doubt a consistent meaning for δικαιοσύνη to which Matthew sticks, and that would allow a straightforward meaning for the word in Mt. 3.15.

²⁵⁷ See, Przybylski (1980, pp. 1–3) for a succinct list of the different commentators who have held this position, and their rationales as he defines the 'state of the question' at the beginning of his monograph. See also, D. Hagner (1993, p. 56) on the position of some scholars on the question.

²⁵⁸ Przybylski (1980, pp. 1–3); Wet and Kruger (2013, p. 4). It is also important to notice that some, also in more recent studies, have concluded that δικαιοσύνη in Matthew does not consistently mean one thing or another as it has been argued before (see footnote above), but it has been used with both meanings in this Gospel. See, Huub Welzen (2013); McCuiston et al. (2014).

²⁵⁹ This is not a survey-based study on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew. While it is necessary to expose the different positions that have furnished the discussion, the aim of this research is to deal with the question of the meaning of δικαιοσύνη within Matthew's own paradigms, and this thesis' defined exegetical procedure. As said in McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 5), 'the interpreter' must remain 'in the world of the text'.

This disagreement among scholars seems to spring out of the ground of differences of views on the historical settings of the Matthean community, and the general multi-layer background believed to be behind Matthew's use of δικαιοσύνη.²⁶⁰ Some scholars have thought that Matthew's use of δικαιοσύνη is similar to that of Paul. It is 'the gift of God to man'. Therefore, Matthew and Paul would be in agreement on the meaning of this term.²⁶¹ Proponents of this idea believe that these two would have shared the same understanding of the concept of righteousness. This significant role of δικαιοσύνη in Mathew would consequently, indicate the commonality of Matthew's view of righteousness and salvation with that of Paul. There would be points of interest in this argument that would be relevant in the discussion about the meaning of Jesus' baptism since in Mt. 3.15, the baptism of Jesus is the fulfilment of 'all righteousness'. The baptism of Jesus would then be the fulfilment of 'all' of God's gift to man according to this understanding.²⁶²

However, considering the above textual analysis of the passage and the divergent views already expressed, there seems to be enough evidence to support a specific Matthean use of this concept that serves an independent purpose in this Gospel. This position on Paul and Matthew sharing the same concept of righteousness is informative as to what the views are, but it is by no means conclusive as evidenced by the lack of scholarly consensus on the question. As demonstrated above, some scholars believe that Matthew does not use the term δικαιοσύνη consistently, and refuse to subordinate the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in one place to its meaning in

²⁶⁰ Przybylski (1980, pp. 3–8).

²⁶¹ Przybylski (1980, pp. 2, 3). The specific mention of Paul here is only due to the fact that he is the NT writer who uses this word the most and therefore, represents the idea or concept of δικαιοσύνην in this corpus. See the analysis of Piper (1983) on the way Przybylski has dealt with this particular point.

²⁶² See, McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 7); Anstey (2010) and how the developments and conclusions of these writers echo this thought to a great extent.

another place within Matthew.²⁶³ The outcome of this position is evidently that Matthew's concept of righteousness is necessarily different to that of Paul in their view. It seems that there are a variety of paths that are followed in attempting to deal with the issue. It has been shown by Przybylski in particular, that the reason for this contention on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη or the Matthean concept of righteousness is the failure to adequately identify the Old Testament and other background literature for this Gospel.²⁶⁴ The concept of righteousness in the OT, which had evolved by the time of Matthew, according to Przybylski, is different to that found in the Pauline epistles, into which context others have placed Matthew's use of δικαιοσύνη.²⁶⁵ He further infers that although there is an influence of the OT in the background literature of the Gospel of Matthew, it is indirect, hence the transitional use that he advocates. Therefore, he has claimed that it is against the background of the intellectual milieu of the Dead Sea Scroll and of Tannaitic literatures that Matthew's use of δικαιοσύνη is intelligible.²⁶⁶

Consequently, in the view of these various positions, which have led to no general consensus on a single understanding of Matthew's concept of righteousness, the sense of δικαιοσύνη must be examined in every passage of occurrence. However, whether or not Matthew's use of δικαιοσύνη is consistent in meaning in all the seven instances is of subsidiary importance at this stage. It is the meaning of the passage within its immediate and larger context that should be primarily exposed. Then the extent to which the origin or background of δικαιοσύνη is identifiable with the OT or with the DSS and the TL can be argued. The result of this will be crucially important for the interpretation of this term in general and in particular. Hopefully, this

²⁶³ Przybylski (1980, pp. 2, 3).

²⁶⁴ Przybylski (1980, p. 3).

²⁶⁵ The same idea is shared by others like for instance, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 326).

²⁶⁶ Przybylski (1980, pp. 4–8).

procedure will help clarify the sense of the declaration of Jesus in Mt. 3.15, and provide an adequate answer to the question as to what the baptism of Jesus means for Matthew. This in turn will inevitably produce elements of comparison, eventually, between a possible Matthean baptismal concept and the general concept of baptism in the NT as usually understood from the Pauline perspective. The main point, however, is to discover the meaning of Mt. 3.15 in the light of origin of Matthew's use of δικαιοσύνη in the context of the baptism pericope.

2.7 Summary of chapter 2

In this chapter, the exegesis of Mt. 3.15 exhibited the reality and tangibility of Matthew's determination to place Jesus' baptism within the OT scriptural fulfilment context that permeates his Gospel. Although there is no formula quotation used in this text to achieve this aim, Matthew's combined use of πληρῶσαι with δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 3.15 accomplishes this same goal. The assessment of the 'concept of righteousness' within Matthew's intellectual milieu, and according to scholarship, has brought to light two possible meanings for it in this Gospel. The first one is 'the gift of God to man' and the second is 'the demand of God upon man'. It was shown that there is no consensus or agreement among scholars as to whether or not Matthew uses this word consistently with only one meaning. In view of the literary unity shown in this Gospel, there is a need for a consideration of Matthew's usage of 'righteousness' that is reflective of this aspect. For this reason, I have determined that I should focus on ascertaining the usage and meaning of 'righteousness' within the OT-fulfilment literary and theological context that characterises Matthew's text. This will be the aim of the next chapter.

Chapter 3. The Concept of Righteousness in Matthew's Literary Context

3. A Matthean Use of an OT Concept of Righteousness

In this chapter, I will examine all the individual passages where Matthew uses the word 'righteousness'. I will attempt to define the nature of every usage in relation to the two main aspects that have been exposed as the 'gift of God to man' and the 'demand of God upon man'. In so doing, I will expose the best way to understand the meaning of 'righteousness' as being consistent in all the passages of occurrence, including the main passage of interest, Mt. 3.15. This analytical step will help clarify the meaning of this verse in its own context and within the larger OT-fulfilment literary context of the book.

3.1 Δικαιοσύνη In All The Matthean Passages

Although Mt. 3.15 sets the precedent for the use of δικαιοσύνη in the first Gospel, it would be more appropriate, methodologically, to leave this passage until I have examined all the other instances of occurrence. This choice is only preferred because ascertaining the meaning of Mt. 3.15 is the focal point of the research. Therefore, I will start with Mt. 5.6, where δικαιοσύνη occurs for the second time in this Gospel, and then I will proceed with the other passages as they subsequently occur. I will return to the main passage of interest in view of fulfilling the task of exposing the meaning and significance of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 3.15. Assessing whether there is a consistent use of the word with the same meaning in all the passages is significant in trying to assert the meaning of Mt. 3.15 in its larger context. In this proceeding, a more secure hermeneutical path should emerge and allow the very thought of Matthew in this passage to be captured. In other words, there will be a net

clarification concerning Matthew's understanding and use of δικαιοσύνη in every instance, but particularly in the context of his pericope of the baptism of Jesus.

It is noteworthy, as mentioned earlier, that most of the occurrences of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew, which is five times out of seven, take place in the passage commonly known in as the 'Sermon on the Mount' (SM).²⁶⁷ The fact that the use of δικαιοσύνη is spread in different sections that form this specific passage, the SM, is of no consequence to the textual reality of the unity of it according to Matthew's designed literary context.²⁶⁸ This possible identification of subjects, even at a micro level, illustrates the point made earlier that the whole story of Jesus' ministry, though divided in various sections, is one literary unit. The SM is to be contextually and textually considered as a homily of Jesus in time and space. If there were any need to

²⁶⁷ This observation is relevant for reasons that I will uncover and expand on as the study progresses. It must be noted at the start that commentators who recognise some of the specific literary characteristics of this Gospel have systematically remarked upon this point. See, F. P. Viljoen (2013), who echoes some of what has been said by others concerning the role of δικαιοσύνη in the SM that has been called, 'the Constitution of the Kingdom of heaven', and the use of the word, an 'identity marker', F. P. Viljoen (2013, pp. 1, 2); Thom (2009, p. 314) that 'plays a crucial role in the Sermon on the Mount'. See also, McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 2) and notice how the first pages of this article are intentional in conveying the importance of the literary aspects of this Gospel. This is because of the role that not just the author believes they play in telling the story, but also, because he has found support for this in similar views from other major commentators on this matter. The fact that Matthew's literary structure is so involved in the construction of the story, according to those observations, and that the unique and concentrated Matthean use of δικαιοσύνη is also one feature of this structure in the Sermon on the Mount, this concentration must have some inherent significance that needs to be considered. For further consideration on this point as for the significance of the δικαιοσύνη in the Sermon on the Mount in terms of how strategically the word is used in this passage, read, Thom (2009, pp. 314–38, 315).

²⁶⁸ Although there is an agreement among scholars on this point, it would be fair to say that this position could still be challenged in scholarly circles as noted in Thom (2009, p. 315). The attempt to fracture this entire passage into various unrelated units that would compose it, would not be supported by the literary context in which Matthew places the whole SM. See Davies and Allison (1988, p. 426) on this point of contextual and textual linkage. The evidence seems to be that there is a 'lower level' of identifiable units there than elsewhere. Thom's working hypothesis is instructive and could help in this discussion to accept Matthew's claim through his structure of the passage, that this is a very significant one-time speech of Jesus in terms of how he uses the concept of righteousness. For possible counter arguments on this point, see the views of some who do not think that the SM is one speech and the reasons for that position in, Viljoen (2011, p. 388) and also, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 422); Luz (2007, p. 213). My position here is to consider the passage as it is presented in its textual and literary context in order to deal with its content. In clear, here, it is a speech of Jesus as Matthew claims it to be in his writing.

demonstrate this point, internal evidence would suffice to this cause.²⁶⁹ One such piece of evidence among others is relative to some basic structural features of this passage.²⁷⁰ The SM begins in Mt. 5.1 and ends in Mt. 7.29 with no hint of any interruption in time, or a change of audience. The first verses of the passage are smoothly introduced by the last verses of the preceding chapter four. In Mt. 4.23-24 the context and settings of the SM are brought to attention as something that was of regular occurrence in terms of Jesus' activity, teaching people wherever possible. There could be here a blending of material from several teaching moments as it has been argued. Yet, the SM is the report of a single event that is separated from other undertakings within the story of Jesus's ministry because of its structure, length and content.²⁷¹ Also, the SM is brought to a clear closure by the words of Mt. 7.29 and 8.1, thus making clear the singleness of the event. Then, Jesus descends from the mountain that he had climbed in Mt. 5.1 before he delivered his speech.

There is no sign of discontinuity in time, space, or focus from the beginning of the fifth chapter until the natural closure of the speech in Mt. 7.29. The mention of this aspect may seem as stating the obvious from the reading and it may seem redundant to state it again. However, there could be some significance to this simple fact in the interest of the undergoing analysis concerning the use and meaning of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew. It may be important to notice that the SM, Mt. 5.1- 7.29, is

²⁶⁹ Mt. 4.25, and 5.1 are undeniably linked in the narrative by means of subject and vocabulary. In the first reference, there is a mention of ὄχλοι πολλοὶ that followed Jesus, and in the next verse it is the same τοὺς ὄχλους that Jesus saw before he went on the mountain (whether literal or not), from where he delivered the speech.

²⁷⁰ See the proposed outline in three major divisions by Thom (2009, pp. 315–17), *Exordium, Propositio, Probatio*, for the SM, through a 'rhetorical and thematic approach' of the text that seems to keep the integrity of Matthew's claim intact, and attempt to give another possibility to understand the SM's structure.

²⁷¹ These may be the very elements that would lead some commentators to think that this passage is too highly structured for it to be what it claims to be. For O'Donovan (2009, p. 21) the SM is a 'self-conscious compilation of teachings from dominical traditions', which structure and content as it can be observed, are not 'haphazard' but carefully 'considered'. This perspective is not unique and can be expressed in an attempt to recognise and make noticeable Matthew's structural complexity.

Jesus' most famous speech in the Gospel tradition and that the use of δικαιοσύνη in it is paramount.²⁷² This observation is indispensable since the answer to the question of whether or not Matthew uses δικαιοσύνη consistently in meaning will have to bring this passage under scrutiny. I will now begin the textual analysis on the Matthean use of δικαιοσύνη with Matthew 5.6 in the context of the above-established literary background for it.

3.1.1 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 5.6

Μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.

This phrase is at the heart of the first part of the pronouncement of blessings by Jesus upon some people of his audience. These people who fulfill *de facto* the criteria are the recipients of these blessings also called 'beatitudes'.²⁷³ Of such 'beatitudes', we count nine in total in Mt. 5.3-12. Μακάριος, 'happy, fortunate, lucky, blessed', expresses the state of 'joy' already experienced by those who can be identified, according to Jesus, by the characteristics mentioned in every pronouncement.²⁷⁴ In the case of Mt. 5.6, the state of blessedness results from the fact that these individuals desire to feed (hunger) and quench their thirst on δικαιοσύνη. They are μακάριοι because they 'hunger and thirst after' δικαιοσύνη and they 'will be satisfied' or

²⁷² Thom (2009, p. 314) sees the role of δικαιοσύνη in the SM as 'crucial'. The only parallel text found in the book of Luke and called 'the Sermon on the Plain', 6.20-49, is different to the Matthean text in several aspects, see O'Donovan (2009, p. 23) on the precise differences between the two texts according to his analysis. However, in this thesis the main diversion point to be considered is about the use of δικαιοσύνη.

²⁷³ Lindberg (2007, pp. 1-16). The point here in citing this author is more for his use of the expression 'Beatitudes' for the blessings pronounced in the SM, than for his personal interpretation, understanding and theological application of them, though interesting.

²⁷⁴ For the different interpretations and meaning of the word, see Friberg et al. (2000); Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988); *GELNT* (1998); D. Hagner (1993, p. 91); Luz (2007, p. 232), see, the LXX use of the concept encapsulated in μακάριοι in (Davies and Allison, 1988, pp. 431-34). Also, see Gundry (1982, p. 68) on the 'deeply religious sense' of the word and a greater 'emphasis on divine approval than on human happiness' that he attributes to it.

filled.²⁷⁵ It appears from context that the analogy of feeding is utilised to convey a spiritual reality.²⁷⁶ The μακάριοι are those who have God's favour, those whose courses are approved of divine authority, and therefore, as expressed by the use of a passive mood (they will be satisfied), they become the object of God's approval as a result of their attitude. This concept is well utilised in the OT and for this matter it echoes the sayings that contain the same word in the LXX.²⁷⁷

This approval of God seems to be demonstrated through the fulfillment (ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται) of the expectations of those who desire δικαιοσύνη as food and drink. It seems evident that this sentence constitutes a point of reflection with regard to interpreting 'to hunger and thirst' for δικαιοσύνη or 'righteousness'. This reflection is particularly needed because of the symbolism that seems to be implied through the use of δικαιοσύνη. A synoptic reading of the beatitudes indicates that only Luke in the 'Sermon on the Plain' (SP)²⁷⁸ has recorded some of the pronouncements found in Matthew. While on the one hand Matthew contains nine beatitudes, Luke on the other hand mentions only four of them in 6.20-23. This is an element of difference that is significant in this context with regard to the Q source-sharing theory between these two Gospels.²⁷⁹ It is an example of Matthew's specificity in telling the story of

²⁷⁵ The different English translations can vary, but most of them already mentioned in this thesis have a similar rendition of the text to the one above. However, it is noteworthy that all of the modern ones translated the word χορτάζω as 'satisfied' rather than 'filled' as in the KJV. This could perhaps hint at the fact that they understood the symbolic nature of the use of 'hunger and thirst' in this text.

²⁷⁶ The Lukan parallel, 6.21, seems to promote a more literal sense of this pronouncement since it does not contain the word 'righteousness' as in Matthew, and the hungering and thirsting could easily be interpreted as physical rather than spiritual. For such interpretation, see Lindberg (2007).

²⁷⁷ See in the OT, for instance, in Gen. 30.13; Dan. 12.12; Pss. 2.12; 89.12; 119.1; 127.5; Prov. 3.13 and μακάριος in T. Muraoka (2002, p. 253); (F. P. Viljoen, 2013, p. 3), who has stated that 'Matthew's Jesus used a standard literary form of the Hebrew Bible as found in Ps 1.1,2'. See also, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 432) for additional information on the use of the word and concept in Wisdom Literature.

²⁷⁸ O'Donovan (2009, p. 23).

²⁷⁹ I am here referring to the theory of the common source that Matthew and Luke shared for their writings, Q, as it is called. The fact that Luke does not use δικαιοσύνη at all in this 'Sermon on the Plain' and that it is mainly used in Matthew's version of the same (SM) has been one of the main factors to promote among scholars the redactional use of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew. On the question of

Jesus within a literary context that is his own and for particular reasons.

However, the most striking difference is not the length or number of the beatitudes they respectively present to the readers, but the clear separate level of implications attached to them. They seem different in the roles they aim to play in the hearing of the crowds around Jesus. Although five of the Matthean beatitudes are missing from Luke, a conclusive comparison between the two sets is still feasible in order to substantiate the above claim. The idea seems to be that Matthew's difference from Luke in this passage is consistent with his specific goal in telling the story of Jesus from a specific OT perspective.²⁸⁰ Luke's speech of Jesus as in Matthew is set in the context of a single specific event in time and space. In both texts, Jesus teaches one audience and presumably the same, but in Matthew, he says much more than what is contained in Lk. 6.20-23.²⁸¹ The end of this speech, the SP, is recorded in verse 49 and overall contains parallels with the SM, but there is no use in it of δικαιοσύνη as in the SM.²⁸²

In the first beatitude in both Gospels, there is already an element of distinction

redactional activities of Matthew within the Beatitudes, see the analysis and conclusion of Luz (2007, pp. 226–27) as this may be relevant to the whole of the SM in relation to the comparison between Luke and Matthew on this particular speech of Jesus.

²⁸⁰ Although, dealing with perhaps a slightly different point in this discussion, Luz (2007, p. 227) has stated that concerning Matthew's specificity in this part of the SM and in comparison to the SP, 'it must be admitted that in the additional beatitudes, there is a language which is strongly influenced by the Old Testament'. See, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 436–42) on the 'parallels' between the Matthean beatitudes and Isaiah 61.

²⁸¹ It has been argued by several, among whom O'Donovan (2009, pp. 22–23), that although much shorter than in Matthew, the Lukan version of Jesus' speech, the SP, can be structurally identified with that of the SM. Four out of five sections that compose the SM are present in Luke's text. The one absent is according to him the 'central section' or focal point of the SM. Although, I am not discussing O'Donovan's theological conclusion, this structural remark is of interest in the discussion about Matthew's careful arrangement of his material and aim when he uses with such intensity the word δικαιοσύνη in this SM.

²⁸² Read Lk. 6.17-49 cf. Mt. 5.1-8.1. It is observable that both sets, although different in their contents as already noted, similarly begin with the same teaching, the Beatitudes. This marks the opening of the speech of Jesus. Lk. 7.1 states that after he ended all his sayings, he went to Capernaum. The last bit of his sayings is then found in Lk. 6.49 and it parallels Mt. 7.26, 27 which is also the closing saying of his teaching session on the Mount. Thus, in spite of the differences in the middle parts and the geographical location from where it was delivered, there is structural and textual evidence that this is the same event, but recorded differently by reason of a difference in perspectives from the writers.

between them that perhaps is revelatory of their respective difference in perspectives and intents. Luke reads, Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί, ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, while Matthew reads, Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. There is a clear difference of not just language between the two statements and this even when they seem to convey the same basic idea. This common basic idea is that those who are ‘poor’²⁸³ will at some point be enriched with the possession of the kingdom of God, according to Luke, and for Matthew it is the kingdom of heaven that they will obtain. While the substantives used in each text to identify the nature of the βασιλεία are different, they do not change the notion of its ‘divine’ kind.²⁸⁴ However, this wording may suggest that there is more to Matthew’s statement with regard to the nature of the poverty or the kind of ‘poor’ and the solution to it in this beatitude. It is not just οἱ πτωχοί in Matthew as we have it in Luke, but οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι.²⁸⁵ The conditions as described in these two statements seem to imply circumstantial differences, which in turn would address different challenges.

Although the kingdom is to be theirs in Luke and in Matthew as a result of their situation, that is they are πτωχοί, in Matthew there is a difference. The addition of τῷ πνεύματι to πτωχοί is qualifying and expresses a more complex thought about

²⁸³ In both texts the word πτωχός means literally to be deprived of ‘goods’, and is ‘dependent on others for support’, see, Friberg et al. (2000); Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988); *BDAG* (1957, p. 896) that is being ‘destitute’.

²⁸⁴ It is common knowledge that the words ‘of heaven’ and ‘of God’ are interchangeable in the Gospels when they are individually used as *nomen rectum* for ‘the kingdom’, but it would seem as if Matthew favours the expression ‘the kingdom of heaven over ‘the kingdom of God’. In fact, he is the only one to use this expression in the Gospels, 32 times, while he uses the expression ‘the kingdom of God’ only 4 deliberate times and all outside of the SM. As for Luke, he is the one who uses the most in the Gospels, the expression ‘the kingdom of God’. This aspect of difference between the two begs the question about what the original expression must have been in the common passages, such as in Mt. 11.12 and in Lk. 16.16 in the context of the Q source discussion. Which one of these is redactional? This question is of some importance in this thesis, but the relevance of the point is first to do with a character of independence, rather than dependence.

²⁸⁵ It is reasonable to straightforwardly think that there is a major difference here between these two statements. It would generally take no explanation to understand what it means to be poor, while on the contrary, being poor in spirit needs clarification as to what it means.

the nature of their poverty as it echoes Isa. 66.2.²⁸⁶ This additional element should be considered as indicative of a more specific tone to the Matthean text than to the Lukan material about Jesus' SM and SP. One element of this specificity is highlighted in the use of *πτωχός* and its 'Hebrew equivalent' *אֲנִי* in the OT for 'those who are in special need of God's help', and a special tie between Mt. 5.3 and Isa. 61.1,2 is noteworthy in this context.²⁸⁷ This inquisitive reaction to the reading of Matthew's version is further exacerbated by the difference observed in the rest of this particular beatitude passage. With this in mind we then come to the first beatitude that contains the word under investigation here. Comparing Mt. 5.6 and Lk. 6.21, there is a plain difference between them that is again noteworthy. In this beatitude, although the imagery in terms of a fundamental physical need and the provision that God will make to satisfy that need remains invariable in both texts, the nature of the need is textually and qualitatively different in each. This difference is expressed through the addition of two words 'thirst' and 'righteousness', but it is mainly *δικαιοσύνη* that changes the nature of the need.²⁸⁸ This reading in turn may express Matthew's distinctive

²⁸⁶ The relationship between these two texts is very likely on the basis of the semantic field that the different words share in the OT and NT for 'poor'. See, *ταπεινός* and *ἡσυχίος* in Isa. 66.2 in the LXX version, cf. *πτωχός* in Mt. 5.3 according to Friberg et al. (2000); Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988). Also, it is the thought of the Hebrew text that Matthew seems to use through the explicit mention of *רוּחַ* that is *πνεῦμα* in the Greek and 'spirit' in English. In Isa. 66.2, saying 'poor and of a contrite spirit,' is as to say 'poor in spirit' which would be the thought conveyed by Matthew's expression in the beatitude. See, Brown (1907) for the Hebrew *אֲנִי* that is the equivalent of the Greek *πτωχός*.

²⁸⁷ According to Davies and Allison (1988, p. 443), there is a list of OT references, especially in the Psalms. However, one very important point that is made by Davies and Allison is that of a relationship between Mt. 5.3, 4 and Isa. 61.1, 2. This point could be further developed in terms of this textual, but also theological relationship between Mt. 5.3,4 and Isa. 61. 1, 2. In the latter, the word *πτωχός* is used in the context of the event depicted in the former. The saying of Jesus in Mt. 5.3 echoes that of Isa. 61.1 where the *πνεῦμα κυρίου* is the agent that qualifies, by *χρίω* 'to anoint', the one who *εὐαγγελίζω* 'brings the good news' to the *πτωχός*. The relationship between these two sets goes beyond their individual significance to evoke a prophetic connection between the story of Jesus in the Gospel tradition and the OT announcement of the Messiah. I will have to return to this connection later.

²⁸⁸ The other Matthean addition of the word 'thirst' is important to consider in the sequence and combination that it makes with the expression of interest in this verse, and the observation could be expounded upon, but here, I will just point at the aspect of a greater importance of the need that it may convey and later I will investigate it in more depth.

perspective on Jesus' intentions in this speech.

In Lk. 6.21 the text reads, μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες νῦν, ὅτι χορτασθήσεσθε, whereas in Mt. 5.6 it reads, μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται. Again, it seems evident that both texts deal with a common basic idea of satisfying some people's needs, but there is a strong indication that the Matthean text has a different meaning to it as distinctly shown in the choice of words. The Lukan text is unambiguous and straightforward. The now-hungry ones are going to be satisfied. This could be construed as an announcement from Jesus to the crowd that there was going to be a food distribution 'now' as people might have been hungry at that moment in time. There could even have been an expectation of that, and this would be no stretch of the text. It is even plausible that the audience came to this conclusion. The point here is that there is no preclusion to reaching such conclusion based on the statement, οἱ πεινῶντες νῦν, ὅτι χορτασθήσεσθε. However, coming to this inference on the basis of Matthew's pronouncement would prove a much more difficult and challenging task.

It is quite clear that the Matthean statement could not be interpreted literally by reason of its content. The οἱ πεινῶντες of Matthew, without the use of the adverb νῦν found in Luke, is accompanied by καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην. This extra piece of information given by Matthew seems to plainly set into perspective the analogical use of the words 'hunger' and 'thirst' and subsequently the spiritual context in which he places this beatitude. This is also congruent with the preceding piece in Mt. 5.3-4. Consequently, the question must be asked concerning Matthew's aim in this particular text. How does one hunger and thirst for righteousness? The use of the connective conjunction, καὶ, to coordinate οἱ πεινῶντες and διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην is

grammatically and syntactically significant here.²⁸⁹ In this case, καὶ is not purposed for simply connecting the two words as it may appear, but it is used to indicate a key addition that plausibly establishes the metaphorical nature of the expressions ‘hunger and thirst for righteousness’ in Matthew.²⁹⁰ This makes the latter part of the expression one that is defining, not just because it creates that difference with the Lukan text, but one that might be a key identifying link between Matthew and possible pre-existing text of the same nature. It is in this specific context that we first need to deal with the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.6.

By reason of the undeniable influence of the OT on the Matthean Gospel in general as previously established in this thesis, the logical step forward in clarifying the use and meaning of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.6 is to proceed with an investigation for a possible specific OT inspiration behind such a usage of δικαιοσύνη. Could it be that Matthew’s ‘addition’ of διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην is a means of referencing the OT-underlying thought of this text? Could this ‘addition’ simply be a re-use of some OT passages that possibly convey thoughts and ideas that are intended in his beatitude? It is noteworthy that in the OT we encounter the same idea of thirsting not for water, but for things that clearly evidence a metaphorical use of the verb διψάω much in the manner that it is used in Mt. 5.6.²⁹¹ There are a few LXX texts that explicitly show the repetitive analogical or symbolic use of the διψάω in the Bible and with which Matthew would have been acquainted.²⁹² It is significant that, although used at different times, places and by different biblical writers there is a consistent figurative

²⁸⁹ καὶ, being a the conjunction that usually means ‘and’ can be translated here as ‘also’ since it plays the role of an adjunctive conjunction. See, Wallace (1996, p. 671).

²⁹⁰ Wallace (1996, p. 671).

²⁹¹ διψάω, meaning to thirst, is used figuratively to express a longing and desire for, see Friberg et al. (2000); T. Muraoka (2002, p. 131) and the Hebrew equivalent.

²⁹² Whether or not the LXX is ‘Matthew’s Bible’ and that it is διψάω rather than ḥṣṣ for those who hold opposite views, it changes nothing in the fact that there is this figurative use of both words in the OT. See the discussion on Matthew’s use of the LXX in Stanton (1992, pp. 353–58); Osborne (2006, pp. 333–34); Nolland (2005, p. 28–33) and other commentaries used in this research.

use of the expression ‘to thirst’. For instance, in Ps. 42.1, 2, the writer, who is not identified,²⁹³ uses the imagery of a deer longing for water to express the longing of his soul for God. The first part of this poem is expressed as follows in verse 1, ὁν τρόπον ἐπιποθεῖ ἡ ἔλαφος ἐπὶ τὰς πηγὰς τῶν ὑδάτων and then it continues with οὕτως ἐπιποθεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου πρὸς σέ ὁ θεός.²⁹⁴

The use of ἐπιποθέω²⁹⁵ as the main verb in this sentence, both in the main and in the adverbial clause with οὕτως²⁹⁶ introducing the latter, establishes the intended comparison between the longing of the deer for water and that of the Psalmist for God. Seemingly, this first verse in Psalm 42 acts as the first couplet of a parallel structure that is formed with verse 2 as the second couplet in that structure. The aim of this literary form of expression is to eventually emphasise the message that is conveyed on the spiritual state of the writer. In the first part of this second verse we can tangibly observe the parallelism with the preceding statement, ἐδίψησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου πρὸς τὸν θεὸν τὸν ζῶντα. The two elements that establish this parallelism are the use of διψάω in place of ἐπιποθέω since they share the same semantic characteristics, and the previous comparison of the longing of the deer for water to the longing of the soul for God. In this OT text, we have an evident metaphorical or figurative use of διψάω that is similar to the use of the same in Mt. 5.6. Also, this is not an isolated

²⁹³ The fact the writer is not identified is an element that counts toward the idea that anybody apart from the those we know among the Psalmists could have written this poem using a common expression that is not characteristic of just one or a few.

²⁹⁴ The choice of the Greek text here is simply due to the NT correspondence in language. The Hebrew text presents the same idea on the point that is being discussed.

²⁹⁵ Although, this word primarily expresses ‘longing after’, ‘yearning for’ and ‘strongly desiring’ in both the OT and the NT, the context in which it is used in Ps. 42.1 leaves no doubt about the semantic range it has here and the meaning it is invested with in this text. See, Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988); T. Muraoka (2002, pp. 218–19) so, this word that expresses a deep desire for something is consistently used throughout the Bible and in this case it is for water. The Hebrew word is עָרַב, see Holladay (2000); *TWOT* (1980); Brown (1907) cf. עָרַב. In Ps. 42.1, each word is used with the same subject within the same context. This makes the point of the interchangeability of the two in this passage.

²⁹⁶ This adverb can be translated in different ways, but the main idea for the use of it in most texts is to establish the link between the sentences with the meaning of ‘likewise, in the same manner’ and so on, see, Friberg et al. (2000).

example of such usage of διψάω in the OT. There is evidence through a number of texts from different biblical writers for the same metaphorical or figurative usage of διψάω. This show that a number of specific OT texts could have inspired this specific Matthean usage of the word without causing any misunderstanding among the acquainted audience.

Another of those, for instance is Ps 63.1,²⁹⁷ which is clearly identified as of David when he was in a dry land without any water and desperately thirsting. Although in Ps. 63.1 the sentence structure is different to that of Ps. 42, to some extent, in ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεός μου πρὸς σὲ ὁρθρίζω ἐδίψησέν σοι ἡ ψυχὴ μου, David seems to convey the same message of thirsting for God through the imagery of a dry land needing quenching water. In Ps. 42.2 and in this last passage, the writer unequivocally and ultimately expresses his thirst for God or spiritual thirsting. In Ps. 84.2²⁹⁸ also, we encounter the same intended meaning than in Ps. 42.2 from the same David, while the LXX has ἐπιποθέω for the Hebrew הָסַב.²⁹⁹ Nevertheless, this change does not affect the similarity of these texts in meaning since we find these two Greek words, διψάω and ἐπιποθέω interchangeably used also in Ps. 42.1, 2.³⁰⁰ Again it is rather clear that Matthew is not pioneering the metaphorical or figurative use of διψάω in his Gospel because the same usage of it is found in the above references from the LXX.

Thus, on the basis of an OT historical use of such expression and the known relationship between Matthew and the OT, it may be reasonably suggested that

²⁹⁷ The numbering of verses is sometimes different in the English Bibles to that of the HB and the LXX. In this particular case, we need to look at verse 2.

²⁹⁸ In the King James Bible, the reference is Ps. 84.2, however, it is Ps. 83.3 in the Greek, and 84.3 in the Hebrew text.

²⁹⁹ This Hebrew word also shares in the semantic range of the previous ones, and therefore, is used in the same way as they are. For instance, in Ps. 17.12; 84.3, see, Holladay (2000); *TWOT* (1980); Brown (1907). The observation is that several Hebrew words could be used here in this way and their Greek translations are also more than one with yet the same basic meaning.

³⁰⁰ It is to be noted also that the Hebrew word for the thirsting 'soul' used in the text of Ps. 63.1 is the same as in 42.2, that is נַפְשִׁי, so that these two texts are really conveying the same thoughts and support the concept as existing and in use in the OT with the same expressions.

Matthew has possibly borrowed this figurative usage of the word and this symbolism from the OT texts. Identifying Matthew's use of *διψάω* as of OT origin could quite possibly be even more conclusive if there were a concurrent OT idea of spiritual hungering somewhere in this literature. The different tone and meaning of Matthew's saying from that of Luke in this beatitude is not without relation to what can be found in the OT.

As a matter of fact, it is the case that some OT passages contain the specific imagery about satisfying the hungry and the thirsty as found in the beatitude in Mt. 5.6 and Lk. 6.21. There are numerous instances in the OT where the imagery of hunger, thirst and God's satisfactory provision of these needs occur. For instance, this is the case in Pss. 34.10; 36.8; 63.5; 107.9; 132.15; 146.7 and Isa. 49.10; 55.1; 58.11. While the vast majority of these passages could easily be understood from the Lukan perspective of natural physical needs, there may also be a figurative use of these words as it happens in the Bible. The above reference in Psalms 42 concerning the thirst of one's soul for God is an example of this. There would be no stretch of the imagination in contemplating the possibility that these above and other texts of the OT may have been inspirational in Matthew's idea and spiritual perspective on such need.³⁰¹ Thus, understanding the difference of intention between Matthew and Luke regarding the beatitude under discussion is to think that the nature of the audiences' need is different in both.³⁰² It is appropriate at this point to propose that Matthew

³⁰¹ See, for instance, Isa. 43.3; 55.1, 2, among other OT texts, in which there is a clear parallel made between the physical and the spiritual dimension of God's action to satisfy the thirsty and the hungry soul. It has also been argued that this beatitude 'reflects the language of Ps. 107 (LXX 106)' and there is a specific imagery connection there with Matthew in terms of the 'thirsty' and the 'hungry' whom God 'fills', both in Matthew and in Ps. 107.9, see D. Hagner (1993, p. 93). Other commentators see more LXX relations to this Matthean beatitude. See, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 451–52); Gundry (1982, p. 70) who says about Matthew's Beatitude here that 'once more he conforms Jesus' words to God's word in the OT'.

³⁰² Commentators are generally more interested in exposing their ideas on what the meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* is in this passage, but they also recognise the point that is made above concerning the

spiritualises Jesus' statement, while a literal understanding of Luke's version of the same poses no hermeneutical difficulty.³⁰³

Nevertheless, the question concerning the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.6, enlightened now with the above textual and contextual considerations, needs to be fully answered. Is δικαιοσύνη in this passage the gift of God to man or the demand of God upon man? The answer to this question seems polyvalent. On the one hand and quite simply, those who are thirsting for the gift of God to man will be satisfied and it seems a plausible logical interpretation.³⁰⁴ On the other hand, it can be argued that those who are thirsting for the demand of God upon man to be fulfilled in their lives, in other words, thirsting for divine direction from God and obedience to him will also be satisfied.³⁰⁵ However, looking at the metaphorical use of thirsting and hungering with the use of δικαιοσύνη in this Matthean beatitude is informative in the light of a possible connection between Mt. 5.6 and the OT perspective found in Ps. 42.1, 2 and Ps. 84.2, for instance. The latter view contributes to the debate in the sense that it may clarify the longing, ἐπιποθέω, of the soul, ψυχή, for God as in Ps. 42.1, 2 in terms of defining aspects of what it may involve. In Ps. 84.2 the same terms are

specific need that Matthew is dealing with here. See, D. Hagner (1993, p. 93); Luz (2007, p. 238); Davies and Allison (1988, p. 451).

³⁰³ While the audience's need is unequivocal in Matthew, it should be noted that in Luke there is also this sense of a greater need than the physical side of things that is palpable. 'Even in Luke=Q, the hungry are men who both outwardly and inwardly are painfully deficient in the things essential to life as God meant it to be', Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 451–52).

³⁰⁴ This position has been that of several scholars on the question, while others have rejected the idea. The reality is that there is no general consensus on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in this text. In fact, according to Luz (2007, p. 237), 'There are three possibilities of interpretation'. He mentions, (1) human behaviour, (2) a divine gift or God's power, (3) a combination of the two, God's covenant order as gift and task. See various definite positions in Przybylski (1980, p. 96) as some others are more cautious in pointing out only the likelihood of their position, Kingsbury (1986, p. 70) even when it can be substantiated by texts construed as evidence of their thinking. The point is that the answer could be reasonably different according the reader's perspective on Matthew.

³⁰⁵ Others who think that this interpretation of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.6 is more consistent with the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in previous verses hold this position. The reason for that being as Przybylski says, the fact that δικαιοσύνη in this text is redactional. Since the Lukan text does not have this word, Matthew would have added it to suit the perspective of the whole of his Gospel. See, Przybylski (1980, p. 97). See also, Kingsbury (1986, p. 70) in his explanation as to why this interpretation is less fitting than the other.

used, ἐπιποθέω, ψυχή and the longing is defined in terms of being connected to God through the keeping of his law as given. This idea is expressed through the reference to a specific part of the Jewish temple, the αὐλή, where people in response to God's demand upon man offered sacrifices.³⁰⁶

Thus, it would not be strange to think of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.6 as a longing for the demand of God in one's life since David who is more in view in this Gospel than in Mark and Luke is characteristic of this view in the OT.³⁰⁷ It is noteworthy that Matthew more than anyone within the synoptic Gospel tradition refers to this OT character as key to his story of Jesus.³⁰⁸ While both interpretations are possible taking into account Matthew's specific literary construction, a clearly flowing one-literary unit, the second perspective might be more appropriate and consistent with an OT-anchored Matthean perspective of Jesus' story.³⁰⁹ Therefore, in this text, δικαιοσύνη

³⁰⁶ Upon reading about the Levitical prescriptions in terms of procedures for offering sacrifices, it is very clear that they are divinely given through Moses and nothing is left to human arrangements when it comes to the way of doing things in that circle. This is very clear from the start of the book. Read Lev. 1.1-10 and see that there is a right way of doing these things that is expressed by divine command. This is part of the law.

³⁰⁷ Not only this point about David's experience with God is demonstrated in the different narratives in the Bible, for instance, in life situations when David 'enquired of the Lord', see, 1 Sam. 23.4; 30.8; 2 Sam. 2.1; 5.19, 23, but especially in the Psalms. It is there that the principle of wanting to know the requirements of God is more strongly advocated by the character, so that he may walk accordingly. See among many possible references, Psalms 119 which entirely deals with the issue of the revelation of God's law and the keeping of it as a priority for David. It is noteworthy that in the Psalms that are attributed to David, Psalms 119 (LXX, 118) is the one that contains the greater number of occurrences of the word δικαιοσύνη, 14 times. See, vv 7, 40, 62, 75, 106, 121, 123, 138, twice in 142, 144, 160, 164, 172.

³⁰⁸ Statistically, and perhaps theologically, Matthew's reliance and reference to David as one of the most prominent figures in the process of identifying Jesus as the Messiah is indisputable. Mark and Luke refer to David respectively, 7 and 12 times, while Matthew has him mentioned 17 times in his Gospel. The difference between Matthew and Luke can be accounted for in the fact that Matthew's genealogy alone at the very beginning of his Gospel contains no less than 6 references to David against 1 in that of Luke. See comments on the emphasis of Matthew on David in Gundry (1982, p. 13) who suggests at some point in the narrative that the intention might have been to present David rather than Jesus as the son of Abraham. See also, Smith (1989, pp. 31-34) for whom the pivotal point in the frequent reference to David 'the only name among all the 46 in the genealogy to appear with a title: David, the King.', is to point to the kingship of Jesus.

³⁰⁹ Commentators agree that the book of Matthew is carefully put together, but most of them seem also to believe that there are so many units composing this Gospel that a claim about the whole being a one-literary unit may be a challenge to many. However, one of the main themes of the whole that permeate all those individual units and consolidates the view in this thesis is the theme of discipleship. See how the question of 'discipleship and littleness' is covered in Grams (2004) as a permeating point in this

would be ‘the demand of God upon man’. In Mt. 5.6, those who hunger and thirst to obey God will be satisfied. This view is concurrent with that of the personal responsibility to respond to God through discipleship that seems to run through the SM.³¹⁰ This interpretation of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.6 could be confirmed by investigating the same word as it occurs only four verses later in the same breath almost, in Mt. 5.10. This is the next occurrence of δικαιοσύνη to be examined.

3.1.2 Δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.10

In Mt. 5.10, based on the literary structure of the passage, δικαιοσύνη seems to be logically used in a textual and contextual continuity with the previous occurrence.³¹¹ Syntactically, δικαιοσύνη is a moral or spiritual quality for which those who possess it suffer persecution.³¹² As in the previous text, there is also what seems to be a parallel saying in Lk. 6.22.³¹³ Here also, there is a difference between Matthew’s version and

Gospel. In this article, (pp. 117-19), there are some charts through which Grams exhibits clearly the point that he makes about Matthew’s unique approach to the question of discipleship.

³¹⁰ See Grams (2004, pp. 119–20); O’Donovan (2009);

³¹¹ Matthew’s Beatitudes is a unit within the SM that has been recognised as ‘organized into two stanzas of four each (5:3-7, 7-10) with the ninth (5:11-12) in somewhat different form sounding a powerful crescendo.’ See this remark in, Smith (1989, pp. 78–79), who actually highlighted that ‘poetry and symmetry are not the least of Matthew’s nine beatitudes,’ before he made the preceding remark.

³¹² It can be argued without doubt that δικαιοσύνη is a moral quality, on the basis of the passage content and structure, again. In Mt. 5.7, 8, 9, the three preceding Beatitudes, those ‘blessed’ are so, because of moral qualities, such as being ‘merciful’, ‘pure in heart’ and ‘peacemakers’ according to the KJV. In Mt. 5.10, there is a continuity of the mention of moral qualities encapsulated in the word δικαιοσύνη. Therefore, it could be argued that the relationship between the first and the second occurrence of δικαιοσύνη is straightforwardly tacit. Several relevant points have been made in this sense in Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 459–60), who propose that there is an ‘*inclusio*’ that is ‘formed between the first and the eighth beatitudes.’ See also on this point in, D. Hagner (1993, p. 95). Also, the relationship between the virtues mentioned and the reward that is offered to those who possess them, point to the same message being delivered differently. See, Luz (2007, pp. 241–42), who thinks that this verse ‘reinforces once more the two main aspects of the whole series, δικαιοσύνη and the kingdom of heaven’.

³¹³ Scholars do not necessarily agree on this. For instance, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 459), who mention some others who share the same view, believe that ‘there is no counterpart to this in Luke and no evidence that the verse ever stood in Q.’ This is not the view of Gundry (1982, p. 72), who in passing, highlights the OT inspiration of this Matthean text from Isaiah 61. Although, there is no clear statement of fact from D. Hagner (1993, p. 95) on the relationship between Mt. 5.10 and Lk. 6.22, he seems to see, indirectly, a connection between the two. Hagner, in his understanding, says of the ninth Beatitude, Mt. 5.11, 12, it ‘is in effect an elaboration of the preceding beatitude’. If this is the case, then there is a relationship between Mt. 5.10 and Lk. 6.22 that needs to be openly recognised and they should

that of Luke in this beatitude. In Matthew those who are ‘persecuted for the sake of δικαιοσύνη’ are blessed, whereas in Luke it is the same blessing, but for ‘the sake of the son of man’, not for righteousness’ sake.³¹⁴ Although διώκω³¹⁵ used in Matthew does not occur in Luke, there is a common context through semantics that indicates the parallel between the two texts.³¹⁶ In both cases in Matthew and in Luke, it is clear that the persecutions, hatred, excluding and casting out of society are equivalent situations for the same reasons. For Matthew, it is for the element of δικαιοσύνη in their lives that they are persecuted. In Luke it is for the sake of τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in their lives that they are hated and cast out, but in both cases they are disciples of Jesus.

Matthew more than anyone else in the synoptic tradition uses the expression, τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου,³¹⁷ although it is still quite a small number of times, Mt. 12.32; 24.27; 30; 37; 39. However, it is the context in which this expression is used in Matthew that is relevant here. In the first instance, as in the above list, it is in the context of a controversy between Jesus and his opponents concerning good deeds he performed, but which they judged as evil. In other words, he would have done the will of God through the power of God’s Spirit, but would have been rejected for that as having done evil. This expression, τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is used in this context, his

be viewed as parallel texts. The same relationship between Mt. 5.11, 12 is acknowledged by Nolland (1989, p. 284). In spite of the preceding remark by Davies and Allison on the difference between Lk. 6.22 and Mt. 5.10, they have stated that ‘5.10 is a bridge or transition to 5.11-12.’ Thus, in my sense acknowledging the relationship between Mt. 5.10 and Lk. 6.22 in the end.

³¹⁴ Matthew is said to be redactional in every respect with this Beatitude, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 459); Luz (2007, p. 241), but he also has the same thought as Luke concerning the persecution of the disciples by ‘hatred’ for his ‘name’s sake’ in Mt. 10.22.

³¹⁵ This word means to drive out, to persecute, to expel, to pursue, to press, Friberg et al. (2000); Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988); *EDNT I* (1990); *BDAG* (1957, p. 254).

³¹⁶ The point is made in Gundry (1982, p. 73) that in Lk. 6.22 there is a context of ‘hating and excluding’, and although, Matthew does not use the same word as Luke, in his beatitude, the cause for the ill-treatments of the disciples by men is the same. They are ‘hated,’ and ‘excluded’ in Luke because they are ‘disciples’ of Jesus and ‘for Matthew a disciple is righteous by definition’. Therefore, ‘righteousness is the common ‘occasion’ and ‘cause’ for persecution.

³¹⁷ This expression seems to be found only in Matthew’s and Luke’s Gospels within the synoptics, and it is used respectively 5 and 4 times.

auto-identification with God with regards to his actions, but also of his condemnation of those who fail to recognise him for who he claims to be. Although τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is found eleven times in the Greek OT, the Matthean messianic context in which it is used leaves only one possibility where it could identify with LXX, and that is in Dan. 7.13.³¹⁸ For the rest of the occurrences of this expression in Matthew, they are all found in the most apocalyptic chapter of this Gospel.³¹⁹ The immediate context in which this expression is repeatedly used in Matthew 24 is two-fold in one setting. It is about the coming of Jesus with heavenly power and divine glory, a scene that could effortlessly be reconciled with Dan. 7. It also is a context of judgement for the inhabitants of the earth with an outcome that depends on how they obeyed Jesus' words in their lives.

The notion of the Son of man in Matthew conveys the idea of identifying the divine authority of Jesus to judge people according to how they have related to him. This understanding is congruent with the notions of relating to Jesus as the gift of God to man and also as one who demands of man a response to his requirements. In other words, there would be no conflict between δικαιοσύνη and τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in Matthew in terms of the message they convey in context. However, the difference between these texts and particularly the choice of Matthew for δικαιοσύνη must be accounted for. If Mt. 5.10 preferred the expression 'for the sake of righteousness' to the Lukan 'for the sake of the Son of Man' it is because Matthew is emphasising a

³¹⁸ Although, υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου can be found in the following OT texts, Num. 23.19; Pss. 8.5; 143.3; Job 16.21; 26.6; Jer. 2.6; 27.40; 28.43; 30.12, 28, it is only in Dan. 7.13 that a connection with the title for Jesus in the two Gospels seems possible. This is due to the relationship between the apocalyptic and eschatological context in which the expression is used in this OT passage and the messianic context in which it is used in these NT texts. See, Howes (2013, p. 4). The whole discussion about the linguistic features, origin and usages of this expression within scholarship has been, and may be a matter of debate for a long time to come. However, the point here is the relative agreement about where it comes from historically or not (see the different scholars cited in this article, see how they are split in two camps) and how it is used to identify Jesus in the Gospels no matter the side taken in the diachronic aspects of the different views.

³¹⁹ This observation is concurrent with the idea that the link between the expression in the Gospels and the OT is materialised in the context in which it is used in both Testaments.

point in the context of the SM. This point is that of the personal responsibility of individuals to be faithful to God regardless, and the reward that will come with it in the future if they are patient. In Mt. 5.10 δικαιοσύνη would be the tangible and essential element by which one would be judged worthy of the kingdom of heaven that seems to function with righteousness, according to Mt. 6.33. It seems that δικαιοσύνη in this text, alike in the previous one, is the response of man to God's demands.³²⁰ The Lukan expression about 'the Son of Man' being the reason for the ill-treatments of the followers of Jesus is not as specific as to state their actions and way of life. In Matthew, the use of δικαιοσύνη is to define and make totally unambiguous the nature of the actions of Jesus' followers and what it generates against them in return. They are persecuted because they do what Jesus asked them to do. They conduct themselves according to divine requirements.³²¹ At this point there seemingly is a textual, syntactic and contextual consistent use of δικαιοσύνη between Mt. 5.6 and 5.10.³²² This consistency needs to be confirmed or not as running through the book by the analysis of the other references like the next one that is found in the same chapter. This is Mt. 5.20 that we need to turn to now.

3.1.3 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 5.20

It seems quite straightforward to come to a sense of what δικαιοσύνη would mean in this sentence just by simple contextual, syntactical, grammatical observations along

³²⁰ Gundry (1982, pp. 72–73) in this commentary has conclusively identified a number of OT texts behind this Beatitude of Matthew, while sharing the same conclusion on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in this text as in this thesis.

³²¹ See the OT texts possibly behind the Beatitude in its immediate context, Pss. 15.1; 24.3–4; Isa. 13.49; 25.32; 51.7; 66.5, according to Gundry.

³²² It seems evident that δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.10 is the demand of God upon man, see, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 459–60); Przybylski (1980, pp. 98–99) declares that 'The majority of scholars agree that in 5.10, righteousness refers to Man's conduct, that is to say the demand rather than the gift of God.' see also, D. Hagner (1993, p. 94), who calls the reason for the persecution of the disciples, 'their loyalty to God'. This can only mean that they obeyed God's requirements above and first of all. This is their conduct.

with some consideration for Matthew's literary flow.³²³ Indeed, one of the first elements that are unavoidable is the fact that this statement begins with an inferential conjunction, γάρ.³²⁴ This is to say that δικαιοσύνη in this verse comes as the main subject in the conclusion of a matter that has been discussed earlier in this chapter that constitutes the first part of the SM. In actual fact there is clear evidence of the connection through textual and contextual elements between the last usage of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.10 and this one in verse 20. This connection is made through the use of the expression ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν in Mt. 5.10, the allusion of it in v 12, 16 and the clear mention of it again in v19 twice, τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν, before it occurs again in Mt. 5.20. It is noteworthy that it is in this chapter 5 that the greatest concentration of the use of δικαιοσύνη is found in Matthew as it is the case for the overall use of the same in the SM, chapters 5-7. This may point to consistency in usage and meaning even before formally examining individual occurrences. In this sense, there is a clear line of reasoning that appears on the question.

Also, the subject matter in this passage, Mt. 5.11-20, is straightforward with regard to its content, as it has to do with the role of the disciples of Jesus in the world. This role is determined by the relationship between the law, its importance to God's work and message and the obedience the disciples to God through their keeping of it. The imagery of the 'salt of the earth' and the 'light of the world'³²⁵ that Jesus is using

³²³ It is noteworthy that this verse is made of a single-sentence structure to conclude on what was said just before.

³²⁴ See, *GELNT* (1998). It seems rather clear here according to the immediate context that the force of this particle, as described in this article, is conclusive. See also Wallace (1996, pp. 666, 674).

³²⁵ 'For people as lights' as Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 475–76) put it, it is a 'very common metaphor' whether that is in the OT as mentioned in this commentary or in the NT. Among the OT references given, of which Isa. 49.6; 60.1, one that is of particular interest for this part of this thesis is Isa. 42.6. The relevance of this text is at least three-fold. First, it has been continually interpreted as a messianic prophetic text in its immediate context, second, it also contains Matthew's special word, δικαιοσύνη and third, Jesus is referred to in connection with it and he refers to himself through its usage as the light of the world in the Gospel tradition, Lk. 2.32; Jn 1.4, 5; 8.12; 9.5; 12.36. See also, on the metaphor of light in the Bible, D. Hagner (1993, pp. 99–100) who identifies the OT references that are relevant to Matthew's use of this metaphor.

in verses 13-16 cannot be dissociated from the concept of obedience to, and immutability of ‘the law’ as in the OT that he emphasises in verses 17-19 and of which verse 20 is the conclusion.³²⁶ In Mt. 5.20, δικαιοσύνη has a quantitative and comparative element attached to its use. It qualifies the disciples’ obedience to the law as the righteousness that Jesus wishes them to have in greater portion than the scribes and the Pharisees. Again, δικαιοσύνη in that greater portion is the element without which the kingdom of heaven will not be accessed. Δικαιοσύνη in this passage is the qualifying attitude by which the disciples show themselves worthy of this kingdom as in Mt. 5.10. Δικαιοσύνη must be possessed and expressed by the disciples in Mt. 5.20 for them to enter the same kingdom of heaven as in Mt. 5.10.³²⁷

Furthermore, the syntax in this verse through the combined usage of περισσεύω³²⁸ and πολὺς³²⁹ with δικαιοσύνη as their subject matter is rather indicative of the intended meaning for δικαιοσύνη. The semantic choice within the SM context indicates that the physiognomy of this quantitative element is dependent on the willingness of those who possess it. The immediate context of this beatitude is plainly one that addresses behaviour, spiritual conduct, total obedience expressed through the response of man to the Law (his conduct) or to the scriptural demands of God.³³⁰

³²⁶ Mt. 5.20 is ‘what Dale C. Allison calls the “core” of the discourse’, Garlington (2010, p. 480). For an appreciation of the discussion on varied views that this passage and particularly Mt. 5.17-20 has generated among scholars, read the whole of Garlington’s article. See also, commentators such as Luz (2007, pp. 255–72), who believes these passages to be ‘the most difficult ones of the Gospel’. Also, Gundry (1982, pp. 78–84) who thinks that the ‘clarity’ of Matthew’s ‘portrayal of Jesus as the greater Moses attains its greatest’ point in the latter passage. According to Gundry’s treatment of this passage, it is where the OT influence of the account of the life and teachings of Jesus in Matthew is the most evident in terms of the OT-fulfilment concept that runs through this Gospel.

³²⁷ See, Stanton (1992, p. 150). Although, this remark is made in the context of a perceived anti-Jewish polemic in Matthew, the point here is the relevance of the interdependence between these two verses that is underlined by Stanton.

³²⁸ See, *GELNT* (1998); Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 816–18).

³²⁹ See, F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (1979).

³³⁰ Garlington (2010); Bornkamm et al., n.d. (pp. 35, 159–64). With various positions within scholarship on Mt. 5.17, this text has been one of those used in the ‘antinomian’ problem within the Matthean community that some scholars see as in part behind the writing of this Gospel. The argument being that Matthew is tackling those who had thought that the observance of the Judaic law was no

Even the choice of characters, σὺ³³¹ against the γραμματεὺς³³² and the Φαρισαῖος,³³³ in this comparison seems to be orientated towards defining the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.20. This obedience-response attitude is what the disciples, the scribes and the Pharisees must present as a sign of their worthiness of the kingdom of heaven. What would δικαιοσύνη mean then here, if the choice were between the gift of God and the response of man to God in this context? What should the disciples exceed the scribes and the Pharisees in to show themselves worthy of the kingdom of heaven? Quite simply, there is no challenge as to the natural meaning that δικαιοσύνη must have here in the light of this analysis.³³⁴ In consideration of the above elements, it has to be the response of man to God's demand because it is the most fitting meaning in this text.

Therefore, in line with the two preceding texts, Mt. 5.6 and Mt. 5.10, the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.20 is that of the response of man to the requirements of God. Of these three occurrences of δικαιοσύνη in the fifth chapter of Matthew, this one seems to confirm the meaning of the expression in the preceding ones with great clarity from context and their interrelation. It is the last occurrence of δικαιοσύνη in

longer binding within a difficult-to-establish Jewish-Christians setting in which the text is thought to have emerged. See the different discussions and viewpoints about Matthew's proposed perspectives on Jewish and Christian settings in, Stanton (1992, pp. 113–68); Davison (1985, pp. 634–35); Bornkamm et al., n.d. (pp. 24–38). According to David C Sim (2011, p. 185), on the basis of Mt. 5.17-19 among some other texts, it was the issue of the observance of the Law that prompted Matthew to intent to replace Mark's Gospel within the Matthean community with his own.

³³¹ In the context of the SM, Jesus is speaking to an audience that is made up of his disciples and anyone else who is listening with good intents, and this would be included in this word, σὺ.

³³² The main function of the scribes was to deal with copying and teaching the Scriptures, see Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988); *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, p. 206).

³³³ These are the interpreters and teachers of the Law, and they should know the requirements of God from the scriptures, see Friberg et al. (2000); *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, p. 1049).

³³⁴ Bornkamm et al., n.d. (p. 38). This conclusion, however, is not one that reflects unanimity among scholars. For some, it is the demand of God, for others it is the gift of God and for some others it is both at the same time. In Przybylski (1980, pp. 78–87) there is an informative list of scholars and their divergent views on the same subject. This variety of the meanings given to δικαιοσύνη in this section illustrates the challenge that scholars face in trying to determine their interpretation of a text. It is not a simple issue, but it could be that those interpretations are based on the assumptions they make on the text because of external elements, for instance, the historical settings in which they tentatively place the text, rather than looking at the text itself in its own context. This is generally the case for the Gospel of Matthew. See, Sim (1998).

this chapter, but the most straightforward for this part of the SM as to the sense with which Matthew has been using this word. Up to this point, he has been consistent in attributing to δικαιοσύνη the sense of a response of man to God's requirements or God's demand upon man.³³⁵ However, this SM contains two more counts of δικαιοσύνη that need to be investigated as they follow. Now let us look at Mt. 6.1.

3.1.4 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 6.1

As mentioned earlier, the SM is a speech-unit in time and space. It should be expected of the writer to express continuity of thought even when parts of the speech form new sections and chapters in its written form as it is the case presently with Mt. 6.1. A look at the immediate context of Mt. 6.1 is sufficient to evidence this thought.³³⁶

Δικαιοσύνη in this verse, regardless of the place or role is attributed to its use,³³⁷

seems well connected to the matters of the preceding chapter 5.³³⁸ The numerous

³³⁵ In Przybylski (1980, p. 84), although, analysing the position of several scholars on this text, concludes that δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 5.20 'refers to the conduct demanded of the disciples, a conduct characterized by the meticulous observance of the law.' See also, the conclusion of other commentators such as Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 499–500), who state that "righteousness" is therefore, a Christian character and conduct in accordance with the demands of Jesus'. Another position to consider is that of D. Hagner (1993, p. 109), who in spite of his efforts to disagree with the 'quantitative' practical sense of obedience to the law or teachings of Jesus seen in δικαιοσύνη and advocated by Luz (2007, p. 270), still cannot depart from it. However he defines δικαιοσύνη in this passage, he ends with saying, 'To follow that teaching is to follow the path that leads to perfection.' The question is how does one follow a teaching as a pre-determined 'path' found in the 'Torah', if not by obeying the requirements therein?

³³⁶ It is noteworthy that the syntactic and grammatical features of the last verses in chapter 5 and the first verses of the sixth chapter, present the evidence of them being linked. In Mt. 5.48 and 6.1, 2 the use of the imperative mood and the form of speech from Jesus to the audience is the same, plus, the use of the inferential particle οὖν in verse 2 emphasising this link. See also, Gundry (1982, pp. 100–2); Przybylski (1980, p. 87).

³³⁷ 'Mt. 6.1 forms the hinge to introduce critique of inappropriate behaviour' F. P. Viljoen (2013, p. 3). Mt. 6.1 is the beginning of the 'new and final section' of the SM, Gundry (1982, p. 100).

³³⁸ Among the list of words and expressions recognised by Luz (2007, pp. 353–54) as establishing this connection between the two chapters is the word δικαιοσύνη. According to Luz, there is a real structural element that evidences this connection. Davies and Allison 1988 (pp. 573–76) exhibits the carefully structuring of this chapter by pointing at some remarkable features of chapter 6. It must be said that it is not the question of the connection between the two chapters that is of interest in this commentary, but an attempt to deal with the sources of this text. However, dealing with this question, they have shown the connection that is of interest here. Mt. 5.16 is one of those connective elements that help unlock the meaning of Mt. 6.1 as it sets the two subsequent sections, 6.2–6, 16–18, in terms of the importance of giving glory to God from internal conformity as opposed to outward law-keeping gestures. According to D. Hagner (1993, p. 138), Mt. 6.1 would be 'an introduction to all three sections

points of evidence for such connection can be listed as contextual, semantic, grammatical and topical, for instance. The fact that Mt. 6.1 is still a part of the SM in terms of its direct contextual linking element with the rest paves the way for the consideration of the above points. The main semantic element of evidence for this connection, in this research, is the very use of the word δικαιοσύνη in this verse still in the context of the SM. The grammatical element of undeniable connection between Mt. 6.1 and the preceding verses that belong to chapter 5 is the use of a particular mood and tense that is common to the verses of interest. As for the topical element, it is simply that there is no break between what the end of chapter 5 in that sense is concerned with, and Mt. 6.1.

In analysing the different elements mentioned above as evidence for the connection between Mt. 6.1 and Chapter 5 are some that necessitate immediate attention. However, the grammatical and topical elements should be the main ones in view here. Mt. 6.1 uses an imperative mood for its first verb, προσέχω, ‘take care’ ‘be alert’,³³⁹ to convey the request of Jesus to his audience concerning how they ought to behave as they seek to do that which is required.³⁴⁰ This same verb is again used in similar conditions in Mt. 7.15 still in the SM. The 2nd person plural, imperative form of προσέχω is common to these two texts, but not only as in the rest of the SM the

(vv 2-4; 5-6; 16-18).’ See, Przybylski (1980, pp. 87–8) as he makes similar remarks on the role of Mt. 6.1 with 6.2-18

³³⁹ This verb is mainly translated into English words that denote a sense of carefulness, attention and to beware, see F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (1979); Friberg et al. (2000); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 879–80).

³⁴⁰ This is not a commandment to do, but to pay attention to how they do what they do. This is the point made earlier by Davies and Allison regarding ‘ostentation’ which they firmly believe that the OT warned people about, see Davies and Allison (1988, p. 576); Przybylski (1980, p. 88), ‘Mt. 6.1 is concerned with the motives underlying the doing of righteousness.’ Consequently, this verse is about acting in doing things with the right motives. That is to do and to do well on the part of the listener of Jesus. See also, D. Hagner (1993, p. 138), who argues that the ‘expression “to do righteousness” (δικαιοσύνην.....ποιεῖν) is Hebraic’ and it has to do with pleasing God rather than man. Hagner also gives some OT references in support of this view.

verbs that call to action are mainly in such grammatical form.³⁴¹ The same use of the exact form of other verbs begins in Mt. 5.44 where ἀγαπάω and προσεύχομαι are also used under this form as to establish the link between these parts of the text. While the 2nd person, plural, present, active, imperative is used from Mt. 5. 44, the actual command mood begins to pace this speech much earlier as in Mt. 5.12. In Mt. 5.24, it is the 2nd person, singular, aorist, active that is used with the same imperative mood. This will be done alternatively throughout the SM after Mt. 5.20, which is the previous place of occurrence of δικαιοσύνη before Mt. 6.1. Before Mt. 6.1, the imperative tone of Jesus' speech is particularly marked in the antitheses section.

Indeed, Mt. 5.21 is the starting point of the part of the SM called 'the antitheses'³⁴² series punctuated with the repeated use of Ἠκούσατε, in which Jesus gives specific commands to his audience, whether using the 2nd plural, or singular person. This 'antitheses' part of the SM ends with Mt. 5.48, which is also the last verse of this chapter just before Mt. 6.1. Thus, in Mt. 5.48 ἔσεσθε and Προσέχετε in Mt. 6.1, both 2nd plural, imperative, grammatically establish the continuity of thought between these two chapters. This is explained by the already-mentioned contextual contours that define the whole of the SM. Mt. 6.1 could even be regarded as part of the 'antitheses' section as there is no inferential conjunction, οὖν, after Mt. 5.43 with

³⁴¹ From the end of the Beatitudes in verse 12 where Jesus says 'rejoice' in this almost same grammatical form addressing his audience, to the end of the SM in Mt. 7.15, that is the same verb as in 6.1, the interval is loaded with this the 2nd aorist, plural, imperative. Again, this remark of D. Hagner (1993, p. 138), according to which 'the opening verse stands almost as a rubric over the entire passage of vv. 1-18.', is appropriate in this context of continuity, unity and tone of speech within the SM.

³⁴² See, Mt. 5.21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43 where there seems to be a 'radicalisation of the Law' from Jesus for those who aspire to the kingdom of heaven in the SM. It appears that Matthew would have been directly responsible for three of the six antitheses, 31, 38, 43, and if this is case, it would further evidence Matthew's specific relationship with the OT regarding every aspect of the life of Jesus and especially his relationship with the Law and God's demands from man. See some of the comments on this particular aspect of Matthew and the Law in Bornkamm et al., n.d. (pp. 58–164).

the last Ηκούσατε, until Mt. 6.2.³⁴³ It is in this context of practical requests by Jesus to his audience, clearly related to the OT Law, that δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 6.1 occurs, and therefore, needs to be examined in order to define its meaning.

Some scholars have argued that δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 6.1 should be translated ‘alms’ the usual translation for ἐλεημοσύνη as it is the case in some English translations such as the KJV.³⁴⁴ However, most translations have rendered it ‘righteousness’ to be consistent with the previous times in this Gospel when δικαιοσύνη is used. This disagreement can be understood on the basis of the semantic field both Greek words may share.³⁴⁵ There may be an understandable overlap in this context, but Matthew chose the word δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 6.1, not ἐλεημοσύνη.³⁴⁶ From verse 2 of the same chapter 6 and only in the SM Matthew uses ἐλεημοσύνη three times in Mt. 6.2, 3 and 4. The natural argument that would first arise in the reader’s mind is this one: would there be any difference for Matthew between these two words? If there is a natural difference that can be made, then it is likely that Matthew

³⁴³ While it may be fair to say that this conjunction is with regard to the connection between Mt. 6.1 and Mt. 6.2, there is however, nothing that prevents the above suggestion to be a valid and even conclusive one.

³⁴⁴ See, *GELNT* (1998). According to Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988), both of the Greek words in the NT context would fit Matthew’s text since they would be interchangeable in the present conditions. In support of this argument is also the fact that ἐλεημοσύνη is used just after this text by Mathew in verse 2 as the object of ποιέω in a sentence that begins with the coordinating conjunction, οὖν, which grammatically and syntactically links the two verses. On the interchangeability of the terms in the intellectual milieu of Matthew, see also this whole article, but especially Eubank (2014, pp. 80–4). However, on the choice of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 6.1, commentators seem to agree that Mt. 6.1 is referring back to 5.20 and this would make the use of δικαιοσύνη as intentional in this text as in the one it is referring to. See comments on Mt. 6.1 in Gundry (1982, p. 101); Przybylski (1980, pp. 87–88); D. Hagner (1993, p. 138); Davies and Allison (1988, p. 578).

³⁴⁵ See, footnotes above.

³⁴⁶ While it is possible to use these words interchangeably in the OT context, there are some restrictions to apply in both the OT and the NT depending on the context in which it occurs. ἐλεημοσύνη can be an act that is viewed systematically as expressing δικαιοσύνη, but whether the opposite is as straightforward is the question here. See the Hebrew words from which the LXX draws the equivalence in T. Muraoka (2002, pp. 127–28, 174); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 315–16, 247–48); *GELNT* (1998) and also Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988). This same Greek word in the LXX is used to translate the Hebrew words דָּקָה and חֶסֶד in passages such as Deut. 6.25; 24.13; Isa. 1.27; 28.17 and many others. See also comment in Schrenk (1964a, p. 196).

meant that difference considering how carefully he literarily planned this Gospel and chose his expressions.

There is an undisputable certainty about Mt. 6.1 and it is that Matthew is being specific regarding the practical nature of δικαιοσύνη in this verse. Whether δικαιοσύνη should be translated ‘alms’ or ‘righteousness, the context in which the word is used conveys a sense of action on the part of the listener. This action cannot be removed from the context of being a practical response of the audience to the preacher’s requirement. This contextual observation in turn indicates that in Mt. 6.1 the word δικαιοσύνη does not express the idea of it being the gift of God to man, but the response of man to God’s command or his conduct toward God’s demand. Furthermore, it is evident considering the meaning and biblical use of both words being examined, that the doing of ‘alms’ can be a behavioural example of how to express δικαιοσύνη or one’s response to God’s requirements to do good.³⁴⁷ Doing ‘alms’ would be to a great extent in this context of the SM an act of obedience to God.³⁴⁸ For this reason the idea of translating δικαιοσύνη with the practical sense of ἐλεημοσύνη is part of an understandable discussion among Matthean specialists.³⁴⁹ Nevertheless, in this thesis, there is no need to debate on this point since the two main elements on which all will agree suffice to ascertain the meaning of δικαιοσύνη. Matthew has not used ἐλεημοσύνη in this verse, and the immediate and larger (SM) context is clearly that of a plea for the audience to act accordingly on God’s

³⁴⁷ Smith (1989, p. 106).

³⁴⁸ As noted by Eubank (2014, p. 80), the relationship between alms, righteousness and the heavens is very present in some aspects of the relationship between man and God in the OT and in the NT. The conduct of man generally, if pleasing to God is one that is demanded by God and consented by man. This is specifically in view in the Beatitudes that precede Mt. 6.1.

³⁴⁹ See the different views on the words in, Thom (2009, p. 334); Lachs (1987, p. 112); Przybylski (1980, p. 88); O’Donovan (2009, p. 23), but in the end, there is no confusion in this text as to the fact that δικαιοσύνη or ἐλεημοσύνη is an action on the part of man in response to the demand of God to do good.

expectations and requests.³⁵⁰ The meaning of δικαιοσύνη is that of the demand of God upon man or the response of man to God's demand. Having said this, we can now turn to the last occurrences of δικαιοσύνη within the SM in Mt. 6.33 and examine its meaning in this specific text, as for the preceding ones.

3.1.5 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 6.33

It is relevant to this research to be reminded of the fact that δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 6.33 is the last instance of the rather concentrated use of the word in the SM. It is a one-sentence verse that contains a clear command from Jesus to his hearers. This sentence, however, begins with a conjunction (post-positive δὲ) that coordinates it with preceding verses. This syntactical element indicates that any attempt to understand this sentence requires the consideration of the previous verse or verses in terms of mutual relationships. In Mt. 6.33, righteousness is attached to the expression the 'the kingdom of God' through the conjunction καὶ that coordinates the words τὴν βασιλείαν, τὴν δικαιοσύνην with ζητεῖτε, thus, establishing a clear relationship between them. The fact that these are both in the accusative case determines the nature of their function in the sentence. They are both the direct object of the imperative form here of the verb ζητέω, which grammatically and syntactically make clear the juxtaposition that is intended in this sentence.

In several English translations of Mt. 6.33, the words 'of God' are supplied and placed after 'kingdom' and before 'righteousness' for the purpose of greater clarity with regard to the identification of the personal pronoun αὐτοῦ in the text.³⁵¹ The words are also in brackets in the Greek, suggesting that they do not appear in the

³⁵⁰ O'Donovan (2009, pp. 22–3).

³⁵¹ See KJV, ESV, NLT, for instance.

original or authoritative manuscripts.³⁵² It is in reference to θεός in Mt. 6.30 that the writer uses this time the personal pronoun αὐτοῦ, and this syntactic choice indicates more of the context of what is said in 33. This immediate context is enlarged and identifiable by the fact that this verse 30 also is introduced by a coordinating conjunction which in turn points to an attachment of this sentence to one or several earlier verses. As it has been said, this is the SM, and the central thought is that of Jesus exposing to his audience the will of God for them. This is exactly what our present verse of interest, Mt. 6.33, is dealing with. Jesus commands them to seek the ‘kingdom of God’ and the ‘righteousness’ of God first in their lives.³⁵³ The fact that there is no mention of ‘righteousness’ in the Lukan parallel (Lk. 12.31) is evidence once more of the consistency of Matthew in using this word for a particular purpose that he has in mind. This is the same ‘kingdom’³⁵⁴ that he mentions to them in Mt.

³⁵² See, NA28 and the different possible readings according to the critical apparatus. Also, Metzger’s text-critical commentary on Mt. 6.33.

³⁵³ Again, these words echo what is said in the Beatitudes, and in particular, Mt. 5.3, 6, 10, 19, 20. The reason for this is the fact that in these verses, there is a constant use of the expressions, ‘the kingdom of heaven’ and ‘righteousness’. Sometimes they are separated, and at other times they are combined as in Mt. 6.33. See, the following footnote on the relationship between βασιλεία and δικαιοσύνη in this text.

³⁵⁴ Matthew uses the word βασιλεία no less than 8 times in the SM, every time referring to the rulership of God. This word in the SM is always directly attached to the same *nomen rectum*, οὐρανός as it always has one, except in Mt. 6.10 and 33. However, it is significant that in Mt. 6.10, ‘your kingdom come’ βασιλεία, in the context of God’s authority in this verse, this time is used in conjunction with θέλημα, which in the NT is translated as *will, desire, purpose, wish*, in most lexica, see summarily, *BDAG* (1957, p. 447). The parallelism between βασιλεία and θέλημα seems obvious in Mt. 6.10. This is possibly a supporting evidence of a parallelism that may be taking place in this verse, 33, between the words βασιλεία and δικαιοσύνη. If θέλημα is the will of God, and the will of God is his rulership expressed in his demand upon man as in the word righteousness in the preceding verses where δικαιοσύνη occurs, then this parallelism between βασιλεία and δικαιοσύνη exists on the basis of the unity of the SM and the connection between the sections that have been proposed as forming the whole. According to O’Donovan (2009, pp. 22–3), Mt. 33 is part of the fourth section of the SM ‘running from 6:19 to 7:12.’ and this section would be linked to the first one in Mt. 5. In fact, D. Hagner (1993, pp. 82, 165–66) on this point of connection sees Mt. 6.33 as the subject matter of the Whole SM in terms of ‘the righteousness of the kingdom of God’. For him, this righteousness is ‘presented in continuity with the righteousness of the OT law (5:17-19)’. Thus, although he defines righteousness as the gift of God in this verse, he confirms that there is juxtaposition between βασιλεία, and δικαιοσύνη in his final analysis. He says, ‘one should make the kingdom the center of one’s existence and thus experience the rule of God fully in one’s heart’. ‘To pursue the kingdom in this way is also to seek τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ’. One of the thoughts on the this from Davies and Allison (1988, p. 660) is that ‘perhaps’ in this context the ‘kingdom being God’s sovereign rule...’. The point here is that there is evidence of the parallelism between βασιλεία and δικαιοσύνη in the mind of Matthew, and commentators have recognised it regardless of their conclusions on the meaning of the passage.

6.10, and then paralleled with ‘will’³⁵⁵ in the same verse when he teaches them how to pray.³⁵⁶ It is quite clear that in this whole passage, Jesus is emphasising the aspect of conducts and actions required by God of people in continuity with all that has been said so far in the SM.

Also, it is noteworthy that in Mt. 6.33, Matthew uses the same key words that are found in Mt. 5.10 and which we examined earlier. Both passages in this SM contain the words βασιλεία, οὐρανός and δικαιοσύνη, and a syntactic analysis in both with Mt. 6.10 is conclusive in the sense that they convey the same underlying thought. Matthew is consistent in his use of these words regardless of the grammatical construction employed. In the light of these elements, it appears that the meaning of δικαιοσύνη remains the same in all the occurrences of it in the SM. In Mt. 6.33, δικαιοσύνη is the demand of God upon man that prompts the conduct or response of man to God and determines his course of action as a disciple of Jesus.³⁵⁷ In much the same way as in Mt. 5.10, the first of the δικαιοσύνη usages in the SM, Mt. 6.33, the last in the SM context, Matthew emphasises the importance of man’s response to the expressed will of God and δικαιοσύνη is to be a priority for the hearers.

In the first text, the reward for pursuing this goal, δικαιοσύνη, at the expense of one’s own life is the kingdom of heaven being given to them. In the last text, seeking this kingdom is to seek δικαιοσύνη; the two are one, like the kingdom and the will of God are one in Mt. 6.10. This is why in Mt. 5.20 there is a quantitative aspect

³⁵⁵ See, θέλημα, ‘a purely biblical and ecclesiastical’ word, in *GELNT* (1998).

³⁵⁶ Lachs (1987, p. 77); Przybylski (1980, p. 90).

³⁵⁷ There are different understandings of what δικαιοσύνη means here, according to the variety of approaches taken by scholars. Some believe that it refers to the demand of God to man, others, the gift of God to man, some more, the eschatological gift of God to his faithful disciples, and for some, there is no clear distinction and it is best to avoid the definition of δικαιοσύνη in this text. However, all the elements mentioned above and also considered by some commentators strongly make the case for the position taken in this thesis. See Smith (1989, pp. 117–19); Gundry (1982, pp. 118–19); Przybylski (1980, pp. 89–91); Overman, n.d. (pp. 90–94) for whom the tendency to see the use of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew otherwise than for the demand of God upon man and the code of conduct for the Matthean community, is a ‘Paulinizing’ of Matthew. See on this particular point, Schrenk (1964a, pp. 202–10).

to δικαιοσύνη and the hearers must possess more than those who speak of it, but do not comply fully with the will of God. Therefore, there should be no confusion as to what Matthew meant in Mt. 6.33 using the word δικαιοσύνη. It is not the gift of God *per se*, but rather the obedience of man to God that needs to be desired. After Mt. 6.33, there is one more occurrence of δικαιοσύνη, a part from Mt. 3.15 that is outside of the SM context. It is found in Mt. 21.32 and I will now examine this one before returning to the first of them all in Matthew, and the main text in this thesis, Mt. 3.15.

3.1.6 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 21.32

This verse is chronologically the last instance where Matthew uses δικαιοσύνη in his Gospel. Although this is towards the concluding chapters of the book, the use of the δικαιοσύνη in connection with John the Baptist here seems to establish a certain relationship between the early and the last chapters of the book. John the Baptist appears as major a character in the introductory phases of the story as does the use of δικαιοσύνη in this Gospel. John the Baptist is present in Matthew's story of Jesus from its beginning until Mt. 21.32, but it is the combination of this character and the word so dear to Matthew that is noteworthy in this text.³⁵⁸ It is not the first time that Matthew uses such association of the two. It has been said earlier that in Mt. 3.15 righteousness is not fulfilled by Jesus alone, but also by John in his act of baptising Jesus, whatever the meaning of this is. Therefore, in Mt. 21.32, this combination should naturally cause the reader to call the beginning of the story to mind. This way, the introductory part of this Gospel is reminded there, towards the end of it, thus re-emphasising the unity of this whole narrative.

³⁵⁸ It is important to remember that out of the 10 times that this word is used in the Gospels, 7 of them are only in Matthew, 1 time in the Gospel of Luke and 2 times in the Gospel of John. In this Gospel context, it is clear that for Matthew δικαιοσύνη is a very important word. The most prominent use of the word by a single writer is outside of the Gospels, 40 times in the consensually identified Pauline epistles.

The word δικαιοσύνη in its genitive form in Mt. 21.32 signals the nature of its attachment and relationship with ὁδός that it defines here.³⁵⁹ Whether ὁδός is used literally or figuratively like in this case, it retains the idea of following a pre-determined path, and in this verse it is of direct consequence on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη. Used metaphorically, ὁδός ‘denotes a course of conduct’³⁶⁰ and refers to actions and attitudes that characterise mind-sets and conducts involving beliefs that are expressed in the biblical context both OT and NT.³⁶¹ Therefore, in this text of Mt. 21.32, there is no difficulty to perceive a figurative use of ὁδός that governs δικαιοσύνη. In this case, δικαιοσύνη because of its genitive form, functions as an adjective that qualifies the ὁδός of John’s coming, according to the testimony of Jesus.³⁶² At a purely semiotic level, it is the nature of the ‘way’, ‘path’, ‘conduct’ or ‘course of action’ followed by John the Baptist that is identified in the Matthean context of this use of δικαιοσύνη.³⁶³ Quite simply, this expression ὁδὸς δικαιοσύνης

³⁵⁹ The figurative use of this word ὁδός, ‘way, path, road’ etc..., see, Friberg et al. (2000); Liddell and Scott (1869); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 691–92).

³⁶⁰ *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, p. 691), ‘way of acting, way of life or conduct’.

³⁶¹ This is the case in both parts and main languages of the Bible. Whether in the OT or in the NT, the examples of this metaphorical use of ὁδός or הַדֶּרֶךְ its Hebrew equivalent are numerous. See in the LXX, Ps. 144.17 (notice that for most English versions and for the HB, this verse is found in Ps. 145.17) that presents a very good example since the metaphorical use of the word in the text is self-explained through the parallelism between הַדֶּרֶךְ and מַעֲשָׂאֵי that is rendered ‘deeds’ or ‘works’ in most English translations. See the LXX and Hebrew equivalence in Abbott-Smith (1999, p. 310) and the meaning of the two Hebrew words in Brown (1907); Holladay (2000) as it would generally be elsewhere. For instance, ὁδός is used in this way in Mt. 22.16; Mk 12.14; Acts 18.25, 26; Rom. 11.33, Deut. 28.29; Josh. 1.8; 1 Sam. 18.14, and many other places in both the NT and in the LXX. See T. Muraoka (2002); *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 691–92), in the book of Acts Christianity is defined as such, ‘the way’.

³⁶² It is recognised that this form of the genitive, ‘Descriptive Genitive’, is quite frequent in the NT, due to the ‘Semitic mind-set’ of NT writers. This is particularly the case in the Matthean Gospel that was written against a strong OT background that has already been put into perspective in this thesis. See Wallace (1996, pp. 76–81) and also, the Hebrew grammatical background for this in *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar as Edited and Enlarged By The Late E. Kautzsch Professor of Theology In the University of Halle Second English Edition Revised in Accordance with the Twenty-eight German Edition (1909) by A. E. Cowley* (1910, pp. 415–19).

³⁶³ It is noteworthy that Jesus testifies of the divine origin of John’s ministry in both the Gospel of Matthew, in 11.7-19 and in the Gospel of Luke, in 7.24-35, and calls his audience to recognise him as the fulfilment of the OT passage found in the book of Mal. 3.1. However, Matthew is the only one to qualify the work of John the Baptist as done ‘in the way of righteousness’. This is not the first time, since in Mt. 3.15 he has John fulfilling righteousness in baptising Jesus. There is a definite willingness

concerning John the Baptist would mean that his conduct was in response to the requirements of God. Whatever he did was the response that he gave to the one who requested of him his actions as recorded in the text. Luke says in his seventh chapter, verse 30, that the rejection of ‘the Pharisees and the lawyers of John’s baptism is a rejection of God’s ‘plan’ for them.³⁶⁴ This verse is preceded by v 29 that is unambiguous regarding Luke’s understanding of the relationship between the baptism of John and the will of God toward the people who received that baptism.³⁶⁵

In this Lukan passage of which the immediate context is the vindication of the divine nature of John’s ministry by no other than Jesus, the main point is the appropriateness of his baptism. Not only this, but also, Luke brings together the two words that make his understanding unequivocally concurrent with that of Matthew on John’s divinely inspired baptism. He combines the word δικαίωω,³⁶⁶ with the word βαπτίζω in this verse that precedes verse 30 that we dealt with above. The relationship between the two in this verse is that the action of the one is the outcome of the other, thus they are interdependent. This means that Luke’s report, however differently expressed here, is that God ordained the baptism of John. John having come in the way of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 21.32 means that his ministry of baptising people was one that consisted in doing the will of God as God would have requested it of him, and the same is true according to Lk. 7.29, 30. In fact, this analysis seems to be corroborated

on Matthew’s part to stick to the idea that he is promoting about the interaction between Jesus and John in terms of authentication of their actions and relationship in this Gospel. Whatever this idea is, it is consistently expressed through his use of the righteousness concept he holds.

³⁶⁴ The word βουλή, “plan” is said in this commentary to be ‘Lukan’ in nature, and it is observed that it appears ‘seven times in in Acts’. This is apart from the other instance in Lk. 23.51 where it is translated as such in the NAS version. See, Gundry (1982, p. 423); Friberg et al. (2000); *EDNT I* (1990); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 181–82).

³⁶⁵ ‘And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.’ according to Lk. 7:29 in the KJV.

³⁶⁶ The relationship between δικαίωω and δικαιοσύνη is unavoidable, so that, while Luke in Lk. 7.29,30 is not using the same grammar, and perhaps the very same terms to express Matthew’s idea as found in Mt. 21.32, the thought in its essence is conveyed to the Lukan audience as it is by Matthew to his own audience. See, Gottfried R Quell (1964, pp. 174–78).

by an explicit declaration of John the Baptist himself, and consigned in another Gospel storybook, according to the writer's understanding of John's mission.

In the fourth Gospel, John the evangelist reported the saying of the Baptist regarding this very point about the origin of his unique practice of the baptismal rite.³⁶⁷ He captures the words of the Baptist as they reveal the reason why he is primarily involved in the enterprise of baptising people. John the Baptist in person would have claimed, in Jn 1.33, that it is God who requested this ministry of him. Therefore, he is baptising people in response to God who had demanded of him to do so. This declaration of the Baptist in Jn 1.33 comes as an explicit articulation of a more implicit thought contained in Mt. 21.32 and also conveyed in Lk. 7.29, 30 concerning their understanding of the origin of John's baptism. Consequently, a synoptic consideration of Jn 1.33, Lk. 7.29, 30 and of the particular text of Mt. 21.32 in its Matthean context would seem to enlighten readers with regard to what it means that in Mt. 21.32, 'John the Baptist came in the way of righteousness'. A reasonable conclusion is that he would have come and done that which for him was a divine injunction. He would have responded to God's requirement to baptise people in the way he did.

Also, when considering the essence of the message that Mt. 21.32 seems to convey in the context of the polemic between Jesus and the people he is addressing, there seems to be more evidence for the above interpretation. Jesus poses the main question in v 25 as to what the origin of John's baptism is. It is clear from the preciseness of the question, and the private reflection of the addressees to themselves within this same verse, that there is a parallel between the words 'from heaven' in Mt.

³⁶⁷ I will return to this point of uniqueness of John's practice of the baptismal rite in the appropriate section.

21.25 and ‘way of righteousness’ in Mt. 21.32.³⁶⁸ This parallel, though not completely straightforward, is made by the contrast between ‘from heaven’ and ‘from men’ and a link between the two verses. This link is the use and role of the word ‘believe’ in verse 26, part of Pharisees’ reflection, and Jesus’ use of the same word ‘believe’ in verse 32 in relation to the divine, or human nature of John’s decision to baptise people. In other words, although there is no direct declaration concerning the origin of John’s baptism in Matthew as it is in the Gospel of John, both Gospel writers as well as Luke attend to this question. In Mt. 21.32, the ὁδὸς δικαιοσύνης in the context of that discussion between Jesus and the Pharisees is Matthew’s way of saying what Jn 1.33 says directly about the divine origin of John’s baptism. Another element to possibly consider in the context of Matthew’s literary background is that there is in the OT³⁶⁹ at least one text, Ps. 85.13 (84.14 in LXX), that contains similarly the words ‘ὁδός’ and ‘δικαιοσύνη’ in a context that seemingly expresses the same thought as in Mt. 21.32.³⁷⁰

Therefore, in Mt. 21.32, δικαιοσύνη is not the gift of God to man, but the response of man to God’s requirement or God’s demand upon man.³⁷¹ John the

³⁶⁸ The expression ‘from heaven’ is contrasted with ‘from men’. Here, heaven would mean of divine origin or of God, so that the question in other words is whether John baptised because God requested or commanded it or because it was John’s own decision.

³⁶⁹ The LXX uses these two Greek words here to translate the Hebrew words דִּקְיָה and דִּקְיָה that we have already established as being equivalents. The syntactical use of these two words in this OT verse would actually allow an interpretation of it in which the two are viewed as influencing each other as in Mt. 21.32.

³⁷⁰ It has also been noted that the expression ‘the way of righteousness’ is found in the LXX, but according to Przybylski (1980, p. 95), ‘these expression by no means provide a definitive interpretation for 21.32’ of Matthew. For the discussion on these texts and those who advocate the link, see, Przybylski (1980, pp. 94–5).

³⁷¹ See, Gundry (1982, p. 424) who understands this expression as posing that ‘John preached the demand of God.’ As for Przybylski (1980, p. 96), he suggests that ‘it is possible that not only the idea of John’s message, but also that of his conduct is connoted in 21.32. John practiced what he preached.’ For others like Hagner (1995, p. 614), although the question of doing the will of God is treated as being the sense of this expression, there is no attempt to deal with the topic of the question Jesus asked in the passage about the origin of John’s baptism and that prompted the declaration of Mt. 21.32. This seems to be generally the case with commentators on this particular text. However, while they do see in the expression ‘the way of righteousness’, the demand or requirement of God that should determine the

Baptist came in the way of righteousness, he came as obeying God's request to baptise people and in that sense submitting to John's baptism would have been for his audience an act of submission to God. This is what the Pharisees in this text did not do and that caused them to be rebuked by Jesus while John is commended.³⁷² As mentioned above, it is noteworthy that in this text, Matthew uses δικαιοσύνη to define the action and ministry of John the Baptist and not just his standard of living.³⁷³ Also, as said earlier in Mt. 21.32 the association of the two words 'righteousness' and 'baptism' has a precedent in the Matthean Gospel that is of great significance for this thesis. It is in fact an association of terms that brings me right to the core of this thesis, the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in the pericope of Jesus' baptism, in Mt. 3.15. This verse is indeed, the first in the Matthean text where δικαιοσύνη occurs and it is also the last that I should consider in this section of the thesis in the attempt to ascertain meaning of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew.

3.1.7 Δικαιοσύνη in Matthew 3.15

This unparalleled passage of Mt. 3.15 is where the attention and the interest for the meaning of δικαιοσύνη is the most significant regarding the outcome of this research. It is essential in terms of understanding Matthew's peculiar record, and perhaps invaluable contribution to understanding the pericope of Jesus' baptism within the Gospel tradition. The main question to be answered concerning the use of δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 3.15 is posed in the context of the two main existing views. Does δικαιοσύνη in this verse stand for the gift of God to man or does it stand for the response of man to

conduct of man, McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 4) does mention at least one scholar who specifically sees in Mt. 21.32, Jesus' 'validation of John's baptism'.

³⁷² The aim of such discussion was also to prove that those who questioned the authority of Jesus in terms of the acts he performed were exposed as having no real interest in submitting to that authority since they would refuse a baptism that was not just authorised by 'heaven', that is God himself, but demanded by him.

³⁷³ McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 4)

God's requirement? It is tempting to assume, in view of the consistency in meaning so far found in Matthew about the use of δικαιοσύνη, that the answer to this question would be quite straightforward. Considering the OT's underlying influence in this Gospel and the tight relationship between Matthew's use of δικαιοσύνη, along with the Hebrew usage of קִדְּשׁ and הִקְדִּישׁ both translated as δικαιοσύνη in the LXX may provide, *a priori*, conclusive elements on the question. Indeed, almost all the parts that compose this verse have been more or less examined in the above sections and this should facilitate the reflection on this verse at the present. Nevertheless, only a focussed study, mainly deductive, will effectively determine the meaning of δικαιοσύνη in the actual passage. This procedure will lead to a more secure assertion of the meaning of Mt. 3.15, that of the pericope of the baptism of Jesus and ultimately, the significance of the whole in the Matthean context.

From a cognitive perspective and in view of previous literary, textual and contextual discussions, there seems to be no great difficulties to identify Matthew's intended meaning of δικαιοσύνη here. It has been established earlier in this thesis that the act of fulfilling 'all righteousness' in this verse involved not only Jesus in accepting baptism from John, but also John the Baptist in administering this baptism to Jesus. Fulfilling 'all righteousness' would be the act of baptism performed and received by the two characters, John and Jesus, but this act cannot be in itself δικαιοσύνη. The biblical and extra biblical concept of δικαιοσύνη as examined in this thesis contains two main dimensions. These are the gift of God to man, and the response of man to God through his conduct or actions as required by God. If fulfilling 'all righteousness' in this text is to actually proceed with the physical act of baptising and being baptised (as it happened), it seems clear that in this text, δικαιοσύνη refers to the response of Jesus and John to God's requirement.

Furthermore, the fulfilment of ‘all righteousness’ is presented in this text as a response to a required code of conduct, which is exhibited through the grammatical and syntactical use of *πρέπω*, which was also earlier examined. The use of *πρέπω* in conjunction with the other elements exposed is undeniably stating that by baptising and by being baptised, John and Jesus were both conforming to God’s demand.³⁷⁴ What may seem to inconsequently unsettle this thought is that it appears as if only Jesus of the two fully understood the event as such. John’s reaction to Jesus’ coming to him for baptism would indicate that he did not at first understand the baptism of Jesus as fitting the purpose of his water baptism. However, Jesus’ counter-reaction expressed in Mt. 3.15 through the use of the phrase ‘*πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην*’ indicates the opposite. I will come back to this point, but for now it is fitting to say that in this context, *δικαιοσύνη* is the response of man to God’s demand.³⁷⁵ In Mt. 3.15, John was baptising because God asked him to do so, and this was his part to obey according to Mt. 21.32. In Mt. 3.15 Jesus must have been baptised because God asked him to be so. Although this is only implied in the text through context, it would be difficult to reasonably view the situation otherwise in the light of the above claims. This situation is understandably contentious among commentators, but it is not one that is impossible to resolve without violating Matthew’s thought.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁴ The other elements to be considered with *πρέπω* are those exposed in this research to indicate Matthew’s intended meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* in all the other passages that contain it. The very meaning of this word *πρέπω*, combined with Matthew’s usage of *δικαιοσύνη* in the same verse seems to leave no room for another conclusion than the position taken in this thesis. See, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 325); Luz (2007, p. 178); D. Hagner (1993, p. 56), who like most scholars recognise the syntactical straightforwardness of this point, even when they go on further to disagree on their theological interpretations on this point, which I am less concerned here with.

³⁷⁵ See, Przybylski (1980, pp. 93–4); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 325–27) as they come to the conclusion that both John and Jesus are simply obeying the requirement of God and in this way ‘fulfil all righteousness’ by proceeding with this act of baptising and of being baptised.

³⁷⁶ According to Luz (2007, p. 177), ‘every word is controversial’ in Mt. 3.15. This opinion may explain the reason why the interpretation of this verse is so diverse among scholars.

Therefore, after looking at all the usages of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew's Gospel, I arrive to the conclusion that this word has been used consistently in terms of what is conveyed through it. The meaning of δικαιοσύνη 'righteousness' is the same in Mt. 5.6, 10, 20; 6.1, 33; 21.32; 3.15. The concept of δικαιοσύνη is used in Matthew to express the idea of man's conduct in response to God's requirements and commands.³⁷⁷ This Matthean usage of δικαιοσύνη is consistent with the usage of δικαιοσύνη in the OT as well as in the DSS and the TL.³⁷⁸ There should be no surprise to such outcome since it has been shown that Matthew's Gospel has a very distinct anchorage in the OT tradition while written in the intellectual milieu of the DSS and the TL. Quite palpably, the story of Jesus in Matthew is the story of the long awaited Jewish Messiah who is identified as such when he comes, through the fulfilment of the OT texts of which he is the object, according to Matthew. The baptism pericope for Matthew is one of all the other occasions for Jesus to be clearly identified as fulfilling the OT scripture. While this baptism pericope may be a challenge for the reader in the sense of its fitness into the messianic expectations in the other Gospels, in Matthew it becomes another proof of Jesus' true identity through the use of these key words 'πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην' in Mt. 3.15.

³⁷⁷ Przybylski (1980, p. 99), 'In all seven passages righteousness is seen as God's demand upon man. Righteousness refers to proper conduct before God.'

³⁷⁸ It is plain evidence, on account of the various positions that exist on this point, that the conclusion that I reach here is not that of everyone else, but only of some, see D. Hagner (1993, p. 56). While acknowledging the specific aspect of Przybylski's study that concludes with a consistent meaning of δικαιοσύνη in all of Matthew's texts, Hagner notes that in Mt. 3.15 the meaning of δικαιοσύνη could not be the same as elsewhere in this Gospel since there is no request on the part of God for John to baptise people. He also mentions some of the people who agree with his thinking, and this shows that there is a real disagreement on this point within scholarship. The question though is this, the same as the one posed by Jesus to the Pharisees in Mt. 21.25. To put it differently, but keeping the essence of it; was John's baptism of his own initiative, or was it ordained by God? In other words, did God require this of him? If the answer is yes, then, he was responding to God's requirements and this is a fulfilment of righteousness as far as John is concerned. If in Mt. 3.15, this act of fulfilling righteousness includes both Jesus and John, then, this act was also a requirement of God from Jesus, although this is less textually evident in this passage.

However, Matthew does not expound on his unparalleled declaration to dispel doubts as to what he really thinks in terms of how Jesus and John have fulfilled the will of God through this baptism event.³⁷⁹ All that he has provided the reader with explicitly by using his righteousness concept in Mt. 3.15 is another proof of fulfilment by Jesus of the divine will. For Matthew, this baptism, by virtue of the Baptist's involvement is as much part of the OT-predetermined story of the life of Jesus as are his coming, his ministry, his death on the cross and his resurrection.³⁸⁰ This baptism is also, according to Matthew, an identifying element of the Baptist's role in the messianic mission of Jesus. How is it possible for the ministry of John to be predetermined and announced in the OT and not his main activity, which is to baptise people?³⁸¹ The expression of John's reluctance to baptise Jesus, and then his submission to Jesus after the words spoken by the latter in Mt. 3.15, indicate that Matthew places two different perspectives on the same event. One is that of John on the meaning of his baptising role, and the other is that of Jesus on the meaning of his baptism. It is clear from context that Jesus did not fit into John's perspective of his baptism, on the one hand. On the other hand, it is also clear from Matthew's record of

³⁷⁹ This lack of information or explanation on the part of Matthew on this particular point is the very reason why there has not been an agreement in scholarship about the meaning of this text. This however, does not mean that Matthew has left his audience in the dark concerning his understanding of this part of Jesus' life. It is rather the opposite.

³⁸⁰ Matthew tends to provide an OT basis for all these aspects of the life of Jesus through his regular usage formula quotations and other literary devices that have been identified in his Gospel. The point here is that Matthew can provide the same idea about the centrality of the baptism of Jesus to the Gospel that all the other Gospel writers recognise in their stories, but do not attempt to portray as an OT-based event as Matthew understood it to be. If John the Baptist's specific baptismal ministry can be identified in the OT, such should be the case of his activities and especially in relation to Matthew's pericope of Jesus' baptism.

³⁸¹ It is noteworthy that there is no difficulty to interpret a number of OT texts as prophetically announcing the ministry of John. In all the NT texts such as Mt. 3.3-7; Mk 1.3-5; Lk. 3.4-7; Jn 1.23-25, the ministry of John is essentially recognised as administering baptism to people. Hence, he is called John the Baptist. See what commentators say on this, 'the coming of the Baptist is predicted in the Old Testament' Luz (2007, pp. 167-69), 'the preparation is for the fulfilment that is shortly to be experienced' D. A. Hagner (1993, pp. 48-50), 'So an eschatological reading of Isa. 40.3 with reference to activity around the Jordan' Davies (1988, p. 293), although, in this comment the idea is about the possibility that this OT text was used, but not exclusively to refer to the Baptist's activities.

Jesus' words that John did not understand how fitting it was for Jesus to be baptised by him.

Thus, unlike in the other synoptic Gospels, Matthew in 3.15 seems to be treating the question of the meaning of Jesus' baptism from Jesus' own perspective. A perspective that even John the Baptist would possibly not have had. Indeed, for Matthew, there is another perspective the reader must see. It is so important to Matthew that he departed from all other known records of the occurrence to make his own point. It is because of this clear departure of this Gospel from the others that scholars have tried to interpret Mt. 3.15 in various ways and have come to no consensus on its meaning. It is in this context that I should try to investigate the meaning of this verse in the light of all the above findings. This attempt should strictly remain within the context of previous conclusions on Matthew's use of the OT scriptures to identify the Messiahship of Jesus in the main events of his life and in this case, his baptism. This means that there should be a working assumption based on the idea that Jesus and John both fulfilled God's requirement when this baptism took place, and perhaps this is also contained and identifiable in some OT passages.

3.2 Summary of Chapter 3

In this chapter, I individually examined every one of the seven Matthean passages in which the word 'righteousness' is used. This analysis has led to the perspective according to which Matthew uses the word consistently to express 'the demand of God upon man'. This being also the case in Mt. 3.15 has brought to the conclusion that in Matthew's perspective, Jesus considered John as much a part of this fulfilment as he was in this baptismal act. In baptising Jesus John was fulfilling the demand of God. Although the Baptist may not have understood what he was doing as such, they were both responding to God's requirement as Jesus saw it. This finding leads to the

thought that if this is the case, then there should be a possibility to identify the means through which John the Baptist fulfilled this requirement. This demand of God upon John should be identifiable within the Matthean OT-fulfilment literary context that it shares with the six other passages examined. This is why I will, specifically now, focus on John the Baptist, his ministry and role in this baptism story. The next chapter of the thesis will be naturally and essentially be concern with identifying the OT basis for John's baptism. If John in baptising Jesus fulfilled the demand of God as expressed in scripture according to 'righteousness' in Mt. 3.15, then this point needs to be clearly exposed within the Matthean literary and theological context. John's baptism must be recognisable in the OT scriptures.

Chapter 4. The Role of John the Baptist in Mt. 3.15

4. John the Baptist

The task in this chapter is to examine the most relevant aspects of John the Baptist's backgrounds in terms of his life, ministry and contribution to the Matthean perspective on Jesus' baptism. I will identify pre-existing purification rites that seem to share common characteristics with John's baptism, and that have been proposed, possibly, as the source of John's baptismal practice. I will specifically examine a water purification rite practiced by John's contemporaries, as it seems to be of greater significance in the quest for John's inspiration. This latter step will allow me to exhibit the main points of difference that separate John's practice from all the others. This will particularly bring into focus the theological basis on which John's baptism must be compared to other ritual washings that predated his baptismal practice. Following this procedure, I will specifically identify one OT event that seems to share exclusive practical and theological characteristics with the NT baptism of Jesus by John. I will carefully analyse the OT texts that are relevant to define the link between these two events in terms of their backgrounds, characters involved as well as their common nature, purpose and theological significance.

4.1 John the Baptist and His Ministry

I have to some extent attempted to expose John the Baptist's own personal understanding of his baptism in terms of its origin and authority. Of the entire NT, the clearest and most explicit of statements concerning the origin and legitimacy of John's baptism is found in Jn 1.33.³⁸² In the Matthean context, however, this view

³⁸² See, Dennert (2015, pp. 71–2). Although, recognising the identification elements of this verse, it is surprising that some commentators would not stop to particularly acknowledge this unique piece of information in the Gospels regarding the origin of John's baptism. In its particularity, this declaration is comparable to Matthew's particular contribution in the baptism pericope in the Gospel tradition. See

would have only been implicitly expressed in Jesus' declaration in Mt. 21.23-27, 32, and elsewhere it is echoed in Lk. 20.4-7.³⁸³ John the Baptist in these texts is subject to God's requirement as he ministers to others by baptising them in the Jordan River. If the origin of John's service is identifiable in these texts as a mandate from God, and this may be the object of a consensus in scholarship, the question however, of the historical origin of this baptismal rite as such and how it relates to John's identity and mission remains a source of dispute among scholars.³⁸⁴ Although this question has long been one of great importance in scholarship, and various opinions have been voiced, there seems to be no consensual and definite answer to it. While many share the same views on the subject, others diverge on the basis of a different interpretation of the data that is available to support the different hypothetical views.³⁸⁵

While it is unambiguous from the NT sources that John the Baptist was mandated by God to administer this baptism to desiring people around him, the historical, biblical origin of John's actual physical *praxis* is less clear within the same

also, G. R. Beasley-Murray (1999, p. 25); Webb (1991, pp. 89, 263); Taylor (1997); Morgan-Wynne (1999, pp. 116–35).

³⁸³ See, Nolland (1993, p. 943); Hagner (1995, p. 610).

³⁸⁴ This aspect of the question will be argued in more details later, but it can already be said that for most scholars the discussion centres around the identification of John and his practice of baptism, with the Essene groups of his time and their practices of immersion rituals, but also other Judaic ritual purification practices of immersion that existed before John's time. Those instances of ritual washings are traceable in OT and generally dominate the discussions on the topic. This point, the diversity of hypotheses on this question, is well illustrated in the analysis of Webb (1991, pp. 95–132); Taylor (1997, pp. 29–31); Baumgarten (2004) and some others. Although, this last article is not directly treating the subject of John the Baptist's baptism, but only that of the groups which most scholars would endorse as having forged his ministry, the content of it shows by extension the difficulties met with to achieve unity on the subject. Also, the short survey of Howard (1970, pp. 12–26) and some of the questions that all have asked about John's ministry, as in Yoon (2004 pp. 36–38) are representative of the situation on the question at large, but they have not lead to a unanimous answer on the precise questions.

³⁸⁵ Conclusions on John the Baptist and his ministry as they occur in most studies dedicated to his identity and role in the Gospel story, unless based on the 'New Testament material and the evidence of Josephus' are necessarily hypothetical. They generally result from attempts to reconstruct this character's personality, work and life on the basis of reading from sources that do not attempt to inform us about him, but only are thought to be historically useful to this end. See Taylor (1997, p. 8).

context.³⁸⁶ There have been decided attempts to identify the socio-historical background of the Baptist's life in search of answers on this point, but those have only led to possibilities rather than certainties.³⁸⁷ The question of the historical, biblical origin of the John's baptism, nevertheless, is of great importance in considering the meaning of Mt. 3.15. The belief that for Jesus, baptism was 'fitting' and a fulfilment of God's requirement demands an answer that is intelligible within this Matthean context. This approach should be legitimised by reason of Matthew's consistent identification of Jesus as the awaited Messiah even in baptism through his solid Gospel framework of OT-fulfilled scriptures.³⁸⁸ Therefore, it would be reasonable to think, if not to expect, that for Matthew, John's act of baptising Jesus would be most likely, at least implicitly, identifiable with some theological interpretation of some OT scripture that must have been available to this interpretation. In the case of the baptism being a fulfilment of God's requirement not just for Jesus, but also for John, the Baptist, should also be identifiable by role in that OT scriptural basis. It is to this intent that I will now examine the background of John the Baptist and of his baptismal ministry

4.2 The Baptist's Backgrounds

There has been an unprecedented quest for the historical John the Baptist in scholarship since the discovery of the DSS, which has produced various perspectives

³⁸⁶ It is clear that the treatment of John the Baptist figure in the NT 'does not interact with all secondary literature concerning John', and this is why scholars who try to identify the details of his life and ministry in the light of those secondary sources can only be very hypothetical in their conclusions, thus presenting just possibilities rather than informed positions. See a brief, but rather comprehensive survey of the history the study of John the Baptist in Garry Yamasaki (1998, pp. 12–32), also, Webb (1991, p. 28); D. Hagner (1993, p. 46); Davies and Allison (1988, p. 291).

³⁸⁷ Webb (1991, pp. 20–45); Taylor (1997, pp. 15–16, 48).

³⁸⁸ Nolland (2005, p. 154).

from which to consider this biblical character.³⁸⁹ While it is worth analysing those, due to the limitations, scope and the focal point of this research it is neither the aim nor the interest here to engage in a detailed analysis of the life and character of John the Baptist in those sources.³⁹⁰ However, a brief critical analysis of the situation in scholarship is necessary to put into perspective the approach that I will take in dealing with John the Baptist's role in Matthew's baptism pericope. As argued earlier, Matthew intricately links John the Baptist and Jesus in Mt. 3.15. They both 'fulfil righteousness at the baptism pericope. Although there may be a need to expose some of the different positions and general ideas about the historical background of John and his baptismal activity, according to contemporary scholarship, focussing on Matthew's view of his baptism remains the primary goal here.³⁹¹

If it has been argued that information from the DSS possibly relating to the socio-historical, religious and cultural context of John the Baptist enlightens the NT data, the question about the meaning of his baptismal undertakings still remains a

³⁸⁹ It is greatly important to notice that the biblical sources (mainly the Gospels and Acts) in which John the Baptist appears contain very little socio-historical information concerning him. All materials about John the Baptist in the biblical tradition are relative to his role in the story of Jesus and the development of the latter, or that of the Christian movement from its very beginning. It is with the discovery and partial analysis of the DSS in the second part of the 20th century and onwards that scholars have elaborated on extra biblical information that seems to enlighten the views only obtained in the past from the Bible and the Jewish historian Josephus about the Baptist. Thus, the study of the DSS has seemingly expanded previous understandings of the Baptist character and his environment. See Dennert (2015, pp. 7–14); Steinmann (1958, p. 5); Josephus, n.d. (fig. 18. 116-18).

³⁹⁰ It is worth remembering that the details produced by the analysis of the sources outside of the NT on John the Baptist are only tentative in nature, and would not further the course of this research as such.

³⁹¹ This intricate relationship between Jesus and John is not only recognised in terms of the fulfilment of righteousness in Mt. 3.15, but in the whole Gospel, see again on this point, the numerous parallels between them as recorded in Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 289–90). Although, John the Baptist is introduced in all the four Gospels as playing an important role in the Gospel story, Matthew's presentation of him in 3.3 is already in clear terms, the fulfilment of an OT prophecy as in Isa. 40.3, coupled with a striking depiction of him as identifying in verse 4 with the OT prophet Elijah in 2 Kgs. 1.8. While these OT elements can be found separately in the other Gospels, in Matthew alone, they are uniquely combined in the same passage. See how the Matthean choice of grammar and syntax in verses 1-4 of chapter 3 in comparison with the Markan parallel is strengthening the above point, according to Dennert (2015, pp. 133–43).

dividing issue in scholarship, especially on Mt. 3.13-17.³⁹² For this reason, it is not the aim in this part of the thesis to settle the debate by focussing on a detailed analysis of the elements involved. This would be outside of the scope determined in order to justify the Matthean literary context in which Mt. 3.15 is intelligible. I will only attempt to simply expose some of the current theories that are proposed. Then, I will analytically reflect on specific positions that are available today on John's baptism, and some other specific baptismal rites to which his has been associated in the light of extra-NT sources such as the DSS and parts of the OT.

4.2.1 John's Baptism Assumed Background and the DSS

The socio-historical observations made in contemporary studies on John the Baptist's supposed background, and his role in the Gospel tradition are numerous and noteworthy.³⁹³ However, this background information and the implication of it in understanding the character do not originate with the reading of the main sources about the Baptist, the Gospel materials.³⁹⁴ The collected thoughts of the DSS have indeed constituted a pool of readily available material that could possibly help understand John's context and the nature of his contribution to the story of Jesus, but

³⁹² This point is made clear when considering the great interest in the Dead Sea Scrolls documents and their exploitation in view of an uncovering of the different aspects composing the background behind this Gospel character, one so important in his role, yet, so briefly portrayed in the pages of the NT. This great interest is appropriately presented in the survey of the 'historical studies on John the Baptist' by Garry Yamasaki (1998, pp. 12–32); Dennert (2015, pp. 1–18) and commentators such as Steinmann (1958) and others have to say on the subject.

³⁹³ See, Chilton (2002, pp. 25–44); Evans (2002, pp. 45–71); Taylor (1997, pp. 15–59); Webb (1991, pp. 31–45); Howard (1970, pp. 14–26); Steinmann (1958, pp. 11–74).

³⁹⁴ According to some scholars, the influence of John the Baptist on the development of Christianity and the Gospel tradition is of prime importance. This is sensed through the ties that bound together the quests for the historical Jesus and that of the historical Baptist. See, Dennert (2015, pp. 7–14). However, although referring to the origin of John's Baptism specifically, this statement, 'our evidence comes from the Dead Sea Scrolls', in Scobie (1964, p. 111) is quite characteristic of all that is being said about John the Baptist since the discovery of the DSS. For those who only dealt with the Gospel material through redaction-critical studies, such as from Matthew's text for instance, they have not been able to answer many question conclusively, questions of which one is the aim of this research. How does Matthew see the baptism of Jesus by John as fulfilling all righteousness according to the Matthean literary context? See a list of unanswered questions in Garry Yamasaki (1998, p. 32) as depicting the situation.

not irrefutably. Attempts to understand the Gospels' portrayal of John's baptism through the prisms of historical probabilities may have its place in the search for the historical John, and I will try to succinctly expose the global picture that has emerged from this process.³⁹⁵ Nevertheless, it is in the Matthean context that John's role should be ultimately examined for the aim of this research.³⁹⁶ Although, it would be of some importance to investigate the Baptist's role in all the possible aspects of the Gospel's development, such endeavour falls outside of the scope of this thesis. The sole and focal point of interest here is in the question of the origin of his baptismal rite as administered to Jesus. It is on this aspect of his relationship with Jesus that I want to present the elements that may help to uncover the meaning of his short conversation with Jesus in Mt. 3.15. Some have argued on this particular point that John's baptismal practice in the Jordan River originated with his personal connection with the Essenes, and particularly the Qumran community who initiated him.³⁹⁷ This assumption is one that is favoured by most scholars in view of the socio-historical, religious, geographical and archaeological possibly coinciding elements that seem to provide support for this claim.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁵ For a history of research of this particular subject, see, Garry Yamasaki (1998, pp. 12–30) whose work reflects the situation as it stands today in spite of the gap in time from when it was done to the present.

³⁹⁶ See an example of this approach in Dennert (2015, pp. 254–56) and how he defines the preaching and ministry of Jesus as the extension of the Baptist's work with no need for extra biblical influence to enlighten the text. In that sense, John the Baptist and Jesus are so close that he sees Jesus' life and mission as the culmination of everything John the Baptist represented. Their lives are metaphorically intertwined, according to Dennert's reading of Matthew's Gospel. There is no need for extra-biblical information in this conclusion on the relationship between the two.

³⁹⁷ This thought is only the logical consequence of persistently establishing a hypothetical relationship between John the Baptist and the Essenes on the basis of coinciding elements such as time, geography, and a common religious background. For some, it is clearly the case that these elements are defining, yet, they do recognise that it is pure speculations, see Steinmann (1958, pp. 58–60). He would have learnt from them as a former Essene since ritual bathing was so prominent among this Jewish sect in the desert. The reality is stated in these terms by Taylor (1997, p. 13), 'the material at our disposal on John is not extensive, and much will never be known'. The historical reconstruction of John's life is 'at best, guesswork based on data at our disposal'.

³⁹⁸ See Scobie (1964, p. 39). One of the main arguments against this idea is that there is not a shred of evidence that is provided by any textual witness of an explicit link between John, the Essenes and indeed any existing group at that time.

However, if there have been strong and rather well supported arguments in favour of this hypothesis of assimilation, there is by no means irrefutable evidence that John's baptism is the product of his alleged connection with this particular religious group, the Essenes of Qumran.³⁹⁹ In actual fact, the primary and most extensive sources about John the Baptist, the Gospels, are completely silent on this supposed connection and any other affiliation of John to any group of those days. As for other sources that could be considered historical, there is very little said that can amount to any conclusive thought on the matter. In the works of Josephus, who positively wrote about John the Baptist⁴⁰⁰ in a passage considered to be an authentic,⁴⁰¹ there is very a succinct commentary. There also is no mention of any element in this passage about a connection between John and the other groups of which the historian has recorded the names and activities. Josephus makes no allusion to John or

³⁹⁹ This point will be dealt with appropriately in due time. What can be said for now is that if there is no clear textual evidence for or against a connection between John the Baptist and the Essenes, it becomes naturally difficult to find textual evidence of an interdependency between them regarding their respective practices of baptism. It appears that all that has ever been written in support of such connection is merely based on feasibility studies. One of the perhaps clear indications of the main disagreement on the links that are constructed between these two is that there seems to be obvious differences between the baptism of John and the ritual washings of the Essenes. However, there may also be a plausible way to account for these differences while validating the assumed connection, and it is for this reason that this hypothetical link between the baptisms has to be examined. Also, scholarship has expressed the caution that is to be exerted in associating the Essenes and the Qumran community, but in this research I will take the position of the assimilation of the two. See, Geza Vermes (1962, pp. xxiii–xxv); Baumgarten (2004).

⁴⁰⁰ *Josephus, Ant* 117, in this text, John the Baptist is described by the historian as one who led the people around him to a greater devotion to God through his preaching, his influence and his baptismal ministry. This influence would have been that of his own righteous living among the people over whom he had such an impression that they were willing to do anything he said, according to Josephus. See also, Dennert (2015, p. 82) and the material on this discussion in the footnotes related to *Ant.* 116–119 in Dennert's book. According to Webb (1991, pp. 39–40), there are 'three arguments which could be raised against' the 'authenticity' of Josephus' passage on John the Baptist, but the Christian interpolation claim cannot be sustained in view of the evidence provided in favour of Josephus' claim.

⁴⁰¹ *Josephus, Ant.* 116–119. There have been discussion as to whether or not Josephus' comments on John the Baptist were actually Christian interpolations, but there seems to be 'widespread acceptance' among scholars of the position that these comments are authentic parts of Josephus's work. The consensus seems to be that although Christians did use the works of Josephus and promoted them, those remarks by Josephus are not Christian interpolations. See, Dennert (2015, pp. 82–3). Dennert, who specifically deals with the character of John the Baptist has provided on the above point of discussion, a selected, but relevant bibliography in his footnote on p. 83, of authors who have dealt with this particular question of the authenticity of Josephus remarks on John the Baptist as well as a concise critical analysis of these arguments.

to his baptism as having any association with the Essenes' ritual purification practices about which he relatively often wrote in his works.⁴⁰²

Also, while a comparison between John the Baptist's way of life and that of the Essenes may be possible to some extent, the question of the origin of John's baptism remains historically unanswered even in the light of a relationship possibility between him and contemporary groups.⁴⁰³ There has been no conclusive evidence that the Essenes' various purification rites did actually shape John's baptismal ministry.⁴⁰⁴ There has been no proof of an exclusive link between John's baptismal ministry, and the Essenes' ritual purification practices that can *de facto* account for the origin of John's baptism.⁴⁰⁵ A short survey, and analysis of the Essenes' purification rites,

⁴⁰² Here are all the passages from the historian that deal with treatment of the Essenes' question in his complete works, *Ant.* 13.311; 15.371-379; 17.346; 18.11, 22; *War* 1.78; 2.113, 119, 120, 158, 160, 161; 5.145. *Life* 1.10. It is clear from these passages that there cannot be any statement that establishes an explicit direct or even indirect intentional link between John the Baptist and the Essenes. Surely, for one who has explicit admiration for the two, as Josephus does, the link between them if there were any, would have imposed itself unambiguously. This is not the case anywhere in Josephus. As for the question of using the term baptism, Josephus only uses the word 'βαπτισμός' once in the unique excerpt of his works on John the Baptist, in *Ant.* 18.117.

⁴⁰³ According to Taylor (1997, p. 9), 'we can know very little about John'. The evidence of a possible relationship between John the Baptist and the Essenes can be found in the fact that they both lived ascetic lives and shared great interest in the book of Isaiah, according to the sources available. Lk. 1.80 seems to indicate that John did not only preached in the wilderness of Judaea as the other Gospels have it, but he also grew up there. Mt. 3.4 and Mk 1.6 contain some dietary information on John that can also be indicative of a link with the Essenes as some have pointed out, but not exclusively. These points would have been drawn on similarities according to the Bible texts and the Qumran texts such as in 4Q259, 13, 14, in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (1997, pp. 88, 89) and also, Geza Vermes (1962, pp. 110-11). See for more description on the Essenes, other 1st century historians such as *Philo*, *Quod omnis probus liber sit*, 1.75-91 as well as a description of this group by Pliny the Elder in his book *Natural History*, according to Steinmann (1958, p. 20) on the Essenes *modus vivendi*.

⁴⁰⁴ See a synopsis of the comparative analysis concerning the function of John's baptism in Webb (1991, pp. 211-213) through a diagram that he provides to mark the difference between John's baptism and what the Essenes practiced. I will return to this document later. Also, this link between John's baptism and the Essenes' various ritual purifications is often inferred by scholars on the basis of elements of the Essenes' practices of 'purification', 'bath' and 'lustration' with water, in *War* 2.129, 138, 159; *Ant.* 18.19 that appears to be reconcilable with Josephus' reports on John's baptism in *Ant.* 18.117; Webb (1991, pp. 95-132); See, Dennert (2015, p. 92), who says that 'Josephus' description of John parallels his description of the Essenes' on the basis of the present references. Also, Steinmann (1958, pp. 110, 115), who illustrates the hypothetical or assumed nature of the relationship between John and the Essenes through his comments, like many others do. However, there have been dissenting voices, and this association of John's baptism with the Essenes' ritual immersion has been challenged, see, Florentino Gartia Martinez Julio Treballe Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, pp. 205-6); Taylor (1997, pp. 20-24).

⁴⁰⁵ There is no doubt about the existence of ritual purification practices in all the different groups that formed Judaism before and at the time of John the Baptist. Those ritual practices existed, as varied as

compared to John's Baptismal practice should only show the limits of a possible relationship between the two, if there is one. However, the real question that is on focus in the context of this thesis is the following: can the controverted theoretical relationship between John's and the Essenes' purification rites provide vital elements that will contribute to uncover the meaning of the Jesus' baptism in the specifically Matthean context? Let me first examine briefly the Essenes' purification rite that best presents a potential answer to this question.

4.2.2 The Essenes and Their Purification Rites

It has been established that the issue of purity and purification occupied a very important place in the life of the Essenes and the Qumran community.⁴⁰⁶ According to Martinez, the aspect of purity in the Qumran community is so central that it may have even been the reason of its existence after breaking away from the Jerusalem priesthood and temple.⁴⁰⁷ In fact his argument is that they equated 'purification with

they may have been, on the basis of a common starting point which is the Torah, see, Howard (1970, p. 18); Scobie (1964, pp. 32–40). In the Torah, ritual bathing and divers washings are very much part of everyday life, according to Leviticus in particular and the teachings of the Law in general. Almost every defilement defined in the Law is dealt with by washing parts, clothes, and baths of the whole body, according to the entire book of Leviticus. See, Lev. 11.25, 28, 32, 40; 13.6, 24; 14.34, 47; 15.12; 16.26, 28; 17.15; Num. 19.8, 10; 31.20, et cetera. These practices seem also to have been under one form or another that of all major ancient religions before the Judeo-Christian context of the first century, see Steinmann (1958, p. 64). If there is a similar depiction in some aspects, as little as it may be, of John the Baptist life in the synoptic Gospels and in the fourth Gospel, then there is nothing there that specifically states John's affiliation to any of the existing groups of his time. This is the reason why there must be a hypothetical 'separation' between the Essenes and John before he appears in the Gospels, or an 'omission' altogether of this supposed part of his life in the quest for the historical John based on a projection of him in the socio-cultural, historical and religious context of the DSS materials, see, Steinmann (1958, pp. 60–61); Howard (1970, pp. 18–21).

⁴⁰⁶ See, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (1997, pp. 74, 75) in which the Qumran community is definitely identified as being Essene in nature and the purity aspect of their practices as essential to their identity. It is argued that they view themselves 'as a substitute for the temple', which 'implies a transfer of the requirements of purity to the sphere of the community', see, Florentino Garcia Martinez Julio Trebolle Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, pp. 157, 139–57).

⁴⁰⁷ See, Florentino Garcia Martinez Julio Trebolle Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, pp. 139–57) and the conclusion based on his analysis of a number of passages that deal with purity in the DSS. They can all be found as referenced in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (1997) in his article, *The Problem of Purity: The Qumran Solution*, in Florentino Garcia Martinez Julio Trebolle Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, pp. 139–57).

justification', and thus, ritual washings replaced sacrifices.⁴⁰⁸ Whether this conclusion is unanimously reflective of the historical reality or not, the focal point is the emphasis placed on the importance of purity in the community. This strong accent on purity at Qumran would be exhibited in the use of water for baths and other washings including 'baptisms' for the purpose of purification.⁴⁰⁹ The interest should now be placed on assessing the different sorts of purification rites that they practiced in that community as they seem to have been several, possibly, of distinct natures and purposes.⁴¹⁰ However, due to primary focus of this work, only those that seem to evidently offer a parallel with John's baptism should be taken into consideration in this analysis.⁴¹¹ Of such, only one out of two that will be mentioned seems relevant here.⁴¹²

The first to be mentioned in the report by Josephus is a ritual bath that the community practised daily. This particular act of purification took place in a solemn context. According to Josephus, 'they assemble...into one place, ...clothe ...in white

⁴⁰⁸ See, Florentino Gartia Martinez Julio Treballe Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, p. 157) also on this point of self-identification and perception, see the commentaries of Geza Vermes (1962, pp. 56–57, 271), and Scobie (1964, pp. 107–8) based on their understanding of the DSS passages that they quote to substantiate their positions. There seems to be a correct interpretation of the data to reach these conclusions since there is no ambiguity in the DSS passages on how the subjects viewed themselves.

⁴⁰⁹ See on the centrality of purification in Qumran, Florentino Gartia Martinez Julio Treballe Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, pp. 152–53); Geza Vermes (1962, pp. 56, 96, 184, 271) and on the daily practice of baths for the same purpose of purification, see, Josephus, n.d. (p. 2:129, 138). Scholars have noted that historically speaking, ritual baptisms and various sorts purification rites are part of the fabric of all the religious groups that form the milieu in which John and the Essenes operated. See, Taylor (1997, pp. 48–49). Baptism here refers to purification washings that happen through immersion only. See the first definition of baptism in Oepke (1985, pp. 525–46).

⁴¹⁰ 'the life of the community was punctuated by ceaseless purification rites and other ceremonies.' See, Florentino Gartia Martinez Julio Treballe Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, p. 59).

⁴¹¹ For a more comprehensive list of the different water purification rituals that are not investigated in this thesis, see an analysis of them by Webb (1991, pp. 95–162).

⁴¹² It has been said that life in this community was 'punctuated by ceaseless purification rites', and for this reason there needs to be a selection of the most probable instance where there may be comparable elements with John's baptism.

veils then bathe their bodies in cold water'.⁴¹³ The historian clearly identifies this act as one of 'purification' and stipulates that it is only after it was performed that the exclusive ritual meals could take place.⁴¹⁴ Only those who had formally been tried for a period of time, up-to two years, and judged worthy of this honour could partake in this ritual meal. It is clear that this was a daily, repetitive action of the same people and for the same occasion. The result of not taking this course of action, if allowed, would have been the defilement of the whole community. One had to be fully fit according to the community's rules to be able to participate in this ritual meal. This prompts the question as to how one was admitted into this community in the first place in order to daily take part in purification washings within the community. On this point, attention has to turn to the second purification ritual act that is more closely associated with the subject in question. In fact, this one seems to be the only one that can be considered in the context of this thesis.

Again the historian, Josephus, records this second purification act under discussion in very clear terms. He speaks of the 'water of purification' that must be given to anyone who desires to become a member of this community.⁴¹⁵ This specific water-purification-by-baptism act constitutes the most significant element to be considered here. The reason for focussing on this baptism act is on the one hand, the liturgical context in which it occurred, and on the second hand, the natural question of its significance in the membership process in the context of the baptism discussion. There are passages of the DSS in which are carefully recorded the liturgy of which is part this same specific purification-by-immersion act that effected the membership-

⁴¹³ *War* 2.129.

⁴¹⁴ *War* 2.129-131. Those meals were exclusive in character because no one who was not a full member of the community was permitted to take part in it. The solemnity of those ritual meals is seen in the way they are described according to 1QS VI 2-6, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (1997, p. 83).

⁴¹⁵ *War* 2.138.

acceptance process.⁴¹⁶ However, like in Josephus, there is no practical description or depiction of the actual physical baptism or immersion process in these DSS references.⁴¹⁷ Neither Josephus, Pliny the Elder, Philo, nor even 1QS of the DSS gives a tangible description of how this baptism was performed. There is nothing of this nature, except for a reference to the minimum amount of water that was required for a man to practice water-cleansing acts.⁴¹⁸ It could possibly be that this detail information is unnecessary in order to reflect on, and compare this baptism with John's baptism. This situation suggests that any attempt to draw a comparison between the two baptisms should only allow the consideration of their respective theological characteristics. It could mean that the physical aspect might be part of the criteria that differentiate, but cannot be a defining element of contrast.⁴¹⁹ If baptism is

⁴¹⁶ See, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (1997, pp. 71–83). These passages, through expression such as 'cleansing water', 'purified by water of ablution' and 'waters of repentance' in 1QS III.4, 9 suggest the practice of water-purification acts taking place as the candidates are fully introduced into the community. 1QS I.16-II.26; 1QS III; 1QS V.10-11, 20, 21 are specifically thought to deal with the renewal of the covenant ceremony and the entering of new members into the Qumran community. I need not to ascertain a position on the on-going argument about whether entering the covenant and entering the community is one and the same thing, and whether or not it is one ceremony, see Webb (1991, p. 160). I am concerned with the content, the emphasis that seems in these passages, rather on exposing the attitudes of both those who led the procedure in which the requirements of the law in the community are made plain, and those who respond in declaring their acceptance to submit to the rules of the community by completing the whole process imposed on the candidates. Scholars identify the immersion part of this ceremony as they occur in 1QS III.4-9; 1QS V.13, 14. They establish the background of these texts as relating to the treatment of the entrance procedure into this covenant or the community in the whole of 1QS. See in particular, Webb (1991, pp. 140–41, 160) who from 1QS II.25-26 hypothesises on the condition of the people possibly involved in the ceremony, as he attempts to explain the content and meaning of it. His point is that whether these groups of people are composed of those who refuse to enter the covenant, those who enter the covenant for the first time, or of those who are renewing this covenant, 'the context in 1QS is for entry by the candidates'. Therefore, of these passages that implicitly denotes some degree of initiation, this baptism in its form, nature and function that is thought to take place at some point in the process is the part of interest for this research.

⁴¹⁷ There is an insight into how they may have carried out some of their purification baths in terms of the amount of water they used for the act. This is expressed in CD-A X, 11, where the idea seems to be that of complete immersion of the body. See, Geza Vermes (1962, p. 56); *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (1997, pp. 567–68).

⁴¹⁸ See, CD-A X.10, 11 that stipulate 'concerning purification with water, no one should bath in water which is dirty or less than the amount that covers a man'. This statement would mean, in the absolute, that expressions such as those found in 1QS relating to water-purification rites, systematically define the operatory mode. This is the only solid piece of evidence from the DSS that establishes the idea that this community practiced immersion or baptism, and that the yearly ceremony of covenant renewal was punctuated with such happening.

⁴¹⁹ As mentioned already, while there is great emphasis on the importance of the role of the purification rites practiced in those groups among which the Qumran Community, no one gives any

simply washing by immersion, it is theoretically only the role and significance of the two baptisms that can be compared in order to establish the similarities, and the differences that will inform any conclusive position on the main point of this study.⁴²⁰

This only leaves room for a theological assessment of the baptismal rite procedures as recorded in 1QS III.6-9, 1QS V.13, 14, and the baptism of John in the Gospels. It is also noteworthy that while the event of Mt. 3.14, 15 is undeniably important, the same lack of the detailed-practical description regarding the baptism of Jesus by John is a fact that supports the above position. Therefore, it is the theological context in which these rites were performed that provides the comparative elements needed for reflection on the meaning of Jesus' baptism. Thus, I wish to establish that this is the perspective in which a conclusion on the relationship between these two rituals ought to be drawn when compared. Regarding the Essenes' baptism, it is established that this specific ritual act of purification took place yearly, at the Renewal of the Covenant ceremony within the Qumran community.⁴²¹ It is to be remembered that any water-purification practiced at other times was also effected by baptism. However, it is at this yearly occasion that all candidates, and already-members of this community partook in this ceremony that included baptism as an initiatory or conversionary physical sign. This is the main reason this practice should be compared to John's baptism.

detailed description of how the immersions practically happened. There is however a passage in CD X.10-12, Florentino García Martínez Julio Treballe Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, p. 567) that highlights the importance of having enough water for the immersion to take place and for the purification to be effective. There is no mention of an 'immerser' beside the immersed.

⁴²⁰ According to Webb (1991, p. 133), this also, 'function' and 'significance' is the focal point of most studies on the subject of the different purification rituals of the Qumran Community.

⁴²¹ (Geza Vermes, 1962, p. 117) is clear that this was not the only time that they engage in ritual purifications, but as argued above this is the one baptismal event that is being considered in the comparison with the baptism of John in this study, because of the initiatory aspect that there seems to be to both baptisms. The fact that candidates became members of a tight community or part of a movement that is less defined.

4.2.3 The Theology of Baptism at the Renewal of the Covenant Ceremony

As stipulated above, this research must be concerned with the elements that can be compared in trying to assess a possible relationship between John's baptism and the Essenes ritual purification rite that was performed annually. In the light of the paucity of information about the practical aspect of the immersion in this ceremony, and conversely, the detailed theological-contextual information at our disposal, it is natural to focus on the latter aspect. According to 1QS I-III, the persons who partook in this purification rite at the ceremony, whether they fully entered the community for the first time, or were renewing the covenant they had made the year before, had to go through the 'cleansing waters'.⁴²² However, it is abundantly clear from the texts that these 'cleansing waters', in the view of the community, did not effect the purification necessary to become a recognised part of this holy community. This is clarified by the statement, 'Defiled, defiled shall he be all the days he spurns the decrees of God, without allowing himself to be taught by the community of his counsel.'⁴²³

A focussed reading of the selected passages in 1QS III, 1-12; 1QS VI, 13-23 shows that to be part of the community, the emphasis is on accepting the primary importance of the community's rules, and it is when abiding by them that one becomes pure.⁴²⁴ 'And it is by the holy spirit of the community, in its truth, that he is cleansed of all his iniquity' according to 1QS III.7. Again in 1QS III.8, 9, 'by compliance of his soul with all the laws of God, his flesh is cleansed being sprinkled with cleansing waters... with the waters of repentance.' The evidence of a

⁴²² See, 1QS III, 4. As already said, this practice of the renewing of the covenant was annual, and anyone desiring to be part of this community had to undergo the ritual in concurrence with the rules regarding full membership, see, 1QS II, 19-26

⁴²³ 1QS III, 5-8. This actual quote is restricted to the verses 5, 6, but the surrounding verses are also to be considered for a better understanding of where the emphasis is in this act of purification.

⁴²⁴ This emphasis is re-enforced by the policy that regulated the process of simply becoming a candidate for acceptance into this community, as mentioned earlier, and also, by the policies concerning matters of excommunication from the community.

hierarchical structure in 1QS II.19-23, through which authority is exerted within the community, is irrefutable.⁴²⁵ This structure, in conjunction with the emphasis on the demanded unreserved acceptance of the rules that governed life in the community, establishes a relationship between the authority of this hierarchically structured community and the law of God. This inference is possibly prompted by the expression located in 1QS III. 6 projecting the view that the governing body, along with the wider community, sees itself in relation to God as ‘the community of his counsel’.⁴²⁶ Such understanding could be based on the fact that the expression ‘community of his counsel’ is juxtaposed in this passage with the other expression ‘the decrees of God’.

Therefore, looking at this text with both the expressions in the light of the serious legislative and executive powers within this community, it can be argued that the Qumran community saw its rules as God’s expressed authority. This is what is revealed in the Community Rule and the Damascus Documents, showing that ‘the hierarchy at Qumran was strict and formal from the highest to the lowest’, and that

⁴²⁵ Reflecting on the conditions of life in the desert Steinmann (1958, p. 165) declares, ‘The desert is a powerful school of communal and hierarchical life’. This particular 1QS II.19-23 text, in describing the procession at the ceremony emphasises the importance of doing things in a certain ‘order’, and of staying in ‘ranks’. It presents this hierarchical structure as being the one that characterises the *modus operandi* of this community. There are arguably four distinguishable groups that seem to be, the priests, the Levites, and the people divided in numbers ‘so that each Israelite may know his standing in God’s community²³ in conformity with an eternal plan.’ The fourth group is found in the makeup of this community, and that is the proselytes, according to CD A IV.5, 6. The debate as to how many are the groups and divisions is due to unclear statements, and perhaps even conflicting views generated by the use of some expressions and nouns in the documents. This can be confusing when attempting to understand the organisation of this community. This concern is expressed in the analysis of their ‘system of government’ by, Florentino Garcia Martinez Julio Trebolle Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, pp. 55–58). See also, CD A XIII.3, about the authority of the Levites, as CD A XIII.13 speaks about the authority of the inspector of the camp, and CD A IV.13 mentions about the inspectors and the judges. This is a hierarchically structured community with authoritative rulers.

⁴²⁶ It could also be argued that this text refers to the community itself, without distinction of roles within that community, and it is being part of this community that qualifies one to be part of the community of God’s counsel. The main point here in both instances is that those who are part of this community, whether in the capacity of a leader or a simple member, they have become the representatives and the voice of God on earth, and this is an elitist position that expresses a hierarchical perspective. It would be reasonable to consider that this is even more so in view of the notion that there are those who instruct, watch, test and pass judgement on others in this community.

this expressed the authority of the community.⁴²⁷ The two above expressions would have been interchangeable in the self-understanding of the sect.⁴²⁸ This would explain some statements such as in the passage that emphasises the working of ‘the waters of repentance’ in the context of an acceptance into the Community through the embracing of its discipline.⁴²⁹ A covenant made on this premise is according to the text, ‘the covenant of an everlasting Community.’⁴³⁰ This is a community in which one is ‘admitted by means of atonement pleasing to God’, and that is obedience to the rules of the community.⁴³¹ It is in this context that the entering into the Qumran Community is expressed annually, with a part of the liturgical procedure that demands the passage through the ‘cleansing waters’ by baptism of the candidates to the covenant.

Consequently, this baptism was the symbol of a cleansing of the soul that was effective only through one’s prior uninhibited submission to the rules that governed the community in every aspect of life within its confines.⁴³² Any infringement of these rules signified a breaking of the covenant and was punishable according to the

⁴²⁷ This community’s structure was highly hierarchical, and the power to accept or expel individuals was exercised by a few individuals for all the reasons pre-established in the documents that contained their rules, 1QS; 4QSD; 4QSC. Two of the examples of the rules that showed the extent of the discipline maintained through the legislative and executive powers exercised in the community, even over the life of its members, and dealing with exclusion of people from the sect, are shown in sanctions brought against individuals over matters such as simply calling upon the name of God, as found in 1QS VI, 24-27; VII, 1-4. See in, Geza Vermes (1962, pp. 2–7), there are different appellations such as ‘men of holiness’, ‘men of perfect holiness’, ‘the community’, ‘the council of the community’, ‘the men of the Law’. All seem to refer to different groups within the Essenes and the Qumran community, but it is difficult to accurately identify precisely those differences as reflecting separate entities in the structure.

⁴²⁸ 1QS VI, 13-23.

⁴²⁹ 1QS III, 1-12.

⁴³⁰ Although, in this passage, 1QS III, 1-12, in 8, 9, there is a mention of the ‘compliance with all the law of God’ as a condition for the soul to obtain cleansing, the emphasis is on the importance of submission to the Community’s rules for effectual cleansing.

⁴³¹ 1QS III, 11.

⁴³² It is appropriate to once more emphasise that the conditions to enter this community were drastic, and made of long periods of trials, and careful examinations of the candidate by designated figures, as well as the whole of the Community at some point, according to 1QS VI, 13-23.

specific rules that dealt with the offenses.⁴³³ Some of them meant excommunication of the transgressor from the community for various periods of time and in some cases forever.⁴³⁴ It is then a tangible perspective to see this yearly baptism as part of an event that remained essentially a membership ceremony. This end part of the process for first-time candidates, and yearly passage for covenant renewers signified access, recommitment in total submission to the Qumran community's religious vision and identity. Everything in this baptism seems to be girded toward concluding, officialising, and re-enforcing a status, marking the authority and peculiar identity of this community as a priority in the process.

Even the expression 'waters of repentance' in the text is a metaphor for the power of this community to purify through the strict observance of its disciplines and rules one who desired to be part of it.⁴³⁵ The whole focus of everything is the community's authority through the law of God, but more so, their interpretation of it.⁴³⁶ This is what this 'baptism' at the yearly Renewal of the Covenant Ceremony corroborated or sought to sanction. This 'baptism' is a symbol of acceptance on the part of the candidate of 'the instructions of the upright', according to CD-B XX.2. Theologically, this Qumran baptism is not 'into repentance',⁴³⁷ but it takes place as an

⁴³³ See a list of possible offenses and the consequences attached to them in, 1QS VII, 2-19

⁴³⁴ According to CD-B XX, 1-10, the whole passage is relevant to the point that is being made here about expulsion from the community. However, more precisely in verse 3, there is this expression 'the man who is melt in the crucible' that points to the fact that living in the Community was a permanent trial of worthiness that was measured by one's ability to obey the rules faithfully. It makes it clear that the washing was not as much the focus as the community's rules were in terms of the covenant.

⁴³⁵ This thought is more than suggested in the rest of the passage where the expression is found, that is 1QS III. 9-12. There is here a relationship that is made between this community's discipline, and its self-confessed identity. As argued before, they viewed themselves and the regulations that characterised their lives as the voice of God to which one had to fully obey to obtain the favour of God.

⁴³⁶ Had they had the same interpretation of the Jewish scripture than that of the Jews in Jerusalem they would not have separated themselves for the temple services. For instance, as a major point of diversion in practicing the Jewish religion was that they observed a different festival calendar than the priests is the Jerusalem temple, see, Geza Vermes (1962, pp. 52-53).

⁴³⁷ 'into repentance', is the exact expression used in Mt. 3.11 according to John's view of the function of his baptism. In other instances such as in Mk 1.8; Acts 13.24; 19.4, for instance, where there is a mention of the baptism of John in the Gospel tradition and in the book of Acts, the idea found in

outward manifestation of already-atoned sins by means of acceptance and right living through the laws that govern the Community.⁴³⁸ Therefore, the question of a relationship between this Qumran rite and the baptism of John must be answered in the light of a comparison between the above elements, and John's baptism's theological characteristics.

4.2.4 The Theological Context of John's Baptism

Considering the intelligibility of the NT data on the nature of John's baptism and its implications, the task of identifying the theological nature of this baptism and comparing it with that of the Qumran community seems quite straightforward. As said earlier, there is no explicit mention of a Baptist community into which this baptism gave and/or signified entrance to by its own virtue.⁴³⁹ That which is mainly emphasised about John's baptismal activities in the Gospels, particularly in Matthew, and also in the book of Acts, is that his water baptism is strictly intelligible within the theological context of exerting spontaneous repentance for the forgiveness of sin.⁴⁴⁰

Matthew is the same. Whereas, in the Qumran Community, although the Qumran text speaks about 'the waters of repentance', this specific baptism, undeniably, occurs after a repentance that is evidenced by a right conduct of the candidate who is tested for a relatively long period of strict observance of the community's laws, before this baptism can take place.

⁴³⁸ Webb (1991, p. 210) states appropriately that 'the conceptual framework appears to have been that a person turns from sin to the Torah-obedience which is demonstrated by appropriate spiritual virtues (i.e. repentance), and a commitment to enter the covenant/community.'

⁴³⁹ As noted by Taylor (1997, p. 48), 'while his baptism took place in the wilderness, people were expected to go home to their regular occupations.' Also, Chilton (2002, p. 37) believes that 'there is no evidence whatsoever that for John baptism constituted an initiation comparable to the ceremony for novices at Qumran.' This is not to ignore that the Gospels do mention the disciples of John as if to state that he had followers or people who shared his beliefs, but there is absolutely no indication that those followers constituted a community that resembled in any shape or form the Qumran Community in terms of way of life. See, Mt. 9.14; Mk 2.18; Lk. 5.33; 7.18. John the Baptist is mostly understood to have been one who operated alone, Gundry (1982, p. 46), while drawing big crowds and gathering great numbers of people to listen to his speeches, and to be baptised by him.

⁴⁴⁰ Mt. 3.1, 2; Mk 1.4; Jn 1.19-27 directly introduce John to the reader in the context of his mission and main activity, that is calling to repentance the people so that they may be forgiven of their sins. In Matthew, there are no preliminaries such as in the book of Luke, where the background of his existence and role is defined through the telling of John's miraculous birth, and then, a presentation of the nature of his ministry in the same context as in the other Gospels (Lk. 1.13-26; 3.3) although, Matthew does not literally use the word forgiveness as Mark and Luke do. Various passages in the book of Acts such as in 2.38; 3.19; 22.16, which although they contained additional elements, still reflect the theological context in which this baptism is practiced. Only in Josephus' writings does this understanding of the

John preached a message of repentance to which those who were willing to accept it responded by being baptised by him for the forgiveness of their sins.⁴⁴¹ Their baptism expressed their desire to be forgiven by God, and to live a practical, moral, righteous, reformed life as a consequence of hearing about and subscribing to the message that called for this baptism of repentance.⁴⁴² The grammatical characteristics of the two verbs, ἐβαπτίζοντο and ἐξομολογούμενοι in verse 6 of Matthew 3 are indicative of the simultaneity of the actions they denote.⁴⁴³ The idea conveyed in this statement is that the candidates were confessing their sins while they were being baptised.⁴⁴⁴ This baptism into repentance is in view of reconciling the sinner with God, providing them with protection against destruction that is to be brought about at the soon coming judgement day.⁴⁴⁵

function of John's baptism differ. He clearly says that it was just for the 'consecration of the body' since 'the soul was already thoroughly cleansed by right behaviour' see, Lachs (1987, p. 36), but also Davies and Allison (1988, p. 300) who says, 'the contrast with the synoptics could hardly be greater'.

⁴⁴¹ Mt. 3.5-7; Mk 1.5; Lk. 3.3; Jn 3.23. All these texts make clear that John had a public ministry that involved people from all backgrounds in terms the reach of his message. There is no selection of any sort that is taking place among the baptismal candidates in order to be baptised by John for the forgiveness of their sins.

⁴⁴² He declared to the candidate 'bring therefore fruits meet for repentance' in Mt. 3.8 according to the KJV, but another rendition of this text such as in the NLT might produce an even clearer sense of it by saying, 'prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins, and turned to God'. Also, in Lk. 3.10-14 there is the record showing that it was the people who were being baptised who asked the questions regarding the outcome of this baptism with regard to how they should live their lives now that they had been baptised. On this point, and in the context of the discussion on the link between John the Baptist and the Essenes, Lachs (1987, p. 43) notes that John's answer 'does not reflect the philosophy of the Essenes and the Qumran covenants,...hence this weakens the identification of John with these sects.'

⁴⁴³ The fact that βαπτίζω is in the imperfect tense and ἐξομολογέω has a participle mood attached to its present tense suggests that these two actions are done simultaneously, see, Wallace (1996, pp. 625-26). They were being baptised and they were confessing their sins at the same time. This grammatical structure conveys a sense of complementarity of the two actions resulting in a package offered and received during the same event. Webb (1991, p. 214) uses the expression 'conjunction' to denote the link between these two actions. Not every one is willing to endorse this position of simultaneity, but no one can prove that it could not have been the case, see D. Hagner (1993, p. 49).

⁴⁴⁴ See, Nolland (2005, p. 140).

⁴⁴⁵ The context of John's baptismal ministry in Mt. 3.1-12, is that of a call to salvation from the wrath of God, verse 7, that will be expressed through the destruction of those who do not 'bear fruit meet for repentance', verse 8, and will be destroyed by 'unquenchable fire', verse 12, on the day of a judgement that is soon to come 'for the kingdom of heaven is at hand', verse 2. This is reflective of the context of John's activity in the other Gospels as well.

However, Josephus' understanding of John's baptism in terms of its function seems to be different and somehow contrasting with the above NT perception. In *Ant.* 18.117, Josephus appears to have understood that John did not think that his baptism was for anything else than for 'purification of the body' since 'the soul had already been cleansed before by righteousness.' The most striking and conflicting element that is found in Josephus is the fact that he says in this same reference that this baptism of John was 'not in order to the putting away of some sins'. In other words, this baptism was not as the Gospels and the book of Acts say it was; a baptism into repentance for the forgiveness of sin.⁴⁴⁶ Although it is important to know the divergence of opinions here, we need not be detained by Josephus' understanding of the significance of John's baptism since it is irrelevant to our concern for Matthew's perspective on the matter.⁴⁴⁷ It is clear that 'Baptism in Matthew means the moment of radical re-orientation of life', and the person who has been baptised begins to walk 'in the way of righteousness.'⁴⁴⁸

Another possibly theological causal element of contrast between John's baptism and what happened with the Essenes' rite, and particularly in the Qumran

⁴⁴⁶ In Mt. 3.1-10, the combination of baptism, confession of sin, and repentance form the contextual elements that characterise John's activity as preacher of repentance and baptiser into repentance. In Mk 1.3-5 is the same emphasis with a clear statement that stipulates unambiguously that this baptism was into repentance for the 'forgiveness' of sin. The Greek word ἄφεσις that comes from ἀφίημι is variably translated, 'pardon', 'remission', 'cancellation', 'release' in different NT texts according to Bultmann, in *TDNT*, I (pp.509-12), and most Greek lexica. In this context, it means 'forgiveness', and that is the rendering in most of the English translation, see, KJV, RSV, NAS, ESV and other. It should be noted that while the word 'forgiveness' is not used in Matthew's record of John's baptism's role, as noted in Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 300–1) who thinks that 'the relationship between John's baptism and forgiveness of sin is uncertain, according to what Josephus says of the same subject, the idea of forgiveness, however, in this text of Matthew is implicit in this context of baptism, and concordant with an understanding of this baptism's function elsewhere. In Lk. 3.7-14, the relationship between John's activity of baptising people is again found in the context of repentance and confession of sin. The repentance, the confession of sin, and the baptism that he administers are all happening as one event with no understanding of a necessary prior cleansing of the soul as suggested by Josephus. See also Acts 2.38 in which Peter clearly associates baptism with repentance and the remission of sin.

⁴⁴⁷ For a more detailed analysis of Josephus' text, *Ant.* 18.117, involving the question of the historicity of this statement, the possible Jewish, and/or Hellenistic background behind it, whether it is Josephus personal view or not, see Webb (1991, pp. 165–179); Scobie (1964, pp. 90–91).

⁴⁴⁸ Smith (1989, p. 52).

community is found in the very epithet attributed to John, that is ‘the Baptist’. I will return in more detail to this point, but for now it is appropriate to note the reason behind this surname. In all the literature that circulates on the Qumran’s baptism, there is no mention or even suggestion that there was a baptiser who performed the rite on any candidate.⁴⁴⁹ John however, is called ‘the Baptist’. It is noteworthy that there are two grammatical forms of this expression in the Gospel tradition and one of them is also found in Josephus.⁴⁵⁰ The insistence on this epithet marks the fact of the centrality of John physically presiding over the rite and personally performing the act of baptising the candidate. He is not known for just preaching baptism, but he is identified as the Baptiser. This personal role is significant enough to forge John’s reputation, and it is also suggestive of a theological importance in the process of baptising. It is perhaps for this reason that in Matthew’s seven uses of the title ‘the Baptist’ in relation to John’s activity, he chooses the expression ὁ βαπτιστής as a noun.⁴⁵¹

Also in Luke, the three times that the appellation is attached to John, the same noun ὁ βαπτιστής is used, while in Mark, the four occurrences of the English expression ‘the Baptist’ are split into two Greek forms. Two times the evangelist uses the noun ὁ βαπτιστής and two times he uses the participle construction ὁ βαπτίζων and τοῦ βαπτίζοντος to define the same activity.⁴⁵² The main point of this simple observation is that there seems to be a clear emphasis in the Gospels on a concept of

⁴⁴⁹ Nolland (2005, p. 141).

⁴⁵⁰ The fact that the historian, Josephus, speaks about John as Ἰωάννου τοῦ ἐπικαλουμένου βαπτιστοῦ ‘John the one being called the Baptist’, like in the Gospels, indicates how he was indeed known because of his main activity in life, see *Ant* 18. 116.

⁴⁵¹ See, Mt. 3.1; 11.11, 12; 14.2, 8; 16.14; 17.13.

⁴⁵² See, Lk. 7.20, 23; 9.19. It is reasonable to think that on this point the reason for the similarity between Matthew and Luke is that they both follow the same source, Q. However, this may not be all that there is to it, knowing that Matthew could have chosen the alternative found in the Gospel tradition as seen in Mk 6.14, 24, 25; 8.28. In one group, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John is the ‘baptiser’, and in the other group, Mark, John is ‘the one baptising’ according to the use of the participle, thus, clearly establishing the idea that John physically ‘administered’ baptism to people, Webb (1991, p. 214).

John actively administering and personally baptising/immersing, and therefore, washing the candidates.⁴⁵³ It could be argued that John in the view of the evangelists was the one who washed with water (βαπτίζω)⁴⁵⁴ the people who came to him by using immersion, which is βάπτισμα as in Mt. 3.7.⁴⁵⁵ In Mt. 3.14, 15, Jesus came to be washed with water by immersion, in other words, to be baptised by John, and so doing, they both fulfilled all righteousness. This righteousness spoken of by Matthew is fulfilled in John washing Jesus and Jesus accepting to be washed by John. Thus, this righteousness is fulfilled in one administering and the other receiving this washing.⁴⁵⁶ This detail of John's intermediary role must add some significance to the theological meaning of this act. I will return to this point later since the present task is only to expose the contrasting elements that may express theological differences.

Therefore, based on the available information relative to the function of John's baptism, there seems to be a difference that perhaps signifies that there is no theological link between his baptism and that of the Qumran community. While this Qumran baptismal rite is clearly performed in a context that focuses on the worthiness of a candidate to the membership of this group, one already cleansed by up-to two years of trial and testing in life, John's baptism is an inclusive and indiscriminate call to repentance in view of acceptance and forgiveness from God.⁴⁵⁷ It is a call to all for cleansing through baptism, administered to anyone responding to the opportunity for

⁴⁵³ This is not an attempt to identify the actual procedure that John followed in baptising people. There is no data that covers this aspect of the procedure, and scholars in all their efforts to depict this baptism can only use their own imagination. However, the platform on which they can securely stand to do this is the fact that John, by the very nature of his name, is scripturally recorded as performing immersion on people. See, Webb (1991, pp. 180–81); Taylor (1997, p. 49).

⁴⁵⁴ See, Oepke *TDNT* (pp. 529-46), who declares that, 'the basic conception is that of a cleansing bath.'

⁴⁵⁵ See, Oepke *TDNT* (p. 545).

⁴⁵⁶ Garry Yamasaki (1998, p. 97,98).

⁴⁵⁷ This is a call addressed to the very people who were supposed to have no need for it, because of their religious identity. Luke in his account of John's baptismal kerugmatik activities includes all as in need of this repentance. See, Lk. 3.7-14.

which there is no pre-requisite. While it is clear that it was the community at Qumran that authorised the candidate's self-administered baptism after approval for admission by and into the community, John administered his baptism on the spontaneous and personal decision of every candidate who came to him upon hearing about the kingdom of heaven that he preached.

While this Qumran baptism was a yearly commitment to absolute observance of all the community's life policies, rules and laws presented as God's law, John's baptism was a commitment to live a repentant life that resulted in forgiveness from God.⁴⁵⁸ While the yearly Qumran baptism had an orchestrated form and had rules that regulated and governed the ceremony in which the baptism took place, for instance, the blessing and curses response of the candidates, John's baptism, from the biblical viewpoint, seems to have had none of such protocol to it. This yearly Qumran ceremony appears as an official validation of a contract that was termed by the community to allow a new member in, or renew a previous membership. As for John's baptism it is presented as detached from community membership requirements and originating with God's bidding to John to do this, according to Matthew.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁸ See, Taylor (1997, pp. 106–12) on aspects of the repentance and confession of sins at John's baptism. See also, Webb (1991, p. 193) on the same. It is also noteworthy that in the Gospels and Acts this baptism that John practiced is referred to as τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου 'the baptism of John', or τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα which is the same 'John's baptism' in Lk. 7.29; Mk 11.30; Acts 1.22; 19.3 and in John 1.33 it is the testimony of the Baptist himself that adds to the following thought. The evangelists may not have seen this baptism as being the same as the other purification rites that were practiced around. This baptism was unique to John at the time he administered it. It is John's baptism because it is different from others, and this according to God's command. Oepke *TDNT* (p. 537) declares that the baptism of John 'is to be regarded as a new development' because of the prophetic context in which it happened.

⁴⁵⁹ This seems to be Jesus' position on the origin of John's baptism according to Mt. 21.25, 32, and the same is echoed in the rest of the Gospels. The sense that John was sent by God to baptise people is ever present in the Gospel tradition in places such as where Matthew, Mark, Luke and John tell about the crowds that came to him to be baptised outside of the populated areas. In this context, they all tell about the baptism of Jesus, and in the book of Acts, the baptism of John is systematically referred to in connection with baptism as in accepting the ministry of Jesus unto salvation. See, Acts 1.22; 11.16; 13.24; 19.4 and others of those texts that connect John's baptism with the life and ministry of Jesus' disciples.

Consequently, there seems to be no theological link between these two washing acts performed by the Qumran community on the one hand, and by John the Baptist on the other hand. This observation must inexorably bring us to the question of interest in this thesis. Can these fundamental theological differences be reconciled, and the baptism of John seen in the light of the Essene's practices of this ritual bathing? The answer must be negative and highlight the sense of irreconcilable theological differences between the two. The Qumran community seems to have had their own way of practising this ritual washing for reasons attached to their idiosyncratic context. They may have had some of the same washing practices than those outside of their group. There is clear evidence that they practised some washing rituals that are specific to their community as the baptism of John is specific to him. Although there is a common idea of the usage of water purification rituals in both groups, it must be said that there is no evidence for a theological connection between these two, the Qumran annual baptism and John's baptism. It could even be argued that John's baptism may possibly have had no connection at all with the Essenes' practices in much the same way that it is possible to say that the two groups may have shared no historical relationship one with the other.

The notion of John the Baptist being an Essene and a member of the Qumran community at some point in his life remains purely theoretical since there is no compelling historical and scriptural proof of this anywhere as for now.⁴⁶⁰ It has seemed convenient for many to hypothesise and conclude that such was the case on the basis of historical, geographical and archaeological elements that possibly create 'intriguing parallels' between the two.⁴⁶¹ Nevertheless, those elements such as time,

⁴⁶⁰ This point is well illustrated in the treatment of the question in Yoon (2004, pp. 28–33).

⁴⁶¹ It is noteworthy that those parallel elements are not exclusive to these two groups. See, footnote above.

space, and religious practices should not exclusively establish a link between John and the Essenes with regard to the practice of baptism. It is my position that if there were a relationship between the Essene's practise of 'baptism' and John's practise of baptism, the most obvious nexus would be the practice of ritual purifications. However these did not originate with any of them, but are common heritage from a historical, cultural and religious mutual Israelite background.⁴⁶² They shared in the knowledge and practices of the Jewish Scriptures in which ritual purifications were well established.⁴⁶³

This aspect of the Israelite religion permeated and regulated the life of the people.⁴⁶⁴ All could relate to the divine origin and appropriateness of ritual purifications since they were part of the Law of Moses given by God for Israel's conduct.⁴⁶⁵ Although much has been written about John the Baptist's possible link with the Essenes, the connection remains hypothetical.⁴⁶⁶ For this reason, seeking to explain the significance of Jesus' baptism must take place in the light of the Matthean Gospel context that has been established earlier.⁴⁶⁷ This baptism must be investigated against the backdrop of the OT Scriptures being fulfilled in the life of the Matthean

⁴⁶² 'Water had an extensive use in Jewish tradition in connection with the need for ritual purity' Nolland (1999, p. 68); Taylor (1997, pp. 48–9) 'issues of purity were very important to all groups of Jews at that time'. The time spoken of here by Taylor is that of John and his Essene and other contemporary groups who had been accustomed to practicing the purification rituals found in the Torah. Therefore, there is no need to exclusively link John's baptism with the particular Essene baptism as it has been so commonly done.

⁴⁶³ Yoon (2004, pp. 19–22).

⁴⁶⁴ Oepke (1985, pp. 535–36).

⁴⁶⁵ This fact is particularly tangible in the book of Leviticus where different sorts of purification ablutions are prescribed to the whole of the Israelite community as perpetual laws, for various situations, but with the same underlying cause. See for instance, in Lev. 1; 6; 9, 11; 13; 14; 15; 16; 17; 22. See also, Neusner (1975, p. 20) on the priestly biblical extent of this concept of purity, and how it would be of concern to everyone.

⁴⁶⁶ 'Although this possibility has been much discussed, it has not been settled.' see, Evans (2002, p. 56).

⁴⁶⁷ It is essential, as proposed by Nolland (1999, p. 66), to 'read Matthew on baptism with minimal dependence on assumptions of commonality with other early Christian sources and practices.'

Jesus. The question is then; is it possible that Matthew saw the baptism of Jesus as an act that originated, theologically, with an identifiable OT text?⁴⁶⁸

However, before turning to specific elements of comparison between the above baptisms, there is a need to first expose the possible OT elements that could qualify for the discussion. The practice of water purification permeates the OT religious regulations of life, and in the quest for an OT textual origin for Matthew's view of John's baptism, the affordable OT suggestions must also be examined. By reason of the various types of water purifications found in the OT, going through the whole lot would be distractive. Rather, this examination will only concentrate on specific features of OT baptisms that directly correspond to those of John's baptism.

4.2.4.1 John's Baptism and the Old Testament Precedent

The OT practice of water purifications as said earlier, presumably, provides a solid background for the development of baptismal practices in the NT. There is no argument against the fact that the practice of baptisms as recorded in the DSS and possibly other Jewish literatures can all be traced back to the OT text. It is therefore, reasonable to examine the possibility of an OT origin for subsequent baptisms in general, and that of John in particular, with the confidence that a link can be established.⁴⁶⁹ This is even more so regarding the question of the Matthean understanding of the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. There are two main reasons to pursue such a course of thought. The first is the irrefutable OT context in which the whole of this Gospel is framed; according to Matthew, Jesus fulfils the OT prophecies

⁴⁶⁸ Although the list of questions (15 of them) that 'map out the scope' of his 'exploration' of the subject is admittedly 'not exhaustive', Nolland (1999, pp. 63–4) makes no mention of this aspect of Matthew's view on the baptism of Jesus.

⁴⁶⁹ Taylor (1997, p. 68).

at every step of the messianic story.⁴⁷⁰ The second reason is the fact that in Mt. 3.15, the baptiser, John the Baptist, and the baptising candidate, Jesus, are both through this act of baptism ‘fulfilling all righteousness’. This means, according to the position taken in this thesis on the meaning of righteousness in this text, that John and Jesus in taking part in this baptism responded to a requirement of God. Thus, this requirement must have been identified in Matthew’s understanding as the origin of this baptismal event. Now, whatever it is, it must be found in the OT as for the rest of his treatment of the link between Jesus’ life and the OT prophecies that he identifies as fulfilled by Jesus. Although Matthew makes no obvious reference to any OT text in particular in 3.15, the fulfilment theme used here is indicative of such underlying thought.

Therefore, the OT must have contained at least from the Matthean perspective, a specific point of reference from which the whole baptism pericope is intelligible and especially the unparalleled saying in Mt. 3.15. John’s baptism of Jesus in Matthew must have been viewed in the light of an OT water purification practice that involved a baptiser and a candidate in order for this pericope to be consistent with the OT framework of the entire book. I am now turning my attention to finding an OT water purification practice that would have to be considered carefully in order to establish the similitude of its characteristics with that of John’s baptism of Jesus. There is no difficulty to find an OT point of connection in the context of a water purification practice with John’s baptism of Jesus. Of such OT water purification practice there is only one that seems to qualify. Only one event involving water purification in an

⁴⁷⁰ It has been argued regarding the fulfilment citations in Matthew that “these citations emphasize that, the whole of Jesus’ life, down to the last details, lay within God’s ordained plan.” See, Overman n.d. (pp. 73–89). This is one of the main reasons that have led scholars to think of the Matthean audience as being essentially of Jewish background, and this in spite of a presumably perceived ‘anti-Jewish’ tone that others have identified in the book, and which has led more to think of the question of authorship and target audience in various and opposing ways. See a brief survey of the different views in scholarship on the subject in, Stanton (1995, pp. 17–23); Luz (2007, pp. 78–90); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 1–58); Stanton (1992, pp. 45–53, 113–68).

initiatory context, comprising one administrator of the rite, one who washes the candidate and the candidate publically receiving this rite, seems to compare to what John is doing with Jesus. On the basis of these unique characteristics common to the OT event and John's baptism, the list of a number of OT passages can be brought forward. These references are all found in the Torah as following, Exod. 29.4; 40.12; Lev. 8.6. All these OT texts exist in the context of a single event, the ordination of Aaron and his sons to the priestly functions at the establishment of the Levitical priesthood.

Consequently, these are the OT texts that I will further examine in order to determine the extent of the relationship between them and the Matthean baptismal pericope. This examination will take into consideration the already-mentioned factors of similarity such as the use of a water purification rite in an initiatory context, and the unique procedure consisting in having someone presiding over or administering the washing to the candidates. However, this analysis must go beyond these points to theologically assess the possibility of reconciling this OT washing event with the washing of Jesus by baptism as it happened in the Gospel tradition and particularly in the Matthean pericope. I will now turn to the OT texts referring to the washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses following the express request of the Lord, and then, I will analyse and compare them with the baptism of Jesus by John.

4.2.4.2 The Washing of Aaron and His Sons

All of the OT references, Exod. 29.4; 40.12; Lev. 8.6, are concerned with one unique event that is recorded in the Bible as taking place at the establishment of the Levitical priesthood within the congregation of the children of Israel. According to the biblical chronology of events, this phase of the history of Israel is placed against the background of the desert experience and the formation of Israel as the people of God.

The Israelites have just come out of Egypt and are in these passages undergoing a structural organisation in some aspects of their religious identity. The question here is not whether or not this record is historically accurate and in line with critical scholarly opinions, this would fall outside of the defined scope of this research. Rather, the focus is on this particular event that is taking place in these texts, its theological value and possible influence on the Matthean view of Jesus' baptism. For this reason let me first examine the texts in their immediate contexts and address three relevant points. The first point will have to do with the origin of this event. The second point will deal with the event itself in terms of the nature of it and the procedure that is followed as it took place. Lastly, I will attempt to consider the theological aspects possibly involved in this event that may be relevant to the present quest.

4.2.4.3 Exod. 29.4

In order to examine this text in the context of this research, it is best to simply outline the historical biblical context that characterises its content and then analyse the event that it describes.⁴⁷¹ According to the preceding chapters, 25- 28, there is a communication between יהוה and מֹשֶׁה that is taking place in direct relation to the creation and the establishment of the Israelite מִקְדָּשׁ and its services.⁴⁷² Verse 8 of chapter 25 possibly captures the essence of the whole passage in terms of the nature

⁴⁷¹ It is not the aim of this research to engage in a critical analysis of this passage in such a way as to define authorship, dates, and to deal with any form of literary analysis that today exhibits a variety of views within scholarship. This approach is neither necessary nor appropriate here. The interest for this text is primarily thematic or topical, and therefore, only some textual aspects of the passage will be taken into consideration.

⁴⁷² Exod. 25.1 clearly says, 'And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying', KJV. This translation is reflective of both the HB and the LXX. With regard to the context of this conversation, the point is made clear in the 8th verse of the same chapter. That is the construction of the desert 'tabernacle' in this text called 'sanctuary' as it says here, 'And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.' KJV. Also here, both the HB and the LXX are reflected in this English translation. For the translation of מִקְדָּשׁ into 'sanctuary' and other possible forms see, Brown (1907, p. 872); Holladay (2000, p. 211) and for ἁγίασμα, the Greek equivalent in the LXX see, ἁγίασμα, in *GEL LXX* (2003). There seems to be a technical difficulty that is, however, of no consequence on the text. See, the usual Greek word for the Hebrew in Abbott-Smith (1999, p. 5) as well as some more information in Procksh, *TDNT* (pp. 111-13).

and cause of the happening.⁴⁷³ The whole of the passage, chapter 25 and beyond 29.4, deals with the details of the fabrication of this tabernacle as well as the details of some of the different services that were to take place in the sanctuary.⁴⁷⁴ Most of the activities programmed to take place would happen for the first time in this historical context. Many parts of the service were to become a regular and perpetual practice. However, a particular one was to be unique in this specific context.⁴⁷⁵ It is on one part of this contextually unique service that my attention is brought in the present discussion. In Exod. 29.4, as identified already, there is a distinctive rite that is to take place in the context of the establishment of this sanctuary. This is the washing with water of particular individuals at what seems to be an exceptional occasion.

This water purification rite is to occur within the context of establishing the priesthood, and it is to particularly aim at signifying the Aaronic investiture as being a specific and perpetual order of priests who would minister in this new sanctuary.⁴⁷⁶ There seems to be no other biblical reference relating to a practice of washing the priests with water before they take service in the sanctuary in the years to follow. This singularity makes this event unique in nature and probably in meaning too. Although there is plenty of evidence for continual water purification usages in the OT in relation to the priests, this particular event does not seem to have been duplicated at

⁴⁷³ 'And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.' KJV

⁴⁷⁴ See, Dozman (2009, pp. 603–9) on the aspect of the nature and role of the building as it is presented in the biblical text.

⁴⁷⁵ In chapter 28, the verses 30 and 35 seem to present the details of a service that the priest is to perform 'continually', and in the last text, there is the notion of repetitive actions. The biblical historical data does provide evidence that these were continually happening in the context of the sanctuary service. The content of the NT book of the epistle to the Hebrews does confirm the perpetual nature of the above specifics in the Hebrew sanctuary service that went on for centuries. See for instance, Heb. 9.2-4, 6, 7. See also, Steyn (2011).

⁴⁷⁶ According to the book of Numbers, in chapter 16 and verse 40, God made the clear choice of having exclusively and perpetually Aaron and his descendants as priests in this sanctuary service. This choice was public, definitive and miraculously signified, according to Num. 17.5, 6.

any time after.⁴⁷⁷ It is noteworthy that in Exod. 30.21, the text is without any ambiguity on the fact that this water purification act of the priest is to be from generation to generation. Thus, it appears that while in Exod. 29.4 and in 30.18, 19, 20, 21, Aaron and his sons are subject to purification by water in the context of the sanctuary service, these texts do not deal with the same thing. There are two sorts of water purifications occurring here, and the difference seems not limited to just a passive and an active role of the priest in the processes. There needs to be an investigation into the elements that set them apart and class them differently while they seem to occur in the same context.

If the context in which both water purifications involving Aaron and his sons are mention is the same, according to Exodus 25-30, yet, there is a difference to be made even within it. This difference is expressed through the consideration of the immediate context of both texts. Exod. 29.4 is immediately situated in the context of an investiture procedure.⁴⁷⁸ In verse 1 of this chapter, we encounter this saying of The Lord to Moses, וְזֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר־תַּעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם לְקַדְּשׁ אֹתָם לְכַהֵן לִי. This is the first part of verse 1 that continues along with verses 2 and 3 that specify the different acts that Moses is to perform in order to fulfil the above first part of verse 1. There are clear terms that define the goal of the procedure that Moses is asked by the Lord to engage in with Aaron and his sons. ‘This is what you shall do to לְקַדְּשׁ אֹתָם לְכַהֵן לִי.’ The first expression, לְקַדְּשׁ אֹתָם, ‘to sanctify them,’ or ‘consecrate them’.⁴⁷⁹ The second

⁴⁷⁷ Even within the same context of the passage of interest, there is an emphasis on the necessity for the priest to use water to purify themselves in the context of their service to God in the sanctuary. There are at least four references in chapter 30 of Exodus, verses 18, 19, 20, 21 that all speak about Aaron and his sons washing themselves before entering the sanctuary, and this perpetually, so that they may not die.

⁴⁷⁸ This is commonly called the ‘ordination’ of the priests, see, Dozman (2009, pp. 655–56).

⁴⁷⁹ See, קָדַשׁ in BDB (p.872). As it is the case in different English renderings of this text, this word is translated in many different ways in the Bible. Sometimes it is rendered ‘consecrate, set aside, sanctify,

expression, לִי לְכַהֵן 'to minister as priests to me' or 'to serve me in the priest's office', as some English versions translate.⁴⁸⁰ Although כַּהֵן is a different word,⁴⁸¹ it is an extension of the thought, one that makes the whole very explicit in terms of the activity for which they are set apart within the sanctuary service context.

Therefore, this immediate context of Exod. 29.4 highlights the inaugural background against which this water purification act is to be performed. This is the establishment of the exclusive Aaronic ministry as priests to the Lord, within the larger passage that deals with the establishment of the sanctuary service itself. This water purification act is particularly attached to a one-time initiatory service that subjects both humans and accessories to God's service at his command. The human aspect is the priesthood of Aaron and his sons, whereas, the accessory or material aspect is the sanctuary itself with its different furniture components. Both are subject to a particular consecration ceremony at the inauguration of Israel's first and first-time sanctuary service. This is evidenced by the other reference that contains the information recorded in Exod. 29.4 and relative to the water purification of Aaron and his sons by Moses. As mentioned before, in chapter 40 and verse 12 of the same book of Exodus, there is a repetition record of this single event regarding the washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses. The expressions that indicate in both texts the charge of Moses by the Lord toward Aaron and his sons are identical and point at a single act in time. אֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְרָחֲצָתָם⁴⁸²

hallow, but it always demotes the idea of 'setting apart' someone or something for a holy purpose. See also, Holladay (2000, p. 334).

⁴⁸⁰ See, alternative English readings, in NAS, NLT, RSV, KJV, ESV, NET. Whatever the translation followed here, the meaning is the same.

⁴⁸¹ See, כַּהֵן in *BDB* (p. 464). The main idea that is attached to his word is that of 'serving as a priest'. See also, Holladay (2000, p. 152) that views it in the light of 'performing the duty of a priest'. In *TWOT* (1980) it is 'act as a priest'.

⁴⁸² This part of the text in Exod. 29.4 is identical to the last part of Exod. 40.12. In fact these two verses are the same except for the ordering of the words in part that differ in both the HB and the LXX.

However, there is a point of difference that is found beyond the wording variance between these two verses. This difference is made only when seeking to chronologically set the actual event, אֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְרַחֲצָתָּ, in place with regard to the whole ceremony. In Exod. 29.4, the text begins with וְאֶת־אֹהֶרֶן וְאֶת־בְּנָיִל תְּקַדֵּשׁ and in Exod. 40.12 it is וְהִקְרַבְתָּ אֶת־אֹהֶרֶן וְאֶת־בְּנָיִל. In most English translations there is almost no difference between this first part of the sentence in both verses.⁴⁸³ Yet, one change that occurs in the RSV is noteworthy. While in both the HB and the LXX, the sentence begins with a particle conjunction, they have decided to ignore this conjunction in Exod. 29.4 and to keep it in 40.12.⁴⁸⁴ This choice of translation is significant and helpful in the context of this thesis. The decision of the RSV to translate this conjunction ‘then’ at the beginning of Exod. 40.12 seems to take into consideration a chronological sense that is to characterise one of the two narratives more than the other. In Exod. 29.4, among other things that are to be done on the list, in the context of the building and having a sanctuary in place, Moses is to ‘wash them with water’ at the door of the sanctuary. This text is part of the larger passage that begins in chapter 25 that has the specific reference to this point in verse 8. Whereas, in Exod. 40.12 Moses is to ‘wash them with water’ at the door of the sanctuary, this time it is not a list of things that is given, but a precise order of service as it is to take place on the day. The reason why the RSV has translated, this time, the conjunction as ‘then’ is because it follows another action in time.

Therefore, the backgrounds in which these two texts that in essence refer to the same thing are different. This difference is further exposed in the reading of Exod. 40.1, 2 that clearly identify the occasion at which this washing of Aaron and his sons

⁴⁸³ See, ESV, KJV, NAS, NLT, NET, RSV.

⁴⁸⁴ In the HB and in the LXX the conjunction is the same in both texts, וְ and καί, but they can be construed differently, see, וְ in, Brown (1907), and καί in, *GEL LXX* (2003).

was to take place. The time is **בְּיוֹם-הַתְּחִלָּה הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ** and for the occasion it is **תִּקְוִים אֶת-מִשְׁכַּן אֱלֹהֵי מוֹעֵד**.⁴⁸⁵ The following verses, 3-16, simply tell with details of the order in which they were to proceed with the ceremony. The context of the use of water purification is that of the setting in place for the first time of the ‘tent of meeting’. This occasion could reasonably be classified as ‘the inauguration ceremony’ of the sanctuary.⁴⁸⁶ The case becomes even clearer when considering verse 9 of this passage. At this first occasion of the setting up of this tent of meeting, Moses is commanded **וּמִשְׁחָהָ אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ וְקִדַּשְׁתָּ אֹתוֹ** meaning ‘you shall anoint the tabernacle, and everything in it, you shall sanctify it’. This action of Moses, the anointing of the ‘tabernacle’ with **אֵלֶּיךָ שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה** meaning ‘the anointing oil’, precedes the same anointing action with the same ‘anointing oil’⁴⁸⁷ by the same Moses, of Aaron and his sons for the same reason of ‘sanctify them’⁴⁸⁸ to serve as priests.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁵ A common translation for these two sentences would be respectively, ‘on the first day of the first month’, and ‘you shall erect the tent of meeting’. See, the different English translations.

⁴⁸⁶ See how the text is formed with the series of command from God to Moses in this passage. Exod. 40.2 states that Moses should ‘rise’ or ‘erect’ (from the Hebrew **קום**) the ‘tabernacle’. This is historically the very first time that this will happen. In other words this is the beginning or the initial step of a practice that will last many years. It is noteworthy, that the time when this is to happen is significant in terms of beginning, ‘the first day of the first month’. It has been argued that this temporal element of the text is to emphasise the relationship between the creation of the earth and the construction of the tabernacle, see, Dozman (2009, p. 764). Other internal evidence in support of the inauguration nature of the service is the fact that from verses 3-8, the different articles furnishing the tabernacle are set in their places, and then from verse 9-11, they are ‘anointed’ with that specific ordination-oil in order to ‘sanctify’ or ‘make holy’ the tabernacle. This ceremony only took place once in all the instances they had to erect this tabernacle.

⁴⁸⁷ Although, there is no mention here of the use of the same anointing oil, that is for both the tabernacle and the people who are being anointed, it is more than reasonable to think that it is the case. However, it is the anointing action that is the focus here, and it is most definitely the same action.

⁴⁸⁸ Here again, the word **קדש** is not used in this particular verse, but the underlying thought is the same as in verse 9 since it is found in the preceding verse, 13, on which 15 builds. In verse 15, their **מִשְׁחָה** ‘anointing’ sets them apart for the **כֹּהֲנִים** ‘priesthood’ from generation to generation.

⁴⁸⁹ It is doubtless that in verses 13 and 15, the action of anointing Aaron and his sons with this oil is the same as the action of anointing the tabernacle in verse 9 because of who commands it, who performs it, what the reason is for it is, and how all of this is taking place in the same passage within the same context. See the usage of the key words in the original text. **וּמִשְׁחָה אֹתָם**, this is with regard to the sons of Aaron, but the text in 13 says that Aaron was also anointed by Moses, and it is reflected

The inaugural tone of the passage with respect to the sanctuary permeates the whole narrative as much as does that of initiation or ordination of Aaron and his sons as priests. The narrative, beyond the sixteenth verse, from 17, expresses even more strongly the nature of the event recorded in 1-16 in those terms. Verse 16 marks the epilogue of the ordination service by stipulating the fact that Moses performed everything according to the Lord's commands. It brings to clear closure this episode of the setting of both the sanctuary and the Aaronic priesthood that took place on that same 'first day of the first month'. As if to confirm the intention of separating this part of chapter 40 with the remainder of it, the same time paradigm is a clear indicator that the event spoken about in this passage is the same as in the preceding. The action of setting up the tabernacle is also an identifying element of what is taking place at that time. It is the same event, but the function of the second part's content of Exodus 40 seems different to that of the first. The tabernacle was set up for the first time in the second year of Israel's journey from Egypt to the Promised Land.⁴⁹⁰ There is a time gap of exactly one year between Exodus 12, and the narrative that constitutes Exodus 40.

The section of interest in Exodus 40, from which it is possible to see continuity and yet a contrast with the former portion (1-16), includes verses 17-35. At the start of the latter, the subject matter is clarified; it is the setting up of the tabernacle. This is then the first time that the tent of meeting is קוֹם.⁴⁹¹ The same vocabulary is consistently used in the whole chapter in reference to the setting up of

in verse 15 as says the following sentence, *כִּי יִשָּׂא אֶת־אֲבִיהֶם וְכִהְיוּ לִי*. In this sentence 'their anointing' is the same as that of Aaron, and it is for their 'consecration' forever as priests to the Lord.

⁴⁹⁰ A reading of Exod. 12.2 marks the timing element from which the temporal frame given in Exodus 40 is intelligible. The notion of the second year can only be understood in this context.

⁴⁹¹ It is appropriate to translate this verb as 'set up' in the context of the event that is taking place in this text. It usually means, 'to arise', 'to stand', 'to erect', and a host of other meanings can be applied in this field. The subject can be, and often is a person, but not always as it is shown in this case. For more, see, Brown (1907, p. 877); Holladay (2000, p. 316).

the sanctuary in both sections.⁴⁹² It is then clear that both sets of texts are dealing with the setting up of the tent of meeting, but one of them is also dealing with the setting up of the tent at different occasions. What is the most contrasting between 1-16 and 17-35 is the fact that the description of the service that is taking place at the setting of the tabernacle is both similar and different. There is a rather detailed account in 17-35 of the procedures followed by Moses in setting the sanctuary that is missing in the first section. While however, those details did not surface in 1-16, the nature of them reasonably insures that they were part of the procedure, but not described in the passage.⁴⁹³ Although this additional information element is in itself a point of contrast between the two passages, we also find common elements between the two that paradoxically seem to create more disparity. Take for instance the common expression that identifies the origin of Moses' actions at every stage, **כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה**. This expression occurs about 8 times in the second narrative and in 1-16 it is found once under this form, but clearly intended under the consistent verb form found in the text.⁴⁹⁴ The obvious link is that whatever happens in one and the other, Moses in his actions is subject to the Lord's instructions.

⁴⁹² In chapter 40, this word is used 5 times with the same meaning. The reason for this is the nature of the narrative's content, which is the setting up of the sanctuary. See, Exod. 40.2, 17, 18, 33. Moses, in the Torah has made of this word such a familiar one in his narratives that it occurs in every book of the Pentateuch for a total of 145 times, of which 20 in the book of Exodus. Of those 20 times there is one more use in the context of the setting up of the sanctuary, in Exod. 26.30. The remaining 14 times have all subjects as people in action. This is a relevant piece of information to understand the dynamism that is attached to this verb in Exodus. Using this word consistently in chapter 40 for two different events that have in common one action, the setting up of the sanctuary, calls for a recognition of this difference through comparison.

⁴⁹³ One example of this is in the fact that in 1-16 there is the setting in place of the tent that would have necessitated the tasks described in 17-35, by implication, yet, are not mentioned. See, for instance, the precise how-to-do elements found in 18-21, and in the rest of the text the precise place for every utensil in the tabernacle. This explains the greater frequency in 17-35 of the expression **כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה** than in 1-16.

⁴⁹⁴ This point is made clear when observing what forms the division of verses from 3-15. Every single verse in this passage is introduced by the command of God to Moses in the same terms as how it transpires in most English translations, 'Then you shall'. This is in the effort to keep the force of the same Hebrew grammatical form used for every action that the Lord is commanding Moses to perform, according to the introductory sentence of verses 1 and 2. Every verb of action that Moses is supposed

Thus, the underlying principle behind Moses' actions in both of these blocks is obedience to the Lord's detailed directives. These actions take place under inspiration of divine origin. Moses is only a vector of the will of the Lord in both of these passages whatever the event that is taking place at times. The dealings are similar to a great extent, yet, there is a major difference that becomes obvious once the background for each is established. This difference further clarifies the one specific point that is of interest to this thesis. In Exod. 40.1-16, the text focuses on a one-time event, the inauguration of the sanctuary. This tent of meeting, however, will be set up many times again in the future, but this will happen without repeating the actions that are specified in the above passage. As for the passage in Exod. 40.17-35, it aims at clarifying the preceding point by somehow contrasting with it, while extending the list of rituals to take place continually as opposed to only once and for all. This is its focal point.

Similarly, in Exod. 40.1-16 the text focuses on the initiation of the priests, Aaron and his sons for the service of God in the sanctuary, without any concern for perpetuation. Consequently, the priests will be serving continually, yet, what takes place in Exod. 40.1-16 between them and Moses will never be repeated in the future. Although in the whole of Exodus 40 it is the narrative of the first-time setting of the tabernacle, there is a contrast between Exod. 40.1-16 and 17-35 that aims at clarifying a point. One of the points of contrast is in verses 31-32 where it is mentioned that Moses, Aaron and his sons 'washed their hands and their feet'. This is more identifiable with the developments that took place in the daily ministering of the priests (Exod. 30.19-21), than with what took place between Moses on one side, and Aaron and his sons on the other side in Exod. 40.12. In support of this difference is

to take is introduced by a qal, perfect, with vaw consecutive, 2nd person, masculine, singular. See, *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar* (1910, pp. 332–33).

the textual element found in Exod. 40.36-38 that clearly exhibits the repetitive nature of the happening during the forty-year period of the wilderness experience of the people. There should be no need for the last section of Exodus 40, if there were not a contrast aiming at stressing the unique feature of Exod. 40.1-16 in the initiation context of the narrative.

This argument of a specific inauguration and initiation of both the tabernacle and the priesthood at the occasion of the first setting of the sanctuary is supported by the narrative in the eighth chapter of the book of Leviticus. It is in Lev. 8.6 that the third mention of Moses washing Aaron and his sons is made. Upon reading this text in its contexts, the whole chapter, it becomes very apparent that its content coincides with that of Exodus 29 and relates the same event in time and space, and now in the context of the event actually taking place. A comparison between Exod. 29.35 and Lev. 8.33 corroborates the fact that these texts are dealing with an exclusive initiation service for Aaron and his sons denoted as ‘consecration’ in both texts, one being the plan of action and the other its fulfilment.⁴⁹⁵ While both chapters more specifically deal with the consecration of the priests in clear terms,⁴⁹⁶ Lev. 8.10 mentions particularly the anointing of the tabernacle.⁴⁹⁷ The latter reference contains the same

⁴⁹⁵ The most frequent terms use in both texts are identical in meaning as, for instance, מָלַא . See, Brown (1907, pp. 569–71). There is no doubt that this is the same event. It should also be noted that although the whole of the chapter focuses on the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the office of priests in Exodus 29, and this should reasonably be referred to as an exclusive treatment in the text, there are other elements which are common, such as the ritual sacrifices. Also, there is in verses 38 and 42 an explicit element of routine. In these particular verses, there is a reference to a perpetual ritual that will take place in the future beyond the one-time event mainly described. These elements, however, do not change the exclusive nature of the content of this chapter, namely, the consecration of the priests, and in 36, 37, in the same terms some utensils used in the tabernacle service.

⁴⁹⁶ A count of the use of specific expressions reveals how emphatic is the subject of the consecration of the priest in this chapter. There are at least four major terms in use here, and they all convey the same thought since they are grammatically and syntactically attached to Aaron and his sons. In verses 1, 33, 44, קָדַשׁ is used, in 7, it is מִשְׁחָה that is used, in 9, 29, 33, 35, we find מָלַא , and in 22, 26, 27, 31, 34, it is מָלֵא . For the definitions and details on the usages of these terms, see, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000) and *TWOT* (1980).

⁴⁹⁷ It also is the case in Exodus 29, but only by implication, according to verses 36, 37, that deal specifically with one article, the Altar, using the words קָדַשׁ and מִשְׁחָה that are used for the ordination or

information as in Exod. 40.9, which is the part of the chapter that deals with the same event as in chapter 29. Therefore, in Exod. 29; 40.1-16; Lev. 8, the background of the main text that deals with the washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses is unquestionably the same. This washing, this use of water purification, by a washer, on a third party, under the Lord's command, is part of an initiatory, ordination or consecration ritual for a public service to God.

It is in this context that Moses applies this ritual to Aaron and his sons before the whole congregation of the children of Israel as a sign of their dedication to God as priests forever. It is clear that every specific passage from which comes Exod. 29.4; 40.12 and Lev. 8.6 does not contain the whole of the acts that were to be performed on that day for that exclusive event. The washing was just part of a more extensive ritual, but it is noteworthy that while the three accounts tell more or less different parts of this more ample ceremony, they have one noticeable common element and feature. This element is the combined washing and the anointing with oil of Aaron and his sons by Moses in an initiatory context.⁴⁹⁸ This would perhaps suggest that in this context of the priestly initiation, ordination, consecration ceremony, the washing and anointing of the priest over which Moses exclusively presided could not be left out of any of the narratives. Further investigation shows that it is possible in Exod. 40.1-16 to exclude a number of elements that constituted the content of the ceremony, and to conclude the narrative with **כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה**, but the washing and the anointing parts are indispensable.⁴⁹⁹ Similarly, the anointing of the tabernacle with oil could be

consecration of the priests in that event. There is no explicit denotation about the dedication of the sanctuary in Exodus 29.

⁴⁹⁸ Although, in Exod. 29.7 and Lev.8.12 the emphasis is on the Anointing of Aaron's head, in Exod.40.15 the sons are being anointed in the same manner as their father is.

⁴⁹⁹ A number of things, such as the number of days for the consecration, the sacrifice of the bullock for sin, the procedure about the handling of the blood of the animal, the fat of the sacrifice, what to do with certain parts of the sacrificed victims and other items of this ceremony are not mentioned in Exod. 40.1-16, but found in Exod. 29.10-13, 35 and Lev. 8.14, 16, 33.

left out in Exodus 29 while it is clearly part of the ceremony as it appears in Exod. 40.9 and Lev. 8.10, but not the washing-and-anointing-of-the-priests' parts. In Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8, the item lists for the procedure are similarly much more detailed than in Exodus 40, yet, there still are differences between them. While in both Lev. 8.26 and Exod. 29.2 there are clear instructions for the unleavened bread, only the latter reference contains details related to the composition of the bread, for instance, and this small difference is conclusive on what could and could not be omitted.⁵⁰⁰

Consequently, the picture that emerges from this comparison of the different passages is one that highlights the importance of the washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses in the three accounts. In conjunction with this use of water purification rite in this specific context is the importance of the oil-anointing ritual of the same people. Although it is clear that these two elements are inseparable in view of their prominence in the narratives, only one for now should be the object of my focus. The

⁵⁰⁰ Exod. 29.2 stipulates that the bread is to be made with 'wheat', whereas, in Lev. 8.26 there is no information about it. This is not the only point of difference. Concerning the anointing of the priest, cf. Exod. 29.4-9; Lev. 8.30. The details about the garments in their parts are more in Exodus 29 than in Leviticus 8. The procedure for the sprinkling of Aaron and his sons with the blood of the ram in Exod. 29.21, the sprinkling of the priest with the blood of the ram and with the oil, as if the blood and the oil are mixed together, or even if it is not the case and that the actions are consecutive, the sprinkling remains the *modus operandi* for the use of both. The Hebrew word is זָרַק and it means 'to sprinkle' or 'to spatter' in Exod. 29.21, according to Brown (1907, p. 633), see, also Holladay (2000, p. 232). The equivalent of this action in the Levitical account is found in chapter 8 and verses 23, 24, 30, but not in Exod. 40. The pouring of the oil on Aaron's head or anointing is found in Exod. 29.7; 40.13, 15; Lev. 8.12, but there is no record of the sprinkling with blood and oil of the candidates in Exodus 40. In both books, Exodus 29, and Leviticus 8, concerning the details about where the blood of the ram was applied on them are given, see, Exod. 29.20 and Lev. 8.23, 24, but there is no such information in Exodus 40. The anointing of the priests, Aaron and his sons, by Moses is common to all three accounts, but not the sprinkling of them with blood and oil. There can be no mistake as to the difference between sprinkling with oil, and anointing the head by pouring the oil upon it. Concerning the act of anointing someone with oil, the Hebrew word for that is שָׁחַ and in this context it only means 'to pour' by act of causing to flow, according to the consistent use of oil in anointing events in the Bible. See, Brown (1907, p. 427); Holladay (2000, p. 141). This is the same event about which Moses is to follow the exact instruction given by the Lord, but the accounts are different since some parts of the procedure are omitted in the different accounts. Such is not the case with the washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses, they are in all three accounts which follow different chronological orders of action, but they occur quite early in all three. The anointing of the head of Aaron with oil occupies the same position. Also, it should be noticed that Leviticus gives the account of the actual event, whereas Exodus 29 and 40 are God's revelation to Moses of what he will have to do when the time comes. This may explain the complementarity between the two texts and the probable avoidance of redundancy. Literary critics may have an explanation to offer based on when, and by who they think the books were authored. See, Dozman (2009, pp. 31–41).

washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses is to be more closely examined in order to determine whether or not it has any relevance to the main subject of this research. The point has been made that this particular experience, the use of water purification in an inauguration and dedication context with a presiding figure over the act, is the only event in the OT that is comparable to what John the Baptist did. I should therefore, engage with the thematic parallel that seems to transpire between these two unique and unparalleled stories. I will begin with investigating the possibility of a semantic link between the notion of washing by Moses in Exod. 29.4, Exod. 40.12, Lev. 8.6, and the notion of washing by John the Baptist in Matthew.

4.2.4.4 A Semantic and Contextual Link Between Washings

In the specific OT texts that have been mentioned in the context of the washing of Aaron and his sons, the Hebrew word that is used is *רָחַץ*.⁵⁰¹ All three references above occur under the same grammatical form, *וַיִּרְחֹץ*, in spite of wording differences in the texts.⁵⁰² There is absolutely no variation so that the subject matter is totally unambiguous in all three. The command of the Lord to Moses is to wash or bathe Aaron and his sons with water at the door of the sanctuary and in sight of all the congregation of Israel. The use of this word is uneven, but present in every book of the Pentateuch in various contexts.⁵⁰³ It is noteworthy that in the book of Leviticus that contains 26 occurrences of *רָחַץ*, only four times the subject of the verb is not a

⁵⁰¹ The meaning of this word is consistently, ‘wash, wash off, away, bathe’ according to Brown (1907, p. 934), see also, Holladay (2000, p. 338); *TWOT* (1980).

⁵⁰² Cf. Exod. 29.4; Exod. 40.12; Lev. 8.6.

⁵⁰³ In all the first five instances that this word is used in the Pentateuch, in Gen. 18.4; 19.2; 24.32; 43.24, 31, it is strictly in relation to the washing of the feet, but the next usage of it in Exod. 2.5, there, is implied the washing of the whole body, someone who came to the river to bathe. The following occurrence of the 11 times in total in the book of Exodus, in Exod. 29.4, is the first of the three references under scrutiny. The overwhelming majority of occurrences are found in the book of Leviticus, 26 times over the 47 in total in the Pentateuch. This is significant in the light of the priestly nature and ritualistic content of Leviticus.

person, but parts of sacrificed animals.⁵⁰⁴ In all the 22 other instances, the word is best translated ‘bathe’ because of the ritual purification context in which it is used.⁵⁰⁵ In addition to this contextual element, in most of these Levitical texts, רָחַץ is juxtaposed with כָּבַשׁ that is used mainly for the washing of garments, at least in Leviticus.⁵⁰⁶

Also, this difference is significantly maintained in the LXX through the use of two different words as in the Hebrew. For the washing of the clothes especially, the Greek translation has consistently chosen the word πλύνω,⁵⁰⁷ and for the washing of persons, wholly, the word λούω is used.⁵⁰⁸ The significance of the differentiation in terms is further exhibited in the fact that in the HB, the permutation of these two words (רָחַץ and כָּבַשׁ) for the other objects (clothes and persons) is very rare. According to *BDB*, the use of כָּבַשׁ for a person is only in a figurative or poetic sense in the biblical context.⁵⁰⁹ The Greek equivalent as in the LXX, πλύνω, is also most regularly used for ‘inanimate objects’ and with the notion of a detergent involvement.⁵¹⁰ Even when πλύνω is used sometimes for persons, as in Lev. 13.55 for instance, the context still evokes a washing that is more of a sanitary nature than of a

⁵⁰⁴ See, Lev. 1.9, 13; 8.21; 9.13. It should also be noted that those animal parts that are subject to washing seem to be integrally so, according to context.

⁵⁰⁵ All these occur in the context of ritual purification of the body from unclean happenings or circumstances. See, Lev. 14.8, 9; 15.5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16, 18, 21, 22, 27; 16.4, 24, 26, 28; 17.15, 16; 22.6.

⁵⁰⁶ It does not mean that this word is exclusively use in this way in the OT see, Brown (1907, p. 460); Holladay (2000, p. 151). The point here is that its most frequent use as in the above relevant texts is the one just exposed.

⁵⁰⁷ See, Abbott-Smith (1999, p. 367); *GEL LXX* (2003); T. Muraoka (2002, p. 465).

⁵⁰⁸ See, T. Muraoka (2002, p. 350); Abbott-Smith (1999, p. 272); *GEL LXX* (2003).

⁵⁰⁹ See, Brown (1907, p. 460). In Jer. 2.22; 4.14; Ps. 51.4, where this term כָּבַשׁ is used for a person, it is clear that the context evokes the washing as that of clothes. It is not the perspective of ritual bathing that is in view in the above instances as it would be in the book of Leviticus, especially, with the use of רָחַץ.

⁵¹⁰ See, Jer. 2.22; 4.14; Ps. 51.4, and Abbott-Smith (1999, p. 367); *GEL LXX* (2003); T. Muraoka (2002, p. 465).

ritual one.⁵¹¹ As for the other term, $\gamma\eta\eta$, of which the LXX equivalent is $\lambdaούω$, and that is more broadly used in terms of the objects attached to it, the ‘ceremonial’ context is most frequently the one in which it is found.⁵¹²

Thus semantically, there is a course to be pursued in order to establish the nature of the washing to which Aaron and his sons are subjected by Moses on that special day. What can be inferred in view of the above elements of consideration is that this washing of the priests by Moses with water is characterised by words that in both the HB and the LXX emphasise the ceremonial and ritual nature of the act more than otherwise. This washing is not that of a part of the body, but that of the whole. This last aspect is also further clarified by the contrast that is evident in the use of the word $\nuίπτω$ ⁵¹³ in Exod. 40.30, 31, 32. This word is generally considered as a synonym of $\lambdaούω$, yet, the difference between the two seems self-imposing. Perhaps this difference is explicit when considering its place of occurrence in one of our passages of interest. In Exodus 40, $\nuίπτω$ is used instead of $\lambdaούω$ for the Hebrew $\gamma\eta\eta$ in the second part of the chapter that contrasts the first one (40.1-16 and 17-32) in terms of the nature of the event taking place on that day, but as it would in the future. In Exod. 40.30, 31, 32, consistently, in the context of a perpetual ritual, $\nuίπτω$ emphasises the nature of the washing that is to take place regularly, and the parts of the priest’s body that needed washing are identified.

⁵¹¹ It is also fair to say without contradiction that sometimes $\piλύνω$ is used for $\gamma\eta\eta$ in the LXX in the ceremonial context for the washing of animal parts that have been offered in sacrifice as it is the case in Exod. 29.17; Lev. 8.21.

⁵¹² See, Holladay (2000, p. 338), whether it is applied to a person or to a sacrificed animal which parts are the object of this verb, the context is most frequently that of a ‘ceremonial washing’, see, Abbott-Smith (1999, p. 272); *GEL LXX* (2003) in the LXX.

⁵¹³ See, Abbott-Smith (1999, p. 303); *GEL LXX* (2003); T. Muraoka (2002, p. 387). This is the Greek word used for $\gamma\eta\eta$ when the washing in this specific ceremonial context is of only parts of the person’s body, as it would be understood from Exod. 40.30, 31, 32.

Therefore, the difference between *νίπτω* and *λούω* in Exodus 40, and more generally, is the distinction between the washing in part of a person and the washing of the whole in this ceremonial context. Both of them are used for *קָטַף* as they convey the same notion of ritual purification by water, but they express different act types. One event consistently dealt with in Exodus 29, 40 and Leviticus 8 is the inauguration of the tent of meeting and the initiation of the Levitical priesthood. The part of this occasion that is exclusively common to the three narratives is the washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses and the anointing with oil of them by the same. In all three references, Exod. 29.4; 40.12; Lev. 8.6, the terms used for the washing of the priests by Moses are identical in the HB and in the LXX. These terms, in the Hebrew and in the Greek, *קָטַף* and *λούω*, are specific to denote the ceremonial nature of the occasion and the type of the act taking place. In considering the definitions and usages of the other existing terms, *סָבַף*, *πλύνω*, *νίπτω*, there is evidence to support the idea of a possible link between this particular washing and the washing of people by John the Baptist. This evidence is seen through the analysis of the combined semantic and contextual facts. The combined elements of complete washing of the body with the use of *λούω*, the initiatory and sacral context established through the use of *קָטַף*, the uniqueness of the occasion in time and space because of the presiding of Moses over this ceremonial washing deserve attention. All of these may be significant in the quest for the origin of the use of the water-purification washing of the whole body practiced by John the Baptist.

Although in the NT the word that is used to describe John the Baptist's activity is *βαπτίζω*, a semantic and contextual parallel seems to exist between the two washings. The washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses, the *λούω* act on the priests, and the *βαπτίζω* act of John on people seem to be linked. This link could be

established in various ways, but one of them is related to the original form of the word and the context in which it is used in the LXX. It is argued that βαπτίζω is an intensified or developed form of βάπτω.⁵¹⁴ It is noteworthy that at least half of the occurrences of it in the LXX are in the specifically priestly activity sections of the Pentateuch.⁵¹⁵ It is in the Levitical context that βάπτω is mostly used, and exclusively for purification rituals within the sanctuary ministration.⁵¹⁶ Also, βάπτω is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word **לִטְבֹּל**⁵¹⁷ from which it has retained the essence of its OT usage.⁵¹⁸ Thus, βαπτίζω, which stems from βάπτω as previously discussed in the context of John's activity in the Gospels, essentially means washing people by immersing or dipping them in water. In fact, in the narrative of the purification of Naaman the leper, the Greek translation for **לִטְבֹּל** is βαπτίζω.⁵¹⁹ The context of this act

⁵¹⁴ See, Oepke (1985, pp. 529–30) on the etymological characteristics and use of βαπτίζω in ancient, and in literatures that are contemporary to biblical writings of OT and NT. Indeed, while βάπτω is only used in three places and for a total of four times in the NT, in Lk. 16.24; Jn 13. 13.26 twice, and in Rev 19.13, it is used sixteen times in the OT. The main idea here is that βαπτίζω is an intensification of the form βάπτω more frequently used in the OT than in the NT, and meaning 'to dip', 'to dye'. See also, *GELNT* (1998); T. Muraoka (2002, p. 83); Yoon (2004, pp. 10–3).

⁵¹⁵ See, Lev. 4.6, 17; 9.9; 11.32; 14.6, 16, 51; Num. 19.18; Deut. 33.24 and Exod. 12.22 that may not strictly be part of the priestly sections of the Pentateuch, but remains attached to the very context of priestly activities.

⁵¹⁶ See, Lev. 4.6, 17; 9.9; 11.32; 14.6, 16, 51. The vast majority of these references are concerned with the dipping of the finger of the priest in the sacrifice's blood in order to sprinkle it on whatever support, but the main idea here is that the finger is 'dipped' or immersed in to the blood. This is where the immersion connotation is found as in the denotation of βαπτίζω.

⁵¹⁷ See, Brown (1907, p. 371), according to which the Hebrew meaning, 'to dip', 'to bathe' is fully preserved in the Greek translation of the LXX. According to *TWOT* (1980), 'the verb conveys the immersion of one into another', and "'Dipping" is employed in Israel's religious ritual of cleansing'. It also recognises that its main LXX equivalent is βάπτω.

⁵¹⁸ While βάπτω is found 16 times in the LXX, **לִטְבֹּל** is found 15 times in the HB, and the references are quasi the same. In the Levitical portion of the Pentateuch, and more precisely in Lev. 11.32, βάπτω is put for another Hebrew word, **בָּרַח** which intended meaning through context is really reflected in the Greek translation. For this reason even some English translations of this text have used the words 'dip', and 'immerse' instead of 'put' or 'brought' as it is also found in other English translations. Cf. NLT, NET, ESV, KJV, NAS, RSV. For the meaning of **בָּרַח**, see, Brown (1907, p. 97).

⁵¹⁹ 2 Kgs 5.14 is the only place in the OT where the relationship between the words 'to dip' as it is rendered in all the major English translations for the Hebrew **לִטְבֹּל** is βαπτίζω in the LXX. Murray (1980, pp. 7–12) in his counter-argument on the above meaning of βάπτω has called attention to the idea that the word is not exclusively used to mean immersion. However, as always, it is by considering the context of word's usages that we come to a conclusion on their meanings in a text. His argument does not change the meaning of βαπτίζω in the Bible. In his treatment of the question of 'immersion',

is clearly that of ‘bathing’ (רָחַץ is used here not טָבַח)⁵²⁰ by immersing oneself ritually in the water (the Jordan River) in order to be purified or cleansed from the disease of leprosy.⁵²¹ Considering the function and contextual usage of βάπτω and βαπτίζω in the LXX and that of βαπτίζω in the NT, in the context of λούω, the semantic link is so strong that it cannot be broken or even overlooked. This immersion or dipping conveyed by βαπτίζω in the context of λούω is the *modus operandi* of the washing that is in view in the act of baptism.⁵²²

The parallels seem numerous and noteworthy since they are not limited to those mentioned above in the semantic field. There are others that have not been considered in details although they have been exposed to some degree. One of those is the parallel between the command of the Lord to Moses to wash or bathe all these people for a particular reason and in a way that had not been done before. The washing of these men was a novelty that occurred by divine appointment, according to Moses. There are also other factors of comparison that have not been brought to the discussion table at all. One of them is the historical genealogical background parallel between Moses and John the Baptist.

‘affusion’ and ‘sprinkling’, see, Marshall, n.d. (pp. 19–20). Making a decision about which one John practiced initially rests on other grounds than the meaning of the word itself.

⁵²⁰ In verse 10, Elisha the prophet gives the specific command to go and ‘wash’ himself. The LXX also consistently translated it as λούω.

⁵²¹ The unique OT usage of βαπτίζω for לָחַץ in this passage could be subject to a dipper analysis in relation to baptism, but I am only pointing at the fact that it is perfectly fitting in support of the present argument of a semantic link. The ritualism in this text is in view through the number of times, seven, that he was supposed to ‘dip’ or ‘immerse’ in the river in the act of washing himself, in conjunction with the nature of the goal of the experience, cleansing. Another point would be the usual parallel that is made between leprosy and sin in the biblical context.

⁵²² In his treatment of John’s baptism, Oepke (1985, p. 537) argues concerning the meaning of this act that ‘the basic conception is still that of the cleansing bath’.

4.2.4.5 A Common Levitical Genealogical Background Between Moses and the Baptist

It has been argued that John the Baptist was the one who initiated the practice of baptising people in the River Jordan during Jesus' time, according to the Gospels and Josephus.⁵²³ Scholars also agree that different sorts of baptisms are reported to have taken place in various groups within the Jewish religious belief systems of the first century.⁵²⁴ If they argue consensually in favour of a widespread practice and use of water purification rites before the time of John and contemporarily to him, they also recognise that his baptism is different to what had commonly taken place so far.⁵²⁵ This difference here is in the fact that he was personally administering this baptismal rite, hence the nickname 'the Baptist'. Having considered not just the paucity of examples of a baptiser and the fact that there is only one biblical act of administering ritual bathing, in the quest for the origin of the second, in time and space, the similarities and differences between the two must be exhibited through comparison. One of the similarities that appear in the process of comparing Moses' action to that of John is that they both share in the same genealogical and historical heritage, according to the Gospel of Luke. To be more precise, they both come from the same family line. The biblical record says that John's father, in Lk. 1.9, 'according to the

⁵²³ Nolland (2005, p. 136,140-42). Another perspective in support of this view can be appreciated in the analysis of the 'socio-historical' background against which John the Baptist lived and died as defined by Webb (1991, pp. 31-44). The fact that he was nick-named 'the Baptist' in both biblical and extra-biblical materials as Nolland points out in the above reference as well as Webb (1991, p. 163,216) and Taylor (1997, p. 49,50,100), there is a clear sense of him initiating this practice at that time. Oepke (1985, pp. 545-46) is insistent on the fact that what John did, and that owned him this nickname, was new and unique, and that 'he did not baptise himself, but contrary to all Jewish tradition, baptised others.' Webb (1991, p. 214).

⁵²⁴ Apart from the different types of water-purification rituals that are found in the OT and DSS, one of the most cited popular practice that has been referred to as a possible comparative ritual washing to John's baptism is the Jewish 'proselyte baptism'. However, scholars do not agree on the time frame when it was practiced, and the nature of it that would make these too distinct-in-several-ways rituals. See, Oepke (1985, pp. 537-38); Nolland (2005, p. 141); Webb 1991, p. 198); Taylor (1997, pp. 57, 64-9); Steinmann (1958, p. 66).

⁵²⁵ Speaking about the different water rituals that had been practiced before John, and along with testimonies found in the above sources on the uniqueness of John's baptism, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 299) state that 'John's distinctiveness is clear', that is his baptism.

custom of the Priest's office' was offering incense in the temple when the angel visited him with the annunciation of John's birth.⁵²⁶

Therefore, John the Baptist is a descendent of Aaron whom Moses washed wholly with water along with his sons at the entrance of the tent of meeting that was being inaugurated in the wilderness.⁵²⁷ This washing of the priests, administered by Moses, at their initiation service for the 'priest's office was a part of a larger ritual. This ritual signified their consecration to the service of God within the exclusively Levitical priesthood, as it was being instituted and expected to be perpetuated. In other words, John the Baptist was a Levite like Aaron, Moses' brother, and he was destined to the priestly ministry by lineage and by perpetual ordinance.⁵²⁸ While Moses was not a priest who officiated in the tabernacle after the institution of the Aaronic priesthood,⁵²⁹ he was a Levite within Israel like John the Baptist was. Moses

⁵²⁶ Luke's narrative of John's infancy is the only testimony available regarding the lineage from which the Baptist came. It has then been argued that this narrative must be treated with caution because of the agenda that might have prompted its writing, see, Taylor (1997, p. 9). However, there is no particular focus on the importance of such lineage in the idea relating John to Jesus by family ties in order to serve the Christian messianic-salvation history. See, Webb (1991, pp. 60–3); Nolland (2005, p. 137); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 286–90); Luz (2007, pp. 164–67). Still, some have posed that John the Baptist seems to have shared the priestly genealogical attribute with the 'Community of Kibeth Qumran', Howard (1970, p. 19).

⁵²⁷ This is a one-time experience, as it appears to have been the case for those John immersed in the Jordan River, including Jesus according to the NT texts. Scholars may argue on the possible multiple-times aspect of this baptism for the same candidates, but it is a suggestion that might be based on washing practices in the OT or on documents from the DSS, but not on NT biblical data on baptism. See, Steinmann (1958, pp. 64–6). For instance, in Acts 19.1–7, the question and response given about the nature of the baptisms received and administered indicate that baptism was seen as a single event in the NT.

⁵²⁸ Luke's genealogical identification of John through the annunciation and infancy narrative in Lk. 1.5–24 is evidence of the importance of this point in the Gospel story, in the light of the current discussion. It is to be noticed that Luke even mentions in this context, not just the nature of Zacharias' role and function in the temple, but the name of Aaron the first High priest of Israel as family linked with John the Baptist. It has been suggested that one of the possible links between John and the Essenes was their common 'priestly background', Taylor (1997, pp. 22–3); Steinmann (1958, p. 59) and various OT references on this aspect of things as in Exod. 29.28–30, for instance. While the Levites, the sons of Levi, were generally in charge of the tabernacle (Num. 1.51–53), there were divisions of ministerial tasks within the families in this tribe. Only the sons of Aaron were to become priests (Exod. 27.21; 40.15) and serve in the tabernacle that was later replaced with the temple (1Chron 8.6–11).

⁵²⁹ It is to be noted that though Moses was not officially counted as a priest, he did officiate in the service of the priest by the role he was to play in the establishment of the system. In Exod. 40.17–33, Moses is the one who is said to have set everything in place concerning the tabernacle, and in verse 31, he takes part in the same rituals as Aaron in order to minister in the tent on that day.

who is known as a prophet, incarnated in his ministry to the people in the wilderness, the very priestly figure that Aaron and his sons were to incarnate as ministers of the Lord within the sanctuary system. While John was a priest by succession, there is no record that he ever served as such in the Jerusalem temple that had replaced the tent of meeting that Moses in the wilderness erected.⁵³⁰ It is noteworthy that John is almost uniquely known in the biblical record as a prophet, one whose voice cries out in the wilderness, a prophet rather than a priest.⁵³¹ He is known in the biblical records and from Jesus' confession for being a prophet like Moses is one, and even greater than Moses, according to Mt. 11.9-11; 14.5; 21.26. While these points of focus are legitimate, the above-uncommented parallels become significant in the light of the discussion on the similarities between Moses and John.

Thus, on account of these textual elements of similarity, there is a link between the ministerial backgrounds of John the Baptist and that of Moses. This is relevant to the discussion on John's administration of baptism, a non-self-administered ritual bath as posed in this research. This relevance is put into perspective, first, by the fact that they both uniquely dispensed or presided over a contextually particular baptism. The relevance of this connection is reinforced by the

⁵³⁰ See the treatment of Luke's '*portrayal*' of John the Baptist in '*Luke/Acts*' by Webb (1991, pp. 60–70) and note that there is no halt on the relevance of the priestly characteristic of John's life. Like for most, the interest lies in his baptismal and prophetic activities. See, Taylor (1997); Webb (1991); Steinmann (1958) whose works meticulously examine the 'Baptist material' Taylor (1997, pp. 8–9) and the contribution of John the Baptist to the Gospel tradition, yet, there seems to be no reason for them to tarry on the priestly aspect of his identity as part of the plan. While there are remarks on this aspect of John's identity in the context of an Essene connection with him, it would seem that it is of no consequence to his mission as they examine 'the material' in the baptismal context. See, Howard (1970, pp. 18–9).

⁵³¹ This point is clearly seen in the fact that commentators spend most of their energy on the sayings and actions on John as they perceive them to be the focus in the Gospels. Mt. 3.1 introduces John as 'the Baptist' who came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, in Mt. 11.11, Jesus testifies that he is the greatest Prophet ever born of women. The most shared feature of his ministry in the synoptics and the Gospel of John is his auto-identification through the use of Isa. 40.3 in Mt. 3.3; Mk 1.3; Lk. 3.4; Jn 1.23. The titles of the works Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptist and Prophet A Socio-Historical Study*, Joan E. Taylor, *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism*, Jean Steinmann, *Saint John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition*, are revelatory of the general focus on the biblical character, but lack of perhaps a major element, the development of the priestly characteristic.

fact that there is no other biblical record of this nature that can claim a typological link. Secondly, this sort of administration of the baptismal rite occurs in the context of their service to God after an expressed and precise command from him. Thirdly, there is a rather pertinent argument for the assertion of this link in the fact that Moses and John share the same genealogical, ministerial and theological heritage. This compound element of genealogical, ministerial and theological heritage is significant in the light of God's choice to only allow this tribe to serve him in such capacity. Both men in their respective contexts received instruction from God to unusually administer this baptismal rite to others, according to the OT and the NT narratives. Although there is no direct instruction recorded in the Gospels, given to John as to Moses about ritually 'washing' people with water, it is explicit in Jesus' question to his opponents in Mt. 21.25 and John's statement in Jn 1.33 that it is the case. God directed and instructed John to perform this act as he did with Moses. Here, it would seem, are two individuals who are separated by centuries, yet, quite related in their common background within the Israelite context and the unique usage of baptism. There is no other exemplar of such conjunction in the context of cleansing baths or baptisms in both the OT and the NT.

Besides, it is noteworthy that although the baptism of Jesus is essentially recorded by the four evangelists, only Matthew seems to address the reason for it through our main text of interest. As shown in the exposition on Mt. 3.15, in the preceding chapter, the fulfilment of all righteousness, usually, but not exclusively treated with regard to Jesus' action, indeed, equally involves John's action.⁵³²

Matthew is not focussing here merely on Jesus as being the only one who fulfils all

⁵³² See, the explanation in this thesis of the phrase, *γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν*. It is to be noted that although, some scholars like Nolland (2005, p. 154) recognise the co-agency of the two characters in achieving this fulfilment, the main action of the event is characteristically overlooked, and there is a spiritualisation of the text that focuses on other things than the baptism as the object of the fulfilment.

righteousness through this event, but he includes John as co-agent in the action. It is the coupled fact that Jesus is being baptised and this by John, that the fulfilment of all righteousness is taking place according to the text. The administrator of the baptism is fulfilling righteousness by divine ordinance. In the same way, the receiver of this baptism is fulfilling righteousness by the same means, and the act of baptism itself with active and passive subject in this context is the fulfilment of all righteousness. The evidence of Matthew's tie with the OT in telling the life story of Jesus and his actions as fulfilling scripture more than the other Gospels is compelling and it affects this episode of the Gospel as well.⁵³³ Matthew has structured his account of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection in such a way that the reader may be able to identify him with his understanding of the pre-announced OT Messiah. He does it with precision through the use of OT scripture for every one of those stages that form the Gospel story. The baptism of Jesus could not in such a careful structure remain an absolute mystery that would be disconnected from the rest. Using the Matthean fulfilment theme also for this occasion is both theologically important and structurally consistent. It is through these two parameters that the Matthean link between Moses' baptism of Aaron and his sons, and John's baptism of Jesus should be examined and compared. A theological and typological relationship between Moses' and John's baptism seems to exist and needs to be investigated.

It has been said, with regard to the relationship between the public washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses, that it was a baptismal act in essence.⁵³⁴ It was the

⁵³³ See the treatment of this aspect in the literary analysis of Matthew's Gospel in chapter 1 of this thesis. Also, see how in Mt. 3.15 and Mt. 5.17, 'The language of fulfilment here is likely intended to pick up on its use with formula quotations.' Nolland (2005, p. 154).

⁵³⁴ Although, it has been argued that in Exod. 29.4, the washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses is unclear in its nature, and that it may not have been the washing of the entire body. See, Dozman (2009, p. 656). This suggestion does not seem reliable in the light of the elements considered in the above analysis regarding the nature and uses of the words involved in both the Hebrew and the Greek language as well as the context of the event. For instance, the specification of the only parts suggested

ritual washing, by Moses most importantly,⁵³⁵ that was commanded by God as part of a consecration ceremony in order to initiate them into their new role as priests of the Lord. The initiatory context is clearly defined by the procedures surrounding the event that is taking place in time and space. Although there would be other kinds of washings involved in this ceremony and that the term *ῥῥῥ* had been used before, here, it is specifically so in meaning. The same is true for *λούω* the LXX equivalent as seen before. There is no evidence that this type of action in this context had ever happened before in the biblical setting. Of all the instances where this verb is used prior to Exod. 29.4, it was never for ritual washings, but sanitary occasions.⁵³⁶ Not only is the usage of this word in a ceremonial setting a precedent here for all other similar biblical usages, but it also marks the beginning of all common Jewish ritual uses of water purification that later follow in the biblical narrative.

Therefore, the cultic and theological background in which all biblical ritual washings happen can be traced back to this historical and original experience of Moses bathing the new priests. The main reason for this is because it is the first time in the biblical history of the Israelites that an official priesthood is formed to serve God in the first ever geo-physical structure, where there is to be a dedicated space of

as being concerned with the washing in this hypothesis appears clearly in the records when it is the case, like in Exod. 40.31. The latter text is part in this account of the dedication in Exod. 40.17-38, and the account of what happened when the tent was erected subsequently as indicated in verses 36, 37. Webb (1991, p. 106) sees the rite performed in Lev. 16.4, 24 by the high priest on the Day of Atonement as 'immersion'. I will later deal with the similarity of the act in this text with what takes place in Exod. 29.4; 40.12; Lev. 8.6.

⁵³⁵ It is noteworthy that although the Hebrew text is using in Exod. 40.31 the word *ῥῥῥ* as in the other two similar texts that describe the event, the LXX introduces a different word to the one used in the three texts that exclusively deal with the washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses. In Exod. 40.31, the Greek word is *νίπτω* instead of consistent *λούω*. Not only it is *νίπτω*, which we have examined earlier, but the voice that is used in this text is indicative of an act that is performed by oneself, the middle voice. Exod. 40.12 and Exod. 40.31 speak about two different events.

⁵³⁶ See, Gen. 18.4; 19.2; 24.32; 43.24, 31; Exod. 2.5.

meeting between the Lord and his people.⁵³⁷ Moses had been chosen by God to be the instrument through which this whole concept was going to be put in place. We observe that all it is that Moses did was to speak to the people on behalf of the Lord from the time he was sent to them in Egypt, to the time of his death in the wilderness.⁵³⁸ Moses was the voice of the Lord to the people in this great wilderness. Of all the twenty-eight occurrences of the specific sentence, *דִּבֶּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל*, in the whole of the HB, only once is Moses not the object of this command from the Lord who used him as his mouthpiece to the children of Israel.⁵³⁹ This is what is specified in Exod. 20.19 where the people of Israel chose not to hear the voice of God, but to send Moses as an intermediary between them and God.⁵⁴⁰ They implored Moses to be the voice of God to them, and from this point in biblical history, before Exodus 29

⁵³⁷ See, Exod. 25.8, where the reason for this meeting place, the *מִקְדָּשׁ*, is given by God to Moses. This is the place where the Lord declares to want 'to settle' or 'dwell', *שָׁכֵן*, in the 'midst' of the people (see *BDB* on this word). The word for the 'tent of meeting' as sometimes translated in the English Bible (see the different English translations for Exod. 40.29 on this word) is *מִשְׁכָּן* as in Exod. 25.9, where it is mostly translated in English as 'tabernacle'. The same meaning is attributed to *מִקְדָּשׁ*, also mainly called in English 'the tabernacle' and 'sanctuary'. Thus, is established the relationship in this context between the two words that originate from the verb *שָׁכֵן*, and from the verb *קָדַשׁ* which we already dealt with as a word used in the narratives of the initiation of the Aaronic priesthood, and the inauguration of the sanctuary in Exodus 29, 40 and Leviticus 8. See, in Brown (1907) and Holladay (2000) the different nuances that there are to these words, and how they relate in the context of Exod. 25.8, 9. See also, Dozman (2009, pp. 609–10). On the historical interchangeability of the words, see, Soggin J. (2001, p. 37).

⁵³⁸ The narrative of the relationship between Moses, YHWH, and the Israelites is characterised by the frequent repetition of the expression 'the Lord said unto Moses' from Exodus to Deuteronomy, see for instance, Exod. 40.1 (RSV). This came about through the designation of Moses by the children of Israel to be the voice of God to them, according to Exod. 20.18-22. From this point it became the pattern for the rest of the wilderness experience in terms of his intermediary role in the relationship of the Israel of the desert with God.

⁵³⁹ All the other 27 times that this command, under this particular formula, is given in the Hebrew Bible it is addressed to Moses. The exception is when Moses is dead and replaced by Joshua to whom the Lord now speaks in this way. See, Josh. 20.2. Also, according to the KJV, this sentence would appear in English thirty-two times in the whole Bible, but the point is how this specific phrase would be essentially addressed to Moses in the HB. However, it should be noted that there are other similar commands that are addressed to different people with the same intent from God. See, Ezek. 3.1; 20.27 for instance.

⁵⁴⁰ In Deut. 16.18, Moses reminded Israel of their choice for him to be the intermediary between them and the Lord their God at the occasion specified above because they did not want to hear his 'voice' for fear. They made Moses the voice of the Lord in the wilderness experience.

and the institution of the Aaronic priesthood, the Mosaic style of a mediatory system through which God communicated with his people became the pattern in Israel.⁵⁴¹

Thus, Moses the mediator became the model and the principal instrument for the institution of this mediatory system, the priesthood that was to regulate the communication operatory mode between the Lord and his people. It is this mediatory system that Moses officially launched at the first erection of the *מִזְבֵּחַ* accompanied with the dedication (*שְׁמִי*) of Aaron and his sons as the designated and publically invested mediators of the Lord.⁵⁴² Moses was the means by which God established a greater and perpetual organ of communication through a more adequate, but still mediatory structure. The legitimacy of this new system came from the fact that it was through the tried mediation of Moses and what he represented that God established it. Moses had to preside over this ceremony in order for it to be valid in the eyes of Israel who was beginning a new chapter in their communication mode with God. In this context of starting this new institution, the Lord commanded Moses to preside over the bathing ritual through which the priest had to go, presumably, as a symbol of purification for their dedication to serving God as mediators between him and the

⁵⁴¹ See, Hoffmeier K. (2005, p. 9) on the impact of Moses' role as the mouthpiece of God in the OT tradition. According to Hoffmeier, Moses 'is the most dominant person in Jewish scripture'. This is due to the fact of the role the Bible claims that he played in the development and the making of the relationship of God with Israel physically, and through his writings for example, known as the Torah or 'the law of Moses' in the OT and the NT. One of the markers for this is that the name of Moses appears 693 times in the Bible, including 'around ninety times' in the NT. This is besides the fact that he played a role that is indisputably unique in the major part of Israel's history, the deliverance from Egypt and the wilderness experience which both remain unique and pivotal in the Jewish tradition. See also, Dozman (2009, p. 51) who recognises like most, that the story of Israel in the book of Exodus is intricately linked to the story of the life of Moses, and this book was 'influential in shaping the broader History of Judaism and Christianity'. It is simply noteworthy that every aspect of the legislative part of Israel's history in the Bible is dominated by the mediation of Moses between the people and God.

⁵⁴² Exod. 25.22, in the chapter that unveils the plan of God to *מִשְׁכָּן* 'tabernacle' with the people of Israel (in verse 8) through the means of the *מִשְׁכָּן*, the text brings into focus the main aim of this system. This is to communicate with the people through this intermediary system. In this text, the intermediary is Moses, but it is Aaron and his sons after him who will perpetually assume this function as officiating priests. Cf. Num. 7.89; Lev. 16.2; Exod. 28.29; 33.9, and see how Moses' example sets the pattern that the Aaronic priesthood will follow in terms of the communication mode of God that must go on for generations with the people once Moses is no longer this link.

people. If the ritualistic aspect of this bathing act is clear from context, understanding the meaning and significance of it beyond this aspect is still to be determined. So, the question to be posed is about the nature of this ‘water purification’ act and the reason for it as it appears to be the first ever of its kind that took place in this context.

4.3 Why Did Aaron and His Sons Need to Be Washed?

It has been said that this bathing of Aaron and his sons at the door of the new tabernacle is a unique experience in the biblical context. There is no other instance in the OT where it so happens that one is washed by another as part of a ritual that marks an ordination to the Levitical priesthood. It has also been said that this ritualistic use of water provides the first of a list of different types of washings that regulated the religious life of Israel and the Jewish water-purification rites that continued to exist even after the emergence of Christianity.⁵⁴³ These rites also commonly called ablutions are numerous and wide-ranging depending on the reasons they are used for and the circumstances that require them, according to the Torah and other literatures.⁵⁴⁴ Going through all the different types of usages of water cleansing rituals is beyond the scope of this research, and therefore, this will not be dealt with here.⁵⁴⁵ However, it is essential to note that while the use of ablutions is generally attached to the notion of cleansing from uncleanness,⁵⁴⁶ there is an exception to this. That

⁵⁴³ The testimonies of the DSS about the Qumran Community and various Jewish literatures of Second Temple Judaism give evidence of this. For a survey of this aspect of things, see, *Ablutions in the Old Testament and Second Temple Jewish Literature* in Webb (1991, pp. 95–132).

⁵⁴⁴ See, *Immersion and Purity* in Taylor (1997, pp. 49–100) as this chapter of the book presents a helpful survey of the different rites of purification by water in those literatures. Also, Yoon (2004, pp. 19–33); Neusner (1975).

⁵⁴⁵ See references in preceding footnotes

⁵⁴⁶ ‘To appreciate the significance of ablutions, the concepts of clean and unclean need to be understood’, Webb (1991, p. 96). This idea is sustained across scholarship. See for instance, Neusner (1975) who exposes his view on the origins of ‘purity’ and ‘impurity’ outside of ‘a cultic concern’, and therefore, the use of ablutions. However, the significance of ritual washings is factually known in the history of Judaism and Christianity through the ‘priestly’ material on which all of the other types of Jewish literatures have based the practice, see, Webb (1991, p. 108). It does not matter, in this context, what the theory is in terms of the origins of these concepts. The material that is available on the subject

exception is in some way related to the meaning of Aaron's and his sons' washing on that particular day of their ordination to the ministry as priests.

Indeed, in Lev. 16. 24 at one particular occasion in the priestly service in the sanctuary, there appears to be no notion of purification from uncleanness to the bathing (רָחַץ) of Aaron. It is noteworthy that in both the Hebrew (רָחַץ) and the Greek (λούω), the equivalence found in Exod. 29.4; 40.12 and Lev. 8.6 is kept in Lev. 16.24. The context and content of this passage indicate that this bathing of Aaron takes place at his exit from the presence of God in the tabernacle and the changing of clothing. The expression used here to describe his action after removing the priestly garments is the same as the one found at the beginning of the chapter to describe the action to be taken by him before wearing the same. This is in Lev. 16.4, וְרָחַץ בַּמַּיִם אֶת־בְּשָׁרוֹ , and in verse 24, וְרָחַץ אֶת־בְּשָׁרוֹ בַּמַּיִם , the only difference being the word order.⁵⁴⁷ It is noteworthy that the washing of Aaron in Exod. 29.4 as commanded by the Lord is also to be prior to the putting on of the same attire. Indeed, in Lev. 8.7 it is once that Moses has completed the washing of Aaron that he puts on him, בְּגֵדֵי־קֹדֶשׁ, the 'holy garments' as referred to in Exod. 28.2.

It seems impossible to overlook the association that is made between the act of bathing that would be qualify *a priori* as a purification act in Lev. 16.4 and the same act in Lev. 16.24.⁵⁴⁸ The challenge with this link though, in terms of identifying these two as one and the same act is that, looked at separately, it raises the question of the purpose of it. It would not be difficult to interpret the first as an act of water

is first intelligible within the OT context. See, Murray (1980, pp. 6–18) on his use of OT material as a starting point in his attempt to ascertain the origin of the discussion of the modes of Christian baptism.

⁵⁴⁷ This difference in the order of the words is of no consequence to the one and same meaning of the expression in both texts.

⁵⁴⁸ It is to be noted that in Lev. 16.4, the Hebrew (רָחַץ) and the Greek (λούω) are used like in the other texts of reference for the ordination of the priests. See, Webb (1991, p. 106) who notices rightly, the exceptionality of the procedure in Lev 16.4, 24, in relation to all other ablutions in terms of what it required.

purification given that Aaron is about to wear the **בגדי־קֹדֶשׁ**, for the first time, and therefore, needed to be ‘cleansed’.⁵⁴⁹ But did he need to be equally cleansed after wearing the **בגדי־קֹדֶשׁ**? The question of the purpose of the bathing of the whole body is definitely not as straightforward as it would have been had it not been for the occurrence of the same in Lev. 16.24.

In Lev. 16.24, the text indicates that after removing the ‘holy garments’ the same act of bathing was required of Aaron. A comparison between the following texts, Exodus 28 and Lev. 8.7; 16.4, 24, clarifies the fact that all these texts make reference, differently sometimes, to the same attire in relation to which Aaron had to be bathed (Lev. 8.6) and bathe himself (Lev. 16.4, 24) before and after wearing it. Exodus 28 contains a detailed list of the different parts that compose the whole of the **בגדי־קֹדֶשׁ** that is introduced in the second verse of the chapter with the expression, **לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת** that indicates the purpose for it. This same expression, **לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת**, translated in most English Bibles as ‘for beauty and for glory’⁵⁵⁰ is found at the conclusion of the chapter in verse 40. In the following verse, 41, the wearing of the same **בגדי־קֹדֶשׁ** is directly associated with their ‘sanctification’, ‘consecration’ or ‘dedication’ as it is translated from the expressions found in the text, **וְקִדְּשָׁתָם וְכָהֲנֵי לִי** and **וּמִשְׁחָתָם אֹתָם**. It is in this context of a detailed exposition on

⁵⁴⁹ The nature of his cleansing is not specific here as to know whether it was ceremonially physical, or moral, as the difference existed. ‘The predominant function of ablution in the OT is to cleanse an unclean person....that person is changed from unclean to clean.’ Webb (1991, p. 106).

⁵⁵⁰ Of all the English translations mentioned in this thesis, only the NLT has a different rendering of the text that causes them to have ‘glorious and beautiful’ instead of the common one above. The difference may indicate that the adjectives qualify the garments rather than the purpose for them as it could be understood with ‘for glory and for beauty’. Another translation is found in Dozman (2009, p. 635,39), where he has ‘distinction’ in place of ‘beauty’ in the first instance, and ‘honor’ in the last, for the same Hebrew and Greek word. In fact, an examination of the words in both languages is revealing of meanings that are similar and interchangeable, thus paralleling each other as for emphasis. See for *τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν*, T. Muraoka (2002, pp. 557, 133). As for the Hebrew words **לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת**, it is basically the same. See, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000).

the **בְּגָדֵי־קֹדֶשׁ** and the consecration that the bathing command to Moses comes to sight for the first time. Thus, making even at this stage, a direct relation between the wearing of the garments and the bathing can be firmly established in the light of Lev. 16.4, 24.

Nevertheless, establishing this relationship between these two elements is not satisfactory in answering the question about the rationale behind the bathing for no cleansing reason. It would be as if the answer to the query were simply that they had to be washed before wearing these ‘holy garment’ and that is it. Lev 16. 24 would not be intelligible in the light of this answer since it would make no sense to bathe in order to be clean after bathing for the same purpose. If the intricate link that has been established between the wearing of the ‘holy garments’ and the bathing is undeniable in view of the same texts, making the cleansing aspect the main factor between them is unsustainable for the above reason. The fact that the bathing occurs between the change of clothing both ways, before and after wearing them is indicative of the symbolism that resides in the purpose for wearing them. In Lev. 16.24, it is noteworthy that the command to bathe is preceded in verse 23 by the injunction to remove the ‘holy garments’, and also followed in verse 24 by the plea to **וְלָבַשׁ אֶת־בְּגָדָיו** ‘to put on his garments’. This depicts a transition between specific and other. The bathing is a transition between the wearing of the ‘holy garments’ and the wearing of a different garment.

Besides, in Lev. 16.23, the command to remove the ‘holy garments’ is followed by one that explicitly requests that they must be left (the holy garments) in the tabernacle. Thus, it appears that these ‘holy garments’ serve a particular function within the service system of the priests. It is that function that would perhaps consistently underlie the necessity of bathing before and after wearing the ‘holy

garment'. In Lev. 16.23, in which the command is given to Aaron to remove the 'holy garments' that he had put on before entering אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ and 'to leave them there', there is a clarifying element. This clarifying element is with regard to where the 'holy garments' ought to stay, and that is also just mentioned, in אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ. This part of the statement is in reference to verses 4 and 12-19 that clearly identify the location הַקֹּדֶשׁ as also לַפָּרְכָּת translated differently, but unequivocally indicating the second of the two compartments of the tent of meeting. This is to say that in this chapter of the book of Leviticus, at least for the part indicated above, there is an equivalence of meaning in the terms אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ and לַפָּרְכָּת. While the former can be in reference to the whole of the tent in some places, here, it refers to the place where the כַּפֹּרֶת is.⁵⁵¹

The same כַּפֹּרֶת is originally introduced in Exodus 25 and defines the precise location, according to verse 22, where the priest literally meets with God in the process of ministering on behalf of the people.⁵⁵² This ministry for which the priest is consecrated seems, in the light of these texts, to reach its apex when this meeting between the divine and the human takes place within those parameters. This is what the priest is consecrated for ultimately.⁵⁵³ For this reason alone, it would seem, he is wearing the 'holy garments'. When this is not happening he is dressed differently.

Another element is that according to Lev. 16.2, 3, which are the immediate verses

⁵⁵¹ See, (Brown, 1907) that describes it as 'a slab of gold... placed on the top of the ark of the testimony', and (Holladay, 2000), 'the gold covering-slab'. This piece of furniture, the ark of the testimony, of the utmost importance in the sanctuary system, is found in the innermost part of the 'tent of meeting', that is the 'most holy place, according to, Exod. 26.34.

⁵⁵² See the procedure for this meeting in Lev. 16.12-14; Exod. 30.34.

⁵⁵³ There is a clear sense of the ultimate importance of this act in the fact of the requirements of God concerning time and procedure for this meeting between himself and the priest. Leviticus 16 in its entirety highlights the specialness of this event. In verse 2, God says not to come in there at 'all times' that he may 'not die' (speaking about Aaron, and subsequently, all officiating priests). In verses 7-10, there is a definite element of peculiarity concerning the animals and their chosen purposes. Although, there might be actions that are repeated on a daily basis that are taking place in the rest of the text, this is a specific annual event that is described here.

constituting the background of verse 4, this entering into *שְׂרָדָה* where the ‘holy garment’ were to be left after the service, only happened once every year. The logical inference is that these ‘holy garments’ were worn only once a year because God would meet with the priest in *שְׂרָדָה* at that time. In following this logic, the suggestion is that these ‘holy garments’ represented in the service of the priest, the distinctive function of communicating with God on behalf of the people, and that at a very singular time. Leviticus 16 is by its content defined as the chapter that deals with one of the most serious festivals of Israel’s religious ceremonies. This is the day when all the sins of all the people accumulated in the tabernacle for a whole year would be done away with by God.⁵⁵⁴

Consequently, the bathing of the priest happened twice at this yearly occasion, because of the wearing of the special garments in order to meet with God in *שְׂרָדָה*. To encounter God, they had to wear these ‘holy garments’ as to mark the nature of this particular event. Upon the end of that special meeting, these special clothes were to be removed and left in *שְׂרָדָה*. Thus, the bathing part in the ceremony was directly connected with putting these garments on, but not just. Since the bathing had to also take place after wearing those and before wearing the other ordinary or common priestly vestments, it can be said that the bathing is more intricately linked to the function of the priest at this moment than to his physical or moral cultic cleanliness.⁵⁵⁵ In the same way that the wearing of the ‘holy garments’ had more to do with the function of the priest than anything else, so it was then with the bathing of

⁵⁵⁴ ‘the holiest day of the Jewish calendar’, Bekkum (2010, p. 397). This statement is made in the light of the name given to the one part of the tabernacle, where the main service took place on that day. Belleli (1904, p. 163).

⁵⁵⁵ ‘the predominant function of ablution in the OT is to cleanse an unclean person;’ this is mainly the case for ‘uncleanness cause by physical contagion rather than moral contagion’ Webb (1991, pp. 106–7). For the treatment of a list of causes for uncleanness situations in the Torah, and the ‘ablutory’ practices recommended, see, Taylor (1997, pp. 58–64).

the priest. If this rite pursued the only course of ritually cleansing the priest in preparation for his meeting with a Holy God, there would have been no need to do the same after meeting with this Holy God.

While this bathing of the priest in Leviticus 16 was an annual performance, there also were multiple and more frequent occasions for different water-cleansing rituals in which he took part consistently, as already mentioned. This one that was motivated by the wearing and removing of the priestly garments pointed to the nature of the service every year and the reason for the consecration of the priest. Indeed, beyond the form, it was to a great extent a similar type of bathing that took place at the consecration of Aaron and his sons, at which occasion they had to wear the ‘holy garments’ that signified their role that most importantly was to meet with God.⁵⁵⁶ The inauguration of the Levitical priesthood, which by its function was the new mediatory system of communication between God and the people, involved the wearing of the ‘holy garments’ and consequently the bathing. Wearing the ‘holy garments’ physically signified the calling to this function of standing in the presence of God as chosen and dedicated vessels.

The main difference regarding the bathing in Exod. 29.4; 40.12; Lev. 8.6 and in Lev. 16.4, 24 is that God in the first set asked Moses to preside over the whole process. The reason for this being the context of inauguration and consecration in

⁵⁵⁶ In Exodus 40, there is the account of the consecration of the tabernacle simultaneously to that of Aaron and his sons, and particularly in verse 9, there is the command of God to anoint every instrument of the sanctuary with oil as a sign of that consecration. This means that they had to penetrate in the second part of the tent on that day, but not in the context of Lev. 16. It is not specified in this book whether or not Aaron went in as well as Moses to whom the command to anoint is given, but it is noteworthy that the wearing of the garment comes before the anointing of the tabernacle. This wearing of the garments is in the same order in Leviticus 8 that seems more detailed about the same event. The telling of this episode does not end in this chapter, but continues in the next, and it is there in chapter 9 and verse 23 that it is made clear that both Moses and Aaron went in the tabernacle at this occasion. It is then fair to assume that Aaron took part in this consecration ceremony of the utensils within the veil, and this was followed according to Lev. 9.23, by the manifestation of the presence of God. It is also to be noticed that this consecration of the priest was to last for seven days, and therefore, the garments were to be worn for the same period, at the end of which the glory of God was manifested to them all. The wearing of the garments is then linked to the specific presence of God in that place.

those texts, while in the latter ones it is the context of a yearly event that continued after the death of Moses and Aaron. However, even when considering separately these two bathing occasions in their own contexts, which are different, the nature of the acts and reason behind them remain totally reconcilable. In both, it is prior to the wearing of the ‘holy garments’ with which the priest was to meet God in the most holy place. In Exodus 29, 40, and Leviticus 8, 9, the holy garments are a sign of the holy nature of the ministry they were entering initially, and then was to be perpetuated after Aaron and his sons who were directly involved in the consecration ceremony. In Leviticus 16 this same idea is preserved. They bathe because of the wearing and removing those ‘holy garments’ that evoke their role and ministry at its last stage or supreme level. Bathing in both sets of texts is neither simply a sign of cleanness nor the opposite per se, but it is part of a sign for a specific calling to mediate between God and the people in a special capacity. With this in mind, there may have been a link between Matthew’s perspective of a non-strictly-cleansing bathing ritual as it appears in the OT, and the particular bathing of Jesus by John. It would be a bathing or baptism that did not systematically take place for cleansing reasons. This view needs to be investigated on the basis of some parallels between the two specific events.

4.4 The Anointing that Followed the Washing of the Priests

It seems doubtless that in the context of the consecration of both the tabernacle and that of the priest, the anointing part is essential to the whole procedure. Moses is commanded by the Lord to anoint the priest and their garments as well as every piece of furniture that furbishes this tent of meeting. The tabernacle is set as the main place where God, through the service of the priest in it, will meet with the people. In Exod. 28.41 there is a clear sense of the intricate relationship that exists between the

ordination of the priest and the usage of oil upon him as doing so. On the notion of anointing him in the Hebrew text, מָשַׁח is in apposition to the other terms that express the goal of this anointing. This is a sequence that is noteworthy in the context of this discussion since this greatly contributes to the understanding of the importance and the place of this act in the ordination episode. A reading of the text as follows,

אֹתוֹ וּמִשְׁחָהּ אֹתָם וּמִלֵּאתָ אֶת־יָדְךָ וְקִדַּשְׁתָּ אֹתָם וְכִהְנֵנוּ לִי: , with the succession of key words, מָשַׁח, מָלָא, קָדַשׁ, and וְכִהְנֵנוּ לִי is without ambiguity concerning this point in the ritual. This text that depicts the general idea about what God wants Moses to do precedes the one in Exod. 29.7 that places the act in the chronological order in which God wants Moses to perform at the ceremony. The anointing in the case of Aaron follows the washing and dressing of the priest that is all done by Moses. In the case of the furniture of the tabernacle, and the tent itself, it is evidently after they were put into place and before they could be used. In that sense they were, through the ritual, dedicated to the Lord, according to Exod. 40.1-11.

However, it is appropriate at this point to notice that in Exodus 29, this anointing oil, שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה, is used at least twice in the ceremony, but differently. In verse 7 it is used as being ‘poured’, יָצַק,⁵⁵⁷ on the head of Aaron, while in verse 21 of the same chapter, it is ‘sprinkled’ (as rendered in most English translations), נָזַף.⁵⁵⁸ As seen in Exod. 29.7, this action of pouring the anointing oil on the head of Aaron is defined as the anointing act that is also in Exod. 28.41, and attached to the different terms in apposition that relate to his ordination.⁵⁵⁹ This difference of terms in Exod. 29.7 and 29.21 brings into focus the difference of actions and purposes that are

⁵⁵⁷ See, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000).

⁵⁵⁸ See, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000).

⁵⁵⁹ ‘and shall anoint them, and ordain them, and consecrate them’ NAS.

attached to the two separate and distinct operations taking place in the context of this event. The sprinkling of this anointing oil on Aaron and his clothes is simultaneous to that of the blood, on the same, from the sacrifice of an animal that was made after the anointing of Aaron.⁵⁶⁰ The same action of sprinkling oil and blood on people is found to be a perpetual law that the priest were to perform on the children of Israel in the context of purification rites. This is found in Leviticus 14, for instance, that deals with the purification of lepers. In verse 7 of Leviticus 14, the term נָזַח is clearly associated with the purpose of ‘making clean’⁵⁶¹ through this ritual, the person subjected to it by the priest. In the following verse, Lev. 14.8, it is also said that the person will bathe, בָּחַץ. Although it is the same verb that we find also in Exod. 29.4, the cleansing context in which it operates Lev. 14.8 is very clear through the use of טָהַר.⁵⁶² Again, in Lev. 14.14, there is another ritual that is also found in Exod. 29.20 relating to the use of animal blood for the purpose of טָהַר.

The blood of the animal had to be placed on certain parts of the person who underwent the cleansing process at the hand of the priest in Leviticus, as Moses did with Aaron and his sons on that day. The similarity in the actions, although there are some differences,⁵⁶³ suggests that some of what is written in Leviticus 14 and in Exodus 29 have the same nature and purpose. But, it should be noted that the people subjected to the common ritual in these texts are different as are the circumstances in which they take place. However, it could be inferred that what is happening in Lev. 14.7, 14, a cleansing ritual in nature according to textual evidence, being of the same

⁵⁶⁰ The anointing is in verse 7, where the oil is used by pouring on the head of the priest, and there is nothing else that is conjunctionally used.

⁵⁶¹ See, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000) for the Hebrew word נָזַח.

⁵⁶² See the meaning of this verb in the preceding footnote.

⁵⁶³ In Lev. 14.15, the use of the blood in the manner that it is used in Exod. 29.20 is accompanied with the use of oil. In Exod. 29.20, there is no mention of this oil usage.

description as in Exodus 29.20 makes them identical. This conclusion could easily be drawn that the whole ritual in Exodus 29 is of the same kind as what was to perpetually happen in Israel according to Leviticus 14. This would be inappropriate and inaccurate for several reasons that are plain. One of the main reasons is both contextual and textual. Contextually, to begin with, there is no relationship between these two passages.

As already said, there is an inaugural context to Exodus 29 that affects the content of it. The narrative in Exodus 29 contains elements such as time, place of the actions and the particular characters involved that separate it from Leviticus 14 in spite of the similarities described. The same argument is applicable to Leviticus 14 with regards to its connection to Exodus 29. The context of it is that of a perpetual ritual that will take place as frequently as necessary and as long as the whole system exists. It is a ritual that is governed by the cleansing purpose clearly attached to it contextually. As for the textual component, although there are similitudes between these passages, the differences are greater in nature. The main difference is seen in the choice of words that define the actions taking place in both texts. The main words to describe the purpose of what is taking place in Exodus 29 in terms of the use for the rituals are found in the opening and closing verses of the chapter, in vv 1, 44.

Verse 1 says, *לְקַדְּשׁ אֹתָם לְכַהֵן לִי*, ‘to consecrate them to serve me in the priest’s office’, and 44, *וְאֶת־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת־בָּנָיו אֲקַדֵּשׁ לְכַהֵן לִי*, ‘and Aaron and his sons I will consecrate to serve me in the priest’s office’. All that which is done within this chapter aims at one thing precisely, and that is the consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests of the Lord. Speaking about it in the preceding chapter 28 and verse 41, it is summarised in the action of anointing them with anointing oil. It is as if this particular act were pivotal in bringing the recognition of the status and function of Aaron and

his sons and the nature of their mission. As for Leviticus 14, the entire chapter is concerned with one specific question of the purification rituals through which the problem of *צָרַעַת*,⁵⁶⁴ ‘leprosy’ would be dealt with among the people. The passage begins with it and ends with it with the stipulation in the last verse, 57, ‘this is the law of leprosy’. So, while parts of the procedure in Exodus 29 that bring this end result, consecration of the priests are common to Leviticus 14 and to other happenings throughout the HB,⁵⁶⁵ the main ritual element of difference with Leviticus 14 is the anointing part in Exod. 29. This is why the purpose of the whole event as announced in Exod. 28.41 is defined in this term, *וְקִדְשֶׁתָּ אֹתָם וְכָהֲנֵי לִי*. In both passages there is a use of oil upon the head, but there is no comparison possible. The language is very different in both the HB and the LXX in reference to the acts, as explained in the following paragraph.

In Lev. 14.29, the priest is to ‘put the rest of the oil upon the head of the one to be cleansed’.⁵⁶⁶ This action in both the HB and the LXX with regard to the oil is carefully worded as respectively *נָתַן* and *ἐπιτίθημι* to guard against any confusion with *מָלַשׁ* and *χρίω* used in Exodus 29.⁵⁶⁷ Besides, concerning the anointing oil, there is one major factor that clarifies the fact that contextually and textually, these two passages are completely different in nature even when they share common ritual parts.

This element of major difference appears in Exodus 30 still in the context of the

⁵⁶⁴ See, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000).

⁵⁶⁵ In a different context there are animal sacrifices, sprinkling of blood and oil, washing of hands, and other items found here. See the ritual that is recorded in Lev. 14.51,52 that deals with the use of water and blood for the cleansing of a house, for instance. Although, the context is still that of cleansing from leprosy, the ritual is directed to the house in order to cleanse it. It is to be noted that here, *צָרַעַת*, the word for ‘leprosy’ in the case of that once-common skin disease is also used for ‘some fungus or mould’ which houses could be affected with, and which necessitated cleansing in the same way as for the human plague. See, *TWOT* (1980); Brown (1907).

⁵⁶⁶ The mention of ‘the rest of the oil’ in this sentence is indicative already of a difference with what is happening at the anointing of the priest.

⁵⁶⁷ On the definition of the Hebrew *נָתַן* and the Greek *ἐπιτίθημι*, see, Brown (1907) and T. Muraoka (2002).

preparation for the installation of the sanctuary system and the ordination of the priests. According to Exod. 30.24-31, the oil used for the anointing of both the tabernacle and the priests on that day was uniquely made for this exclusive purpose.⁵⁶⁸ In verse 25 by reason of the occasion this oil is specifically prepared and is also called ‘holy’.⁵⁶⁹ Both the HB and the LXX clarify the relationship between the occasion and the nature of the oil by using the corresponding terms, שֶׁמֶן מִשְׁחַת-קֹדֶשׁ and ἔλαιον χρίσμα ἅγιον. The Lord specifies to Moses in subsequent verses, 31-33, that this ‘holy oil’ is for the exclusive usage of anointing as in the case of the priests and the tabernacle for a dedication to the Lord. There is even the warning that any misuse of this ‘holy anointing oil’ will result in as serious a consequence as death. It is never to be used as a cosmetic item by anyone and on anybody else than the priest.

Thus, the ‘holy’ quality of this ‘anointing oil’, שֶׁמֶן מִשְׁחַת-קֹדֶשׁ seems to condition the outcome of its usage. In other words, one on whom this holy oil is applied becomes holy by virtue of its nature. In fact in Lev. 8.12 the dedication and sanctification of Aaron is directly linked, as cause to effect, to the act of anointing him with this oil. In the different passages that expose the procedure of inauguration of the tabernacle, such as in Exodus 29, 30, 40, Lev. 8, 9, the means to sanctify the tent and its vessels is this anointing oil. For instance, in Exod. 29.37; 30.26, 29; Lev. 8.10, 11, the use of the oil on the utensils ‘sanctified them’, and whatever came into contact with these vessels also became holy because of the initial anointing. The use of the anointing oil changed the common nature of what it came into contact with, into to something or someone that is ‘holy’. This is most probably why the act of

⁵⁶⁸ See, Dozman (2009, p. 672)

⁵⁶⁹ In Exod. 30.31-33, there is a very clear warning from God to ‘cut off’ anyone who is using this oil for common purposes and even whoever makes other oils for other purposes with the composition of that anointing oil. The oil is strictly used for the anointing of the tabernacle with its furniture and the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the Lord as Holy men. This oil is Holy, and it makes Holy the priests, the tabernacle and whatever that comes in contact with the furniture of the sanctuary.

anointing the priests with this oil summarises the whole process through which they went to be as Exod. 28.41 says, **וּמִשְׁחָהֶם וּמִלֵּאתָ אֶת־יְיָדְךָ וְקִדַּשְׁתָּ אֹתָם וְכִהְנֹנוּ לִי**. The constant relationship between the anointing of the priests and of the tabernacle, and the fact that they became ‘holy’ provides a robust argument. This is that the anointing part of the whole process is the defining element of function (people and things) and identity (the people) in the inauguration and ordination ceremony in question.⁵⁷⁰

All the terms used to refer to the ordination of the priest denote the anointing act. The question that arises from this observation is quite simple, but important. Why has the action of anointing the priest become the one stage in the whole process by which he is identified? The answer to this is also very simple, and yet, paramount. An analysis of the narrative concerning the ordination of the priests, and more so, of the preparations made for this event is revelatory of the enigma. First, it has been shown that in Exod. 28.41, where God speaks to Moses about the ordination of the priests, that there is a series of words that are in apposition to identify the event. These are to be remembered as **מִשָּׁחָ, מִלֵּא, קִדַּשׁ**, and must be seen as central to the concept of dedication or consecration to the Lord in priestly capacities. The weight and value of this anointing, the difference that it made between the servants and the services in the sanctuary system are emphasised in some places. For instance, in Num. 18.8 when the Lord speaks to Aaron about the portion that is for him and his sons, in terms of their subsistence from sacrifices, the text uses the word **מִשְׁכָּה**. There is no real agreement on the translation of this word among the English versions used in this thesis,

⁵⁷⁰ The things here would be the tabernacle and the furniture, as well as the special garments of the priests, and the people here would be the priests themselves.

presumably, because of a possible pointing error that has been suggested.⁵⁷¹ However, it cannot be overlooked that this word contains the root letters of מִשָּׁח and is closely related to the Hebrew expression for anointing, מִשָּׁחָה.

This may be the reason why this portion of the text is translated ‘the anointing’⁵⁷² in the KJV. Although it may be a translation that is proper to the KJV, the use of this word here seems to again put into perspective the fact that the concept of anointing the priest is one that is central. It is so not only to their identity and mission in the service of God, but also to mark the differences that it engendered between these and others at every other level of daily life and ministration.⁵⁷³ In other words, in Exodus 30 when considering the divine care invested in the preparation of the anointing oil, the uniqueness of it, the exclusive usage of this ointment and the effect that it had on people and things, the centrality of this item in the whole process is undeniable. When reflecting on the penalty that would fall on anyone who would use it outside of the given directives, the seriousness with which it is handled is unquestionable. When studying the demarcating role that it played at the inauguration of the sanctuary and the ordination of the priests once and for all, and the lasting effects of its usage from that particular occasion, the impact of it on things and people is indisputable. As for the legacy that followed this event, the centrality of the anointing oil in the outcome, among the other stages of the ceremony, cannot be overestimated. Of everything that happened in that day, of the initiation, inauguration

⁵⁷¹ Cf. ESV, KJV, NAS, NET, NLT, RSV. The term ‘consecrated portion’ as a translation for this word seems to be fits the definitions found in the Hebrew dictionaries, See, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000); *TWOT* (1980).

⁵⁷² Num. 18.8 in KJV cf. all the other English versions mentioned in this thesis. While the sense is preserved in all translations, the expression ‘by reason of the anointing’ in the KJV indicates more clearly the relationship between the nature of the portion and that which caused it to be holy.

⁵⁷³ Read Numbers 18 and see the difference between the Levites and Aaron and his sons in terms of the daily ministrations, roles, and rights. This difference seems to be defined by reason of the anointing within those of the same tribe of Levi and under the same treatment regarding inheritance of land.

or ordination ritual, the anointing of the priests and of the tabernacle with this oil in Exod. 29; 40; Lev. 8, 9 is a major identifying element of the consecration process.

It could reasonably be argued that the anointing of the priest at this occasion is the unavoidable part on which the messianic OT concept is built. This idea is easily identifiable in this account of the ordination of Aaron and his sons as servants of God in the priest's office. Their anointing by Moses under God's direction then marked the beginning of a biblical concept according to which, one who enters God's service must have this specific unction that differentiates him from others. This is probably why in Lev. 4.5 there is a term of great interest to this research that is used to refer to a particular priest. This term is *הַכֹּהֵן הַמָּשִׁיחַ*, and I shall return to it in the appropriate section of this thesis, for expansion. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the priest here is qualified by the word *הַמָּשִׁיחַ*, from which the term Messiah is derived, and therefore, the concept spoken about above. This is the element by which reference to the holiness of the priests is made as servants of the Lord in the Israelite sanctuary system. The Hebrew messianic concept, the anointing of God upon an individual for a special service is what Exod. 28.41 is defining in terms of its origin. It is first found in the ceremony of initiation of the priests and the inauguration of the tabernacle planned in Exodus 29, 30, 40 and realised in Leviticus 8, 9. There were other happenings, different actions followed under God's command on that day to complete the whole process. Such actions for instance, included the washing or bathing of Aaron by Moses, but it was the anointing, by name, that gave rise to this biblical messianic concept.

The concept was born out of an individual being chosen by God and being very specifically 'anointed' with a 'holy anointing', like Aaron was, so that he could officiate among the people as the Lord's servant. Indeed, just like Aaron and the

priests after him were. As it has been mentioned, this anointing took place once the priest had been dressed with holy garments. These garments were the external sign of the role they were going to play in the midst of the congregation of Israel, but before they could wear these garments and be anointed with this unique anointing oil, they had to be bathed by Moses. There would be, consequently, no anointing without the dressing with clothes that externalised their identity, and there would be no wearing of the clothes without the bathing over which Moses presided. It would be safe to say that this procedure has intricately linked the bathing with the anointing. I will now turn to the question of the bathing at this occasion and its relationship with Jesus in Matthew's pericope of his baptism.

4.5 The Parallels Between the OT Bathing of Aaron and the Baptism of Jesus

As it has been argued in this thesis, the Matthean account of the baptism of Jesus, like the rest of this Gospel seems to be identifiable with a consistent desire on the part of the writer to secure the OT basis for what happens to Jesus.⁵⁷⁴ The aim of such literary strategy is to impress the mind of the reader with, and deepen the sense the OT messianic attributes that Jesus' life exhibited. Matthew more than any other evangelist emphasises the distinctive OT-prophecy-fulfilling character of the life of Jesus from the time of his birth to that of his betrayal by Judas in chapter 27.⁵⁷⁵ His account of the baptism of Jesus also is presented as a fulfilment of a pre-determined plan. This perspective is contingent upon the same Matthean view of identifying the different event of the life of Jesus as recognisable in the OT. In Mt. 3.15, it is Jesus who declares to John that they would both fulfil the will of God when he baptises

⁵⁷⁴ Stanton (1992, p. 363).

⁵⁷⁵ Matthew is the only one of the synoptic writers to identify in the OT through an idiosyncratic link between two OT prophets, the basis of what he defines as the fulfilment of the prophecy regarding the monetary value of Jesus given to Judas in exchange of his betrayal. See, Mt. 27.9; Zech. 11.12-13, and consider the use of Jeremiah in his formula quotation in the passion narrative in Gundry (1982, pp. 557-58); Smith (1989, pp. 318-19).

him. Although John does not seem to fully understand, he does baptise Jesus.⁵⁷⁶ It is clear from context that John understood his baptism as necessary for repentance and forgiveness.⁵⁷⁷ This is the main reason he opposed Jesus who had come to him like any other sinner in search of forgiveness. It seemed clear in John's mind that the Messiah has no need for baptism, rather, he dispenses an even better baptism than his. This, as far as he was concerned was the point of tension, but it was not the case for Jesus, according to Matthew's unparalleled report in 3.15.

For this reason, it is clear that Matthew's perspective on the baptism of Jesus is possibly different to that of the rest of the Gospel writers. It is a perspective that views Jesus' baptism in the light of a ritual that goes beyond the mere water-cleansing ritual that permeated the life of religious people at his time.⁵⁷⁸ This perspective will only be understandable and viable, if there could be an OT basis for it that keeps Matthew's desire to identify Jesus as the OT Messiah, who in every step that he took in life could be identified in the scripture as such, even in the case of his baptism.

⁵⁷⁶ The evidence of this lack of understanding on the part of John is textually characterised by the conversation recorded in Mt. 3.14.15. There is no need of external evidence for a proof of that. See, Nolland (2005, pp. 152–53); Howard (1970, p. 27).

⁵⁷⁷ See, Webb (1991, pp. 184–93); Taylor (1997, pp. 111–32); Green (1999, pp. 163–64). Although, this perspective is generally expanded on from the Lukan standpoint, it is not less clear in the Matthean context. In Mt. 3.2, 6, 8, 11, there is no doubt that John sees his message and practice of baptism in the context of repentance and forgiveness of sin.

⁵⁷⁸ This is the reason why scholars argue about the meaning and significance of John's baptism. See, for instance, Webb (1991, pp. 183–96), who recognises the pre-existing Jewish pattern in the water-ritual nature of the act, but he also says that 'the baptism functioned in six interrelated ways', and in his analysis, there is clear evidence, beyond the Jewish water-rituals, that John's baptism was unto repentance for the forgiveness of sin. He also noted that Josephus (*Ant.* 18. 117) did not see this aspect of John's immersion of the people in the light of the Gospels' traditional claim: Mt. 3.6, 11; Mk 1.4; Lk. 3.3. This contrasting view is also supported by others such as Taylor (1997, pp. 93–9), who systematically views the immersion as effecting bodily purity in the context of other Jewish ablutions, and it was for people who had already been cleansed inwardly. See also, Marshall (1978, pp. 135–36); Nolland (1999, p. 68) and Green (1999, pp. 163–68) who see in the baptism of John from the Luke-Acts textual tradition, the 'washing away of sins' effected through this baptism according to his preaching. There is no consensus among scholars on this point, but lots of assumptions based on attempts to release the tension that this baptism creates because of the claims of its ritual-purifying nature, and the does-not-need-it claim of this baptism for Jesus and by reason of his sinlessness. See, Crisp (2007) who in his whole article discusses the views held by many on the nature of Jesus as to being 'sinless' or 'impeccable'. The point here is that John's baptism unto repentance for the forgiveness of sin would be inadequate in both cases since Jesus did not sin, in the case that he could have chosen to.

There is only one thing to do in order to clarify this saying of Jesus in Mt. 3.15. This is to evaluate the claim that Jesus and John both fulfilled righteousness in the sense that it was the will of God, his expressed command, possibly identifiable in the OT, for them both to go through this ritual. As it has already been shown that there is a typological relationship between John and Moses that particularly needs to be considered in the context of this research. The fact that they were both of the same Levitical lineage is important to highlight, but most crucially, they are the only ones in the biblical texts to have ever administered a washing of the entire body to another person in contexts that are to be further established as unique. The task is to now analyse and compare the characteristics of these washings in order to establish whether or not there is indeed an exclusive biblical typological link that can be ascertained between those washings.

4.6 The Bathing of Aaron and the Baptism of Jesus

It was established from the different texts of reference, Exod. 29.4; 40.12; Lev. 8.6 that this bathing of Aaron happens against the background of a very specific event. This event is the institution of the new way that YHWH devised, according to Moses, to communicate with his people, the congregation of the sons of Israel in the desert. The initiation of the Levitical priesthood, and at the same occasion the inauguration of the sanctuary and the tool with which it will operate is the main subject matter from which these texts belong. As a sign of the consecration of the priest to the special service of God on behalf of the people, there is a one-time ceremony that is taking place, and the above passages reveal a specific part of the priestly initiation procession.⁵⁷⁹ That one part of the whole ceremony is the unique OT episode of the

⁵⁷⁹ There seems to be no other biblical passage that suggests the repeat of this act undergone by Aaron and his sons at the hand of Moses. See, Milgrom (1991, pp. 500–1), who in passing, also argues that this washing of Aaron and his sons were by implication ‘full immersion’.

presiding role of Moses over this act.⁵⁸⁰ It is the specific request of YHWH to bathe Aaron and his sons publically, before the former can be clothed with the 'holy garments' that signify his new and official mediatory role between YHWH and Israel. This mediatory role of the priest indicated by the wearing of the 'holy garments' was still in use at the time of Jesus, as the use of water-purification rituals demonstrated earlier.

However, none of those rituals seem to have been practiced similarly to the one that took place in the above texts. More specifically, there is no other record of any bathing of priests in which another man presides. All the instances of ritual bathing that are mentioned in biblical and extra-biblical sources lack of this particular characteristic that would create a parallel between them.⁵⁸¹ It is until the time of John the Baptist that this type of water-purification⁵⁸² resurfaces and becomes a practice that caused him to be nicknamed 'the Baptiser' or 'the immerser'. The meaning of such epithet is from the fact that he actively immersed, therefore, washed people with water and thus presided over this ritual that may have possibly conveyed the idea of purification like Moses did it once at a specific event.⁵⁸³ This occasion for Moses was the initiation or ordination of the priests that YHWH had consecrated as the ministers of his tabernacle through which he communicated his will to the people. This bathing of the priests at their initiation and consecration to the service of YHWH, and the baptism of John present some important parallels. It would not be exaggerated to view

⁵⁸⁰ Milgrom (1991, p. 501).

⁵⁸¹ 'there is no clear parallel in any Jewish immersion rite for someone acting as an immerser along side the person who is being immersed in the water.' Taylor (1997, p. 50). It is only in this OT episode of the washing of Aaron and his sons by Moses that one can be found. This statement of Milgrom (1991, p. 501), 'Clearly the subject of all the verbs in the dressing of Aaron is Moses.' Commenting on verse 7, it is applicable to the sixth verse as well.

⁵⁸² In view here is the fact that someone physically presides over the immersion.

⁵⁸³ Although the purification aspect might be accepted, it was argued in the light of some convincing elements, in Taylor's view, that it could not have been the case that the baptism of John was 'concerned with the removal of ritual uncleanness like other Jewish immersions'. 'it must have been something else'. See, Taylor (1997, pp. 50–51).

the common presiding elements of both Moses and John at the respective washing of the priests and the washing of Jesus as the closest in comparison in biblical literature. Yet, in a search to ascertain the OT origin for John's baptism of Jesus in the Matthean context, there is more than this common feature element that needs to be investigated. I will therefore turn to some possible other elements in the baptism of Jesus that might parallel in context the bathing of the priests.

4.7 Summary of Chapter 4

In this chapter it has been argued that John's baptismal practice does not originate from the various water purification washings that co-existed. Due to essential theological differences underlying John's baptismal practice from that of his contemporaries, his baptism is to be viewed as something completely different from theirs. However, according to those essential characteristics, a parallel has been found between John's baptism of Jesus in the Matthean context, and the washing of the priests in Exodus 29, 40 and Leviticus 8. Such parallel is seen in the fact that John the Baptist and Moses share major historical, genealogical and ministerial background elements. They are the only ones in the Bible to have ever been commanded by God to publically wash, bathe or baptise someone who is subsequently anointed as priest to the Lord. The washing of the priests followed by their anointing as the two-step ceremony for their initiation into the priestly ministry gave rise to first OT messianic concept. The Matthean washing of Jesus by John so that he may become the Messiah is deliberately placed in the context of an OT-fulfilled act. It was demonstrated that the link between Moses and John and between the baptisms of Aaron and Jesus is contextually, semantically, thematically and theologically sound.

By reason of the above claims, there needs to be a further investigation of this unique parallel between the initiatory or consecration ceremony of the priests and the

baptism of Jesus according the Matthean context. This following last chapter should bring together all the elements of comparison that are necessary to fully establish the nature and extent of the link between the proposed OT event and the Matthean baptism pericope. This procedure should eventually complete the search for the meaning of Mt. 3.15, as this is the main goal of this thesis.

Chapter 5. The Matthean Perspective of Jesus' Baptism

5. Context and Meaning of the Matthean Baptism Pericope

In this last chapter, I will further the discussion by considering the contextual initiatory elements of this Matthean baptismal pericope. This includes John's baptism of all candidates and the specific baptism of Jesus, his water washing and his Spirit-anointing. This step will allow the furtherance of the comparison between the initiatory context of Aaron's washing by Moses and that of Jesus' by John. As a result, I will conclusively be able to consider the exclusive typological nature of the relationship between the former and the latter event. I will explain the meaning the two-step baptism of Jesus in the light of the specific Matthean expression 'to fulfil of all righteousness'. After considering the meaning of Mt. 3.15, I will clearly state the outcome of this research as a thesis on the meaning of Jesus' baptism in the Matthean perspective. By necessity, I will also consider the extent to which such conclusion would impact on the meaning of Christian baptism in relation to the permeating biblical concept of priesthood.

5.1 The Baptism of Jesus in an Initiation Context

It has been long argued by some scholars that Christian baptism is an act of initiation into the church community.⁵⁸⁴ This view along with the other perspectives on the subject has permeated the centuries of the administration of this 'sacrament' or 'ordinance'⁵⁸⁵ in the Christian church to date.⁵⁸⁶ Whatever the underlying thought in

⁵⁸⁴ See, Porter and Cross (1999, pp. 33, 37); White (1960, p. 130); Beasley-Murray (1962, p. 95); Yates (1993, pp. 172–73). It is important to also mention that this is not the only perspective that has been explored and supported, see for instance, Green (1999, pp. 163, 164–65), who sees both the initiation aspect into a new community and the very nature of that community being another aspect of the effect of baptism, that is being converted and engaged in a deeper, more righteous relationship with God as his people. See, Cross (1999a, p. 68); Watts (2002, pp. 270–71).

⁵⁸⁵ The use of the appropriate term would be contingent upon one's perspective on its meaning and effect on the candidate, see Grudem (1994, pp. 966–67).

terms of the procedure through which it is accomplished, it is clearly believed that Christian baptism in its origin has a prominent and absolute connection with the baptismal ministry of John the Baptist.⁵⁸⁷ This connection mainly proceeds from the fact that even Jesus, ‘the Christ’, was baptised by John. It would seem, even after he baptised Jesus, John’s ministerial activities quieted down as if to emphasise that this baptism event marked a turning point in the life both of them.⁵⁸⁸ Furthermore, in the case of Matthew’s account of the baptism of Jesus, that relationship between the Baptist, Jesus, and Christian baptism becomes undeniably strong. If the baptism of John has an initiation character, it means that the context of Jesus’ baptism must be to some extent tinted by this characteristic. This may be one of the reasons for believing that Christian baptism is of such nature. Nevertheless, this aspect of the Baptist practice has to be unequivocally exposed, and the baptism of Jesus must be specifically investigated in search of any element that can be identified as forming this context. Therefore, the question of the initiatory character of both the baptism of John in general and its specific administration to Jesus must be investigated and ultimately established if possible.

⁵⁸⁶ See, Porter and Cross (1999, pp. 33–39). See an overview of the historical positions held by Church fathers in, Bercot (1998, pp. 50–64). The very discussions occasioned by the divergent views on forms and necessity of applying baptism in Christianity through the ages is evidence of this fact. See for instance, the argument between those who support the baptism of infants, and those who are against it, in Green (2002); Murray (1980); Yates (1993).

⁵⁸⁷ In spite of the various perspectives that exist on the different aspects of Christian baptism it is safe to state that most people would not deny the connection between the baptism of John, and the baptismal tradition that followed in Christianity. This is particularly well articulated in the article, Green (1999), and the comment made by Taylor (1997, p. 52), among others.

⁵⁸⁸ This point is well supported by John’s own declarations in several occasions according to the Gospel tradition. In all four, John the Baptist is defined as the one who comes before the Christ to prepare the way for him in line with the OT expectation consigned mainly in Isa. 40.3; Mal. 3.1, respectively used in Mt. 3.3; Mk 1.3; Lk. 3.4; Jn 1.23; and in Mt. 11.10; Mk 1.2; Lk. 7.27. As for John’s Gospel, the same motif is implicitly in the content of the first chapter and particularly in Jn 1.6–9, 19–27. There is this exclusive Johannine statement that exemplifies the point, in Jn 3.30, in the context of the a report to John that Jesus is now baptising people in the same way it would appear that John was doing before.

5.1.1 Initiatory Characteristics of John's Baptism

While scholarly discussions on the nature of John's baptism focus on the aspect of repentance and forgiveness mainly, other aspects have also been considered.⁵⁸⁹ This state of affair, the prominence of repentance and forgiveness theme, is well imbedded in John's own vision of the nature of his baptismal activities. According to the synoptic Gospels, the message that accompanies his baptismal activity is one that emphasises plainly repentance for the forgiveness of sin.⁵⁹⁰ This notion is unambiguous in the context of his preaching in Mt. 3.6-11. It is actually stated in Mk 1.4 and Lk. 3.3, and this is the reason for the dwelling of scholarship on this view as the main function of this baptism.⁵⁹¹ However, there is no particular difficulty in recognising the fact that John's baptism has been viewed by some as having an initiatory characteristic to it.⁵⁹² This initiatory characteristic, according to Webb, is expressed in the framework of the same main idea of obtaining repentance and

⁵⁸⁹ See, Green (1999, pp. 163–64); White (1960, pp. 83–9) who exemplify this point by highlighting the main aspect above-mentioned, and also, the aspect of 'ritual initiation' that they see in this practice. For P. Beasley-Murray (1999, pp. 467–68, 474–75), although, mainly dealing with the subject of baptism from the Pauline textual tradition (in Romans. 6; Colossians. 2; 2 Corinthians 5), he cites the experience of Jesus with John the Baptist in Mt. 3.15 as the example after which Christians are baptised. This implies that the one is derived from the other, as it is believed by most, but not all. He speaks about baptism as both 'a rite of initiation', and something those already 'initiated' do. The same argument of derivation is made by Fides (2002). See also, White (1960, pp. 78, 82, 89) who identifies the baptism of John in this way as compared to Proselyte baptism. For him, it is an act of initiation among other characteristics that define John's baptism. A possible example of a divergent views on the link between the baptism of John and Christian baptism can be found, for instance, in Luz (2007, p. 109) who comments on that perspective without adhering to it.

⁵⁹⁰ This is the reason why scholarly debates revolve around those aspects of the question of the meaning of John's baptism. Although, the synoptics formulate differently the relationship that exists between the baptism of John, repentance and forgiveness of sin, the mechanism that is in place in all is still the same in effect. As already pointed out in the remark that scholars have made on the departure of Matthew from Mark's formulation in Mk 1.4 it is still the same message that is conveyed in Mt. 3.6.

⁵⁹¹ Although White (1960, pp. 83–9) sees the initiation aspect of John's baptism, it is noteworthy that he sees 'several different contexts', namely four, in which this baptism is to be 'interpreted', and they all have to do with repentance and the remission of sin.

⁵⁹² For an overview of the discussion and viewpoints of some scholars on the question of the initiatory characteristics of John's baptism, see, Webb (1991, pp. 197–202); White (1960, p. 78) who in his footnotes quotes that the baptism of John, like the Proselyte baptism of Judaism was 'initiatory'. Although Webb's argument in favour of this conclusion is based on the eschatological context attached to John's baptism because of his message (repentance, or death of the unrepentant) and not on the specific baptism of Jesus, there still is sense in this observation in support of that initiatory aspect of this baptism.

forgiveness through the confession of sins to then escape the group of those who the ‘wrath of God’ will destroy.⁵⁹³

The effect then of this baptism is to enter another group, those who are saved from the punishment of the judgement. In this sense, John’s baptism is an initiatory act for the repenting ones into this category of people.⁵⁹⁴ While this approach can be substantiated by the converging elements of John’s teaching of the eschatological two-group aspect in Mt. 3.12, the ‘wheat’ and the ‘chaff’, and Webb’s textual analysis of Josephus’ declaration in *Ant.* 18.117, this idea still remains a possibility that can be challenged.⁵⁹⁵ From a reader’s perspective, it is clear that John’s baptism was an act that individuals subjected themselves to in view of separating publically the two groups. In that sense, there is an initiatory aspect that naturally exists if the demarcation of the two is manifested through this baptism. Although Webb has a point here, it would be more convincing to find support for this initiatory characteristic of John’s baptism in the testimony of the biblical writers who would have understood it in this light.

Therefore, in order to ascertain a possible initiatory element to John’s baptism, the evidence has to emerge from the perspective of those who possibly viewed it as such and could defined the reasons for doing so. There needs to be a palpable connection in this way between John’s baptism and the practice of the same in the Bible, particularly in NT, that is not simply assumed by readers. Perhaps, one of the most notable elements in support of an assumed link is the mention of John’s baptism

⁵⁹³ See, Webb (1991, p. 197). It is not necessarily an initiation into an eschatological condition exclusively, though. For some, it is simply the fact of entering into a community of people who commit to doing God’s will, see, Green (1999, pp. 163–64).

⁵⁹⁴ Webb (1991, pp. 199–201).

⁵⁹⁵ See how Webb, in (1991, pp. 200–2), sustains his hypothesis by arguing the case of how Josephus uses in other places the word that he thinks indicates that he was thinking of baptism as a means of gathering likeminded people individually to form a corporate body that would form the covenant-keeping people of God, the true Israel. Indeed, Taylor (1997, p. 102) argues that that this baptism of John ‘was not an initiation into a select group’.

in the NT, but outside of the Gospels. After a quick survey, it is clear that the notion of John's baptism in the NT occurs exclusively in the context of the procedure that applied to one wanting to become a follower of Christ.⁵⁹⁶ In fact, of this procedure there is only one act that seems to be systematically performed, and that is baptism. This is especially clear in the book of Acts where the baptismal rite was performed as a significant entrance passage into the developing faith-community that was called the 'Church'. In the narrative of the mass conversion of people, for instance, after Peter's sermon in Acts 2.38-47, Peter invites his audience to be baptised as a sign or a physical demonstration of their intellectual response to his call to accept Jesus as the Son of God.⁵⁹⁷ In verse 41, there is a clear sense that those who are baptised become part of a specific group, and this group is identified in verse 47 as the 'Church' to which those who are baptised are added on a daily basis. Their acceptance of Jesus as the Christ demanded a passage through the baptismal rite, as the imperative mood of Peter's words (in Acts 2.38), *Μετανοήσατε, καὶ βαπτισθήτω*, confirms it. Baptism as it happens in Luke's account of the first steps of the post-ascension followers of Jesus

⁵⁹⁶ The first occurrence of the combination between the name of John and the mention of baptism outside of the Gospels occurs in Acts 1.5, where Jesus is speaking to his followers. In the same chapter of the book, Peter in verse 22 again mentions the two, and in Acts 2.38, although, the name of John is not mentioned, the link cannot be overlooked since the characteristics of his baptism as found in the Gospels, namely, repentance and forgiveness of sins is the aim to which Peter wishes his audience to arrive through baptism. This means that implicitly and explicitly as in Acts 18.25; 19.3, it is there in the developing story of the Christian faith after Jesus' departure. In the perspective of Burrows (1999, p. 100), 'There are three closely related ideas in the action of baptism as John the Baptist practiced it', and these are the same found in later NT baptism. He mentions, 1) 'Total commitment: as symbolized by the submersion of the whole body. 2) 'Complete cleansing: as symbolized by the ritual washing in water. 3) 'A new beginning: as symbolized by being raised from the water'. This is indeed the idea that Green (1999) is exposing in his article concerning '*The Archetypal Role of John's Baptism*' in the NT practice of the same.

⁵⁹⁷ The main point of the sermon is to reveal to the Jerusalem crowd the identity of this Jesus that some days before was crucified like a criminal while being the Son of God, from verses 22-36 of Acts 2, the sole focus is the above-mention point.

in the book of Acts, although performed on the candidates in the name of Jesus, is branded ‘the baptism of John’.⁵⁹⁸

The definite expression, τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ Ἰωάννου, is found in the synoptic Gospels once in every book. It first occurs in the report of Matthew who in chapter 21 and verse 25 has Jesus trying to ascertain the origin of John’s baptism.⁵⁹⁹ The parallel account is found in Mk 11.30, and as for Luke, in chapter 7 and verse 29, and it is again Jesus who commends the ministry of John.⁶⁰⁰ So, the expression ‘the baptism of John, found in Acts 1.22, 18.25, 19.3, seems to have been coined by Jesus from the preceding texts. Later on, after Jesus’ departure from them, it is used by his followers in the context of administering the rite to others as they entered the ‘Church’ community. In Acts, the use of this expression, τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ Ἰωάννου is noteworthy in several ways. In the first instance, in Acts 1.22, the context as well as the message conveyed are revelatory of its function, at least to some extent, in the view of those who used it. The points of reference, according to the wisdom that fixes the pre-requisites to replace Judas and reconstruct the twelve-disciple group (those first ordained by Jesus), are τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ Ἰωάννου and the resurrection. The first marker is the actual baptismal experience of Jesus at the hand of John, and the last is his last major act before departing from his disciples and earth. In other words, it is the period that marks the public ministry of Jesus from its beginning to its end.⁶⁰¹

This last observation, in conjunction with the above arguments, irrefutably establishes

⁵⁹⁸ This would logically mean that the baptism in the name of Jesus that all the first Christians were baptised with had the characteristics of John’s baptism.

⁵⁹⁹ The question of Jesus may have been a roundabout way of doing this, but it was the aim.

⁶⁰⁰ Luke has this expression twice, and the other one that relates the same account as Matthew, and Mark is found in Lk. 20.4.

⁶⁰¹ There is a clear consensus among scholars that these are the very markers of the beginning and of the end of Jesus’ public ministry. Commenting on Lk.3.23 that is part of the baptismal experience of Jesus, Marshall (1978, p. 162) uses the words, ‘when he began his ministry’. See, Luz (2007, p. 164); Davies and Allison (1988, p. 335); Davies and Allison (1991, p. 678). In a less direct way, the statement by Nolland (2005, p. 156) concerning the anointing of Jesus by ‘God for the role that he is to play in the economy of God.’ is more than suggestive of the same argument.

then, the relationship between John's baptismal ministry and the practice of this rite among followers of Jesus called the 'the Christ'.⁶⁰²

Furthermore, this text of Luke in Acts 1.22 followed by 18.25, 19.3 seems to provide an insight not just on how the baptism of John was a rite of entrance into the church, but perhaps a starting point of reflection on the meaning of Jesus' own baptism for Matthew, perhaps.⁶⁰³ I should return to this aspect of the text in more details when I deal with the question more directly. As for now, the point is in examining whether there is an initiatory dimension to the notion of τὸ βάπτισμα τοῦ Ἰωάννου, according to the perception of Jesus' followers in relation to the context in which they practiced this rite. In this respect, the perspective that emerges from the biblical narratives is one that promotes the view that this baptism is perceived as an initiation rite into the nascent Christian Church. As for Matthew's claim on the subject of the baptism of Jesus' followers after his departure, they were to be baptised in the name of Jesus as well as in the name of the father and of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁰⁴ It cannot be overlooked that even when the 'formula' is different to the practice observed in Acts as the baptism of John, there is no disconnection between these baptisms in their purposes. In Mt. 3.13-17, the three elements of that late Matthean formula are well introduced together and connectable in the Matthean literary context.

⁶⁰² 'The baptism of Jesus is a type of Christian baptism' Luz (2007, pp. 175–76).

⁶⁰³ According to Luz (2007, pp. 174–75), Matthew's Christology is too elaborated not to bring elements of response to the embarrassment supposedly felt by his community because of Jesus' submission to the baptism of John. Davies and Allison (1988, p. 323) posits that this view of Matthew 'has a very plausible origin in a Christian difficulty.' In both cases here the point is that there is need for an explanation of Matthew's perspective of this episode of the life of Jesus.

⁶⁰⁴ See, Mt. 28.19. This is the only biblical source for this Trinitarian formula of baptism. It has been argued that this particular baptismal 'formula' is one of the elements that support the idea that the baptism of John and Christian Baptism are to be distinguished one from the other, Davies and Allison (1991, p. 685). This argument is unsustainable since the connection between the baptism of John and baptism in Acts cannot be ignored. In Acts, where people are baptised 'in the name of Jesus' or other titles that still indicate the same character, the context of being baptised and being part of the church is still the same no matter the formula. See, Acts 2.38; 6.16; 10.48; 19.5. Also, Senior (1998, p. 347); Nolland (2005, pp. 1267–68); Smith (1989, p. 339); Gundry (1982, p. 596); Albright and Mann (1971, p. 362).

Also, if the link is established between the baptism of John, ordained by the father, and baptism in Acts in the name of Jesus, then the only added element in Mt. 28.19 is the Holy Spirit. The manifestation of the Holy Spirit being a part of the baptismal experience of Jesus in Mt. 3.16 may consistently be connected to the preaching of John in Mt. 3.11. John had introduced the notion of a baptism with the Holy Spirit as a future necessity for the believer who is baptised with water.⁶⁰⁵ Therefore, the association of baptism and Holy Spirit should with reflection be in no way novel to the reader. Whether people were baptised under the notion of the baptism of John, or in the name of the Lord and according to the Trinitarian formula of Mt. 28.19, it is the same act that they are referring to and in the same context. So, the question is; what difference does it make in terms of the rite performed and the reason for it? The Matthean baptismal formula, although expanded, does concur with the Lukan notion in Acts of the practice of John's baptism as 'the rite of initiation' into the Christian Church.⁶⁰⁶

Therefore, if in the early Christian church, John's baptism is performed in the name of Jesus as a rite of passage into the Church, this practice invests this baptism with initiatory virtues. However, while this seems to be the case from the beginning of Christianity and up to this day, the baptism of John prior to its appropriation by the followers of Jesus may also not be viewed systematically as an initiatory rite by nature.⁶⁰⁷ Nevertheless, the question in discussion in this thesis is not whether or not τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ Ἰωάννου is initiatory in nature. It is clear that there is a perspective

⁶⁰⁵ According to Scobie (1964, p. 114), the notion of the Spirit's gift is to be included in the combination of washing and forgiveness of sin that characterised the preaching of John.

⁶⁰⁶ On this very point there is a sense of divorce between the perception of baptism in Acts, and in Matthew's view of the same. However, this is only in terms of the requirements for proceeding with the rite as Gundry (1982, p. 596) remarks. See also, Nolland (2005, pp. 1267–68). The point here is that in spite of a difference, in some aspects, the initiatory character of these baptisms is the same. See, Scobie (1964, pp. 114–15).

⁶⁰⁷ While recognising that the baptism of John was more than Jewish washings for purity, Taylor (1997, pp. 93–100) insists that the baptism of John 'was not an initiatory rite'.

that concords with aspects of it as practiced on those who came to John the Baptist to be baptised in the Jordan River. This has been made apparent in the context of his message regarding the two groups that are to exist on the day of God's judgement, and baptism expresses one's public choice to belong to one of them. John's role is to call for this choice to be made and evidenced by accepting this repentance-and-forgiveness baptism. The dilemma that one faces is that of the specific place of Jesus in this scenario. Whatever the general nature of this baptism of John is, there must be a separate consideration of its meaning and value for Jesus.⁶⁰⁸ This is not to say that there would be no overlapping characteristics between the general and the specific.

Therefore, the question of the initiatory nature of Jesus' own baptism by John remains whole. If the baptism of Jesus has a different meaning than that of others, the extent of that difference is to be understood. Since there is an initiatory aspect to John's baptism in general, that difference may also apply in this respect in the case of Jesus. The initiatory aspect that affects John's other baptismal candidates may or may not apply to Jesus' in the same manner. This situation does not automatically cause a rejection of the initiation aspect, but unless there can be found elements of such nature in the pericope itself, there can be no positive conclusion either. Furthermore, according to the Matthean literary context and in keeping with the methodology used in this thesis, these elements must be identifiable with the OT characteristics that defined the bathing of the priest as initiatory. Only then, can it be ascertained that the baptism pericope in Mt. 3.13-17 is understandable in the context of an OT origin that can be sustainably identified. Establishing such relationship between Matthew and the OT in this passage would clarify not just the meaning and value of Jesus' baptism from Matthew's perspective, but much more. It will also provide a clear meaning for

⁶⁰⁸ This is precisely why there must be a Matthean perspective that is suggested by the singularity of his report on the event in Mt. 3.14, 15.

this seemingly obscure verse, 15 at the heart of this pericope, and demystify the concept of fulfilling all righteousness through baptism with regard to John and Jesus.

Eventually, because of the link between the baptism of John, applied to Jesus and Christian baptism then and now, there will also be a possibility to reconsider this initiatory act in today's context, but from a perspective that is as ancient as the Matthean text. I will now engage in searching for these elements. If they exist within this pericope, I will examine their characteristics and evaluate the extent to which they fit into the present context. The idea of such a perception among the followers of Jesus, and in Matthew more explicitly than in others, seems to find support in Luke's report of the discussion that took place among the disciples just days after Jesus left for heaven. The reference in question is what I previously mentioned and promised to come back to in the appropriate section. It is time to look at Acts 1.22.

5.1.2 Initiatory Characteristics of Jesus' Baptism

Acts 1.22 as mentioned above is a report of how the disciples of Jesus attempted to face the challenges caused by the rapture of Jesus, and the fact that one of them was no longer there. This account is consigned in the same first chapter of the book of Acts, in verses 11-22. Chronologically, this biblical episode is one that pre-sets the systematic gathering of Jesus's disciples in a group to be known as the 'Apostolic Church,'⁶⁰⁹ historically speaking. This is a significant chronological detail in the development of the argument concerning the practice of baptism in the Church. The immediate context of Acts 1.22 is that Judas must be replaced on the basis of prophecy as interpreted by the protagonists in this scene.⁶¹⁰ The main condition for

⁶⁰⁹ Comby (1985, p. 10).

⁶¹⁰ In Acts 1.24-26, it is said that the disciples prayed for an answer to the question of whom among the two selected ones would replace Judas, and 'the lot fell on Matthias.' While this is the final result through the means used, the procedure started by the actual selection of the two. What is of interest

the replacement of Judas is defined by a specific time spent and experience of the candidate with Jesus. Two events outline the duration of that specific period as the beginning and the end of it. The first one is the baptism of Jesus by John, and the event that identifies the closing element is the resurrection of Jesus. The reason for selecting these events of the life of Jesus seems quite obvious. They mark the beginning and then end of his ministry as the Messiah that they recognised Jesus to be. According to this Lukan report, the baptism of Jesus by John in the mind of his disciples is the opening event of Jesus' messianic activities among them, and his resurrection is the completion of it.

It is noteworthy that Matthew's Gospel ends not with the resurrection of Jesus *per se*, but with the eleven disciples meeting him on a mountain not just to witness his ascension to heaven. They are given the last instructions from the departing Christ about the future of the group and what they should do in his corporal absence. This closing scene is more or less the same in the synoptic tradition.⁶¹¹ Although it seems that it is the resurrection of Jesus that establishes the pinnacle of the Jesus story in the synoptic Gospels, there is clear textual evidence of important post-resurrection activities on his part. Jesus did not depart for heaven straight after he was resurrected from the dead. The Johannine account and Luke's record of events in the book of Acts precisely confirms this chronological elements of the story.⁶¹² John partly specifies a number of days after which Jesus appeared to his disciple, but the time elapsed between the resurrection and the ascension is not precise. It is in Acts 1.3 that it is

here is the selection criteria in verses 21, 22. Both of the candidates had been with Jesus from the 'beginning' and that is the baptism of Jesus at John's hand.

⁶¹¹ While the similarities could be placed on an interdependence tradition (whatever the perspective), the differences are marks of the independence of the Gospel writers according to their writing aims. In Mt. 28.15-20, Mk 16.14-20 as well as in Lk. 24.36-51, Jesus indeed appears to the eleven disciples to instruct them before leaving the earth, but the content of his speech, the place of meeting, and to some extent, the circumstances, are different in all three reports. Those differences do not affect the point that is being made here, that is, Jesus is leaving some time after the resurrection.

⁶¹² See, Jn 20.19, 26; 21.1, 14

plainly stated as being forty days during which Jesus not only appeared to his disciples, but also taught them after the resurrection. The question is why then is the resurrection the chosen element for the closing of Jesus' ministry in the Gospel story. So much so that in Acts 1.22 it is the last part of the two-point factor of reference in choosing a replacement for Judas.

The answer to this question may lie in the fact that in the Gospel tradition, the resurrection of Jesus is the last fulfilling act of the OT prophecy concerning the Messiah.⁶¹³ Therefore regardless of the remaining activities that took place, the focus is on the resurrection as marking the end of the life and his mission of Jesus among the disciples. If this is the case that the resurrection is a defining point, in spite of subsequent activities found in the synoptic tradition that include the Gospel commission, then it is reasonable to think the same regarding the baptism of Jesus. In fact, Acts 1.22 is a clear statement that identifies the two events that officially mark the beginning and the end of Jesus' ministry for the disciples of Jesus. It is plausible then, in the light of the above passages, that the disciples not only believed that these two events were significant in marking the beginning and the end of the messianic

⁶¹³ Matthew ends his Gospel story in chapter 28 verses 19, 20 with 'the great commission', after the disciples in verse 16 met Jesus at an appointed place which was most probably chosen by Jesus anteriorly. There is no mention in Matthew of the preceding meetings that took place in the space of forty days according to Luke in the book of Acts, but it can at least be inferred from the Matthean material that they met before the ascension from that mountain. Before Mt. 28.16, the chapter focuses on the resurrection of Jesus. Mark's last chapter, 16, on the life of Jesus is similar in the sense that the resurrection is shortly followed by a commission to go and preach the Gospel to others. Only verse 14 stipulates that Jesus appeared to his disciples after the resurrection, with no mention of time, but followed by the ascension of Jesus and the return of the disciples to life as his servants. As for Luke's Gospel, like in Matthew and Mark, although, he makes no mention of the time elapsed between the resurrection and the departure of Jesus, there is a greater emphasis on what took place after the resurrection, and before the ascension. A significant part of the last chapter, verses 25-48, contains an explanation, often from the lips of the risen Christ concerning his death and his resurrection as being the fulfilment of the OT scripture, Lk. 24.26, 27, 32, 45, 46. Thus, regarding the closing scenes of the story of Jesus in the synoptic Gospels, the emphasis is on the resurrection, and in Luke, it is placed and explained in the context of prophecy being fulfilled, according to the same scriptural source that allowed them to recognise the Messiahship of Jesus. It is Jesus himself who expounds on the scriptures regarding the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ, 'as it says in Lk. 24.44, these things were 'written in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms, concerning me', and in 45, 'he opened their understanding.'

ministry of Jesus, but preserved it as such. The main reason for it would be how these events related to the OT scripture and played a major role in ascertaining their necessity in the Gospel story. The main difficulty is that while there is no doubt on the validity of the argument concerning the resurrection (see, Lk. 24.44, 46), this appears less obvious for the baptism. Indeed, this would be the case unless there is a particular interest in examining the above argument on the baptism of Jesus in Mt. 3.13-17 in the context of the Acts/Lukan declaration about what constituted the official marker of the opening of the messianic ministry of Jesus.⁶¹⁴ Therefore, Matthew's specific account of the baptism of Jesus could be viewed as an attempt to explain, perhaps from a personal perspective, the event as part of an initiation ceremony. This reflection can be pursued in the light of the disciples' belief on the role the baptism of Jesus played in determining the beginning of his mission among them.

5.1.3 Matthew's Initiatory Perspective on the Baptismal Anointing of Jesus

There is no doubt that the Matthean account of this episode of the life of Jesus is unique, as already discussed in this thesis. That uniqueness is expressed in Mt. 3.14, 15 through the conversation between John, who did not believe that Jesus should have been baptised by him, and Jesus who thought and claimed the opposite. The rest of the event as presented in the synoptic tradition is very harmonious in nature. They all recorded the phenomenon that took place straight after the baptism. There is a unanimous testimony by Matthew, Mark, and Luke of a supernatural occurrence that is also partially reported in the fourth Gospel.⁶¹⁵ Although there are slight differences in the wording of this testimony in the three Gospels, the essence of the happening is

⁶¹⁴ See, comment in D. Hagner (1993, p. 54).

⁶¹⁵ See, Jn 12.32

the same.⁶¹⁶ All three testify of a unique phenomenological experience at the baptism of Jesus that contrasts that of other people who also were baptised in the same manner, day and place by John the Baptist. In the passage that precedes Mt. 3.13-17, and more specifically in verses 5-7, it is plain that John was baptising all sorts of people, and in 13 using the adverb τότε, Matthew establishes the sequence of things that is even clearer in Lk. 3.21.

Jesus, according to the testimony of Matthew and the other evangelists, came to be baptised by John at the place and time that was common to many who did the same. However, the experience of Jesus as reported in all three Gospels made his baptism a unique and special one to both of the protagonists, the Baptist and the baptised. They all, the Gospel writers, attest of the same in almost similar terms what took place at the baptism of Jesus that made it different to that of all other candidates. The report as in Mt. 3.16 is, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἡνεώχθησαν [αὐτῷ] οἱ οὐρανοί, καὶ εἶδεν [τὸ] πνεῦμα [τοῦ] θεοῦ καταβαῖνον ὡσεὶ περιστερὰν [καὶ] ἐρχόμενον ἐπ' αὐτόν. As said earlier the minor differences in the wording of this testimony between the synoptic Gospels do not change in any way the common essence of these texts.⁶¹⁷ They all report the core elements of the opening of the heavens and of the descending of the Spirit of God upon Jesus.⁶¹⁸ There is no record of such occurrence at the administration of this same rite for anyone else before or after Jesus' baptism. There is also the audible accompanying testimony that is reported in the synoptic tradition, whether preceding the first Spirit phenomenon or following it. In Mt. 3.17 it is penned

⁶¹⁶ Cf. Mt. 3.15, 16; Mk 1.10, 11; Lk. 3.21, 22.

⁶¹⁷ Mk 1.10 says, καὶ εὐθὺς ἀναβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος εἶδεν σχιζομένους τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ὡς περιστερὰν καταβαῖνον εἰς αὐτόν. Lk. 3.22a says, καὶ καταβῆναι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον σωματικῶς εἶδει ὡς περιστερὰν ἐπ' αὐτόν, and as for the fourth Gospel in Jn 1.32 Καὶ ἐμαρτύρησεν Ἰωάννης λέγων ὅτι Τεθέαμαι τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον ὡσεὶ¹ περιστερὰν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ ἔμεινεν ἐπ' αὐτόν., here is the testimony of the Baptist that makes reference to the same event.

⁶¹⁸ In Jn 1.32-34, the testimony of the Baptist concerning the element of the Holy Spirit coming down on Jesus like a dove (32, 33) is plainly concordant with the synoptics' reports.

as καὶ ἰδοὺ φωνὴ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν λέγουσα· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα.⁶¹⁹ This voice that was heard at the baptism of Jesus is not reported by anyone being at the address of anyone else in the great number of people who came to John the Baptist at any time, before or after Jesus' baptism. It exclusively occurs in the context of the administration of the rite, the baptism, when it was applied to Jesus. This is the main reason why the message that it conveys is personal to Jesus, and consequently, it exhibits the singularity of Jesus' baptismal experience. This is made particularly clear in Matthew through the repeat, almost word for word, in Mt. 17.5 of the same saying, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, at the unique transfiguration experience.

Since in Mk 1.11 and in Lk. 3.22, the records concerning the voice are quite the same except for some minute changes, the difference with the first Gospel gives reasons to think that in Matthew there is more to it.⁶²⁰ In the context of the transfiguration in Mk 9.7 and Lk. 9.35 there is a minor difference between these texts. That difference is revealed in comparing the phrases, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός and οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἐκλελεγμένος, as they respectively occur in the above references. In both of the texts, the remainder of the verses are identical in meaning, ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ and αὐτοῦ ἀκούετε, therefore, there is no particular question about the impact of the difference in the wording that they present. In Matthew,

⁶¹⁹ Mk 1.11 has it, καὶ φωνὴ ἐγένετο ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα., while in Lk. 3.22, καὶ φωνὴν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ γενέσθαι· σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα, which gives the impression of simultaneity. Also, the phrase is similar to that of Mark, therefore, making Matthew's version of it one that may be purposely different, perhaps for the reason of seeing this baptism in a different light. It has been argued that Matthew places 'central significance' on such statement because of his Christological development, see, D. A. Hagner (1993, p. 337). Also, in Jn 1.34 it is possible to see the connection with the synoptics in John's testimony about the voice that came from above, according to Matthew, Mark and Luke, in the fact that the message is the same about the sonship of Jesus being divinely confirmed.

⁶²⁰ Cf. the Matthean text with Mk 1.11, and Lk. 3.22. The latter ones have the same content that differs slightly with Matthew's. σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα, both have a direct address to Jesus, while in Matthew the voice addresses anyone who is around, as indicated by οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου.

however, it is distinctively different. Mark and Luke have changed the phraseology of the divine testimony between the baptism and the transfiguration in their respective reports, but Matthew has kept the same as in Mt. 3.17 and 17.5, if not just for the addition of the last part of Mk 9.7, also found in Lk. 9.35. Matthew reads, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα· ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ. The reason for this is the carefulness of Matthew, as argued earlier, in literarily binding together his story of Jesus. These two episodes, the baptism and the transfiguration, point to the specialness of Jesus in terms of who he is and what his mission is. The part that is missing in Mk 9.7 and in Lk. 9.35, from the first divine testimony at the baptism, but kept in Mt. 17.5 is ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα. There is evidence that Matthew's consistent use of this expression is of a hermeneutical nature. He wants this phrase to be interpreted consistently in a particular way.

Indeed, this ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα is used in another location in Matthew and within another context. In Mt. 12 that is loaded with OT related material,⁶²¹ there is a block of texts from verses 17 to 21 that begins with a Matthean fulfilment formula that aims at identifying Jesus in relation to God.⁶²² We encounter in verse 18, ὁ ἀγαπητός μου εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου,⁶²³ the same expression, but for the form used by Matthew to audibly identify Jesus at his baptism and at the transfiguration event. The difference is only in the fact that there is the addition of ἡ ψυχὴ μου that only changes

⁶²¹ In this chapter, as observed by *CNTUOT* (2007, pp. 40–1), there is a heavy reliance on OT stories from the beginning of the chapter. ‘the controversy over plucking grain on the Sabbath’ relies on 1 Sam. 21.1–6, then Jesus refers to ‘Numb. 28.9–10’. ‘The rhetorical question, “have you not read in the law?” recalls the numerous OT contexts in which the Scriptures were read aloud.’ Also, Jesus would have referred to Lev. 24.5–9; Hos. 6.6, and alluded to other OT passages and stories. See also, D. A. Hagner (1993, pp. 328–30).

⁶²² This passage describing how Jesus ‘conducted’ his ministry with regard to a specific aspect of his servant attitude, is said to ‘correspond closely’ to ‘the servant demeanor in Isa. 42.1–4’, see, D. A. Hagner (1993, p. 337); Gundry (1982, pp. 229–30); Nolland (2005, pp. 492–95).

⁶²³ The form of the verb in this passage is different, but it is the same εὐδοκέω, only that here, although it has the same subject, God speaking from the heavens, the third person εὐδόκησεν of the aorist tense is used, thus changing the ending because it is the ἡ ψυχὴ of God that is expressing the words.

the morphology, but affects in no way the identical meaning found in οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα. The OT origin of this expression and Matthew's intention to use it in the context of identifying Jesus and presenting the evidence of his Messiahship is once more ascertained in Mt. 12.18. By consistently using οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα in places where he could have followed the changes used, yet referring to the same events in other Gospels, there is a determination to remind the reader of a particular point. That is, when reading the Matthean account of the baptism of Jesus in Mt. 3.17 and encountering the above expression, there would be a strong impression on the mind about who Jesus is. When reading Mt. 12.18 and meeting the same, the same effect would apply to deepen the impression.

When eventually facing the use of an identical expression in the account of the transfiguration in Mt. 17.5, there would inevitably be a fastening of the revelation of Jesus' identity as a link is automatically made between the three texts in their contexts. Identifying the same expression in all three texts would lead to making the same application that would in turn pose the question of the nature and purpose of this Matthean connection between these events as described. If one of these texts provides the reader with information concerning its OT origin, as it is the case in Mt. 12.18, then every time it occurs within the book, it reveals an OT dimension that necessarily affects or even conditions what is being said. In the case of Mt. 12.18, ὁ ἀγαπητός μου, within the rest, εἰς ᾧ εὐδόκησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου grammatically functions as a complement to the subject in the sentence, and this subject is ὁ παῖς μου.

It is noteworthy that the subject, ὁ παῖς μου in Mt. 12.18 has been translated 'my servant' in all the English translations that have been mentioned in this research. It is also a fact that even in other languages such as French and Spanish, for instance,

the tendency is the same.⁶²⁴ The reason for this choice as being the best is due to the context of ὁ παῖς μου. The expression can also be translated, ‘slave, child, son, daughter’. It evokes status in this sentence and this translation is congruent with the NT use of this word.⁶²⁵ However, this aspect is not the only one to be considered. The main reason is the fact that Mt. 12.18 is identified as originating from an OT source that is clearly designated by the Matthew as ‘the prophet Esaias’ in verse 17. In the Matthean version of the story of the healing of a man with a ‘withered hand’ (10-14), this particular part, 17-20, is unparalleled in the synoptic tradition.⁶²⁶ That is to say that the formula quotation in 17 that introduces 18, the quote from Isa. 42.1-4, is proper to Matthew.⁶²⁷ Thus, it is Matthew’s personal and deliberate action to identify the expression in Mt. 12.18 ὁ παῖς μου ὃν ἡρέτισα, ὁ ἀγαπητός μου εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου· as of that specific origin in Isaiah’s prophecy that Jesus fulfilled. Concerning this Matthean claim, it is consensually agreed among scholars that Mt. 12.18 does refer mainly to Isa. 42.1-4.⁶²⁸

Nevertheless, while Isa. 42.1-4 provides the reader with insight into Matthew’s intention to ground this story in an OT prophetic background, it is not the only source from which Matthew has drawn. As said before, the elements in Mt. 12.18 are similar to those of Mt. 3.17 in nature, and remind of the testimony of God at the baptism of Jesus. It is to be noticed that there seems to be in this text, Mt. 3.17, an

⁶²⁴ A brief look at the different French translations such as for instance, the LSG, the Louis Segond, 1910, reveals this fact by having ‘mon serviteur’, and it is the same with, French Bible de Jérusalem (FBJ) as well as the Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible (TOB). In the Spanish translations the phenomenon is the same, see, NIV, SIV and others. The point here is that all these translations of this text in various languages agree that ὁ παῖς μου should be translated ‘my servant’.

⁶²⁵ See, Friberg et al. (2000); *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 750–51).

⁶²⁶ Cf. Mk 3.1-6; Lk. 6.6-11.

⁶²⁷ For Nolland (2005, pp. 491–92), this argument is supported by the observation that this quotation from Isa. 42.1-4 has the ‘least extensive linkage with its immediate context.’ The argument is that Matthew is perhaps thinking that it is a good time in the story to use such literary device.

⁶²⁸ See, Gundry (1982, p. 229); Smith (1989, p. 164); *CNTUOT* (2007, p. 42); D. A. Hagner (1993, pp. 337–38).

identifiable element of an OT passage as well. Theologians have largely debated this question that pertains to whether or not Matthew is quoting or alluding to Ps. 2.7, to Isa. 42.1 and even other parts of Isaiah when he writes Mt. 3.17.⁶²⁹ In the light of the arguments, one point is sufficiently evident here. There is no doubt that Matthew is seeking to place these events in an OT prophetic light. Whatever the conclusion on the exact composition and specific origin of Matthew's sayings in the three texts, Mt. 3.17; 12.18; 17.5, the OT elements cannot be denied. Whether or not in this case Matthew resorts to redactions of OT citations that he has at his disposal, he is determined to use the same at different times in order to produce the same effect in all three places. The difference is only that in two of the texts, Mt. 3.17 and 17.5, it is the voice that comes from heaven that renders this testimony public. In Mt. 12.18, it is Matthew's observation and realisation of the fulfilment of the OT scripture in this episode of the life of Jesus. That means the testimony given by the voice out of heaven is confirmed by the elements that can be observed in the life of Jesus according to the OT.⁶³⁰

If Matthew makes a straight link between Mt. 12.19 and Isa. 42.2 through a direct quotation, such is not entirely the case with Mt. 12.18 and Isa. 42.1. However, a comparison between Isa. 42.1 of the LXX and the Matthean text is conclusive in the

⁶²⁹ See comments on this point in Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 335–45); Gundry (1982, pp. 52–53); Smith (1989, pp. 58–61), where some words and themes used in Mt. 3.17 are investigated in the light of their particular usages in sources that could have potentially been referred to by him, according to different arguments developed around the OT and Jewish scriptural traditions that may flavour this passage. The main point in reviewing these arguments is to see the complexity of clearly identifying a single source to Matthew's text here, and to exhibit the fact that the focus of commentators is most of the time on the same OT texts, Psalms 2, and Isaiah 42, whether they agree or not on the direction the comments on these particular references go. All of them, however, seem to see the link between the three Matthean passages, and the consistency with which they are used in this Gospel.

⁶³⁰ This particular case might be one the least expected. In Mt. 12.19, Matthew explains to the reader, through the fulfilment formula, why it was that Jesus asked his audience and witnesses of the miraculous deed that he performed to keep it quiet. It is a direct quote this time from Isaiah, interpreted by Matthew as a sign of Jesus' scriptural and prophetic identifiable identity and mission. See, Isa. 42.2.

fact that they bear great similarities in form and content.⁶³¹ In both texts God directly speaks about ὁ παῖς μου in whom ἡ ψυχή μου does the same action.⁶³² In the whole context of the Matthean work and his use of the fulfilment formula in Mt. 12.17, it is very difficult to overlook the intention of this text. Irrespective of the changes that Matthew makes consistently to pre-existing passages for literary purposes, it would be difficult to overlook the following point. In Mt. 3.17 and in 17.5, there is an unconcealed willingness on the part of Matthew to identify, in terms of the identity of Jesus, the OT-prophetic-fulfilment nature of two events taking place. This is demonstrated by an identifiable link between Mt. 3.17; 17.5 and Mt. 12.18 through the use of the same words and thought unequivocally recognised in the OT as from Isa. 42.1.

As noted earlier, Matthew uses this OT saying three times in his Gospel, and in two of them, Mt. 3.17 and 17.5, instead of παῖς, he uses υἱός with ὁ ἀγαπητός μου as a substitute. It is noteworthy that υἱός is also used in Mk 9.7 and Lk. 9.35, but without ὁ ἀγαπητός μου. This fact places Matthew in the spotlight with regard the NT usage and the OT text. Matthew alone in the synoptic tradition brings into these different events the same vocabulary as he reports them. This consistency would mean that he applies the same OT prophetic background to them all. Consequently, these three passages consistently identify Jesus in separate occasions as fulfilling the messianic context of Isaiah 42. In Matthew, the ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα of 3.17 and 17.5 is unequivocally the ὁ παῖς μου ὃν ἠρέτισα· ὁ ἀγαπητός μου εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησεν ἡ ψυχή μου. The role of Mt. 12.18, where he carefully

⁶³¹ This remark is not suggesting any difficulty in identifying the link between these texts, but only highlights Matthew's redactional activities to serve his purposes. On the extent of the similarities with both the HB text and the LXX in the Matthean text, see, Nolland (2005, p. 492).

⁶³² Although in the two texts, the verbs εὐδοκέω (NT) and προσδέχομαι (LXX) that express God's thought about 'ὁ παῖς' are etymologically different one from the other, they still convey the same idea. See, Friberg et al. (2000); Shrenk (1964); Abbott-Smith (1999, p. 185); T. Muraoka (2002, p. 486).

preserves the words ὁ παῖς from the LXX version of Isa. 42.2 is to openly allow the liaison in the reader's mind between the OT and Mt. 3.17; 17.5. Thus, the events that the latter texts describe are classifiable as prophecy fulfilled even when there is no formula that indicates that it is the case. In this perspective, the OT endorsement of the baptism of Jesus is reinforced by a public testimony of the voice from heaven. This voice from heaven is largely recognisable in the speeches of the God of OT-Israel in one of the favourite and more consistently referred-to prophets in Matthew.⁶³³ One of the reasons why Matthew's redactional skills expressed in the context of combining formula quotations with the mention of the name of the OT prophet Isaiah is perhaps to do with its important messianic character.⁶³⁴

So, Matthew more than anyone else in the synoptic tradition mentions by name Ἡσαΐας, this prophet of the OT as a reference for understanding and identifying the OT root of the messianic expectations in Jesus.⁶³⁵ It is noteworthy that the very first time that he does so, it is in the context of John's baptismal ministry in Mt. 3.3,

⁶³³ 'Throughout Matthew Isaiah's name ... is associated on the one hand with Jesus' ministry...', Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 292–93). It is recognised that Matthew 'quotes the OT at least twice as often as any other Gospel writer.' In fact it has been argued that the Matthean Gospel 'is saturated with the OT.' See, Nolland (2005, pp. 29, 29–36). As for the use of Isaiah, Matthew more than any other Gospel writer mentions the prophet by name (Esaías) in reference to the source of his declarations. Six times does he name the prophet, while Mark and Luke respectively do it 1 and 2 times only. This is significant in the light of the extent of the interdependence that is generally accepted between the synoptic Gospels. For instance, while the textual relationship between Mark and Matthew is often established as very close, only once does Mark mention the name 'Esaías' in Mk 7.6. The key position of Isaiah in Matthew's narrative and identification of Jesus in OT prophecy is seen in his depiction of the 'servant Messiah' that he uniquely portrays in Mt. 12.17–20 in exact consonance with Jesus' fate. See, D. A. Hagner (1993, pp. 337–38).

⁶³⁴ Although, only Mark, of the four Gospels, does not identify by name the origin of the saying that introduces the Baptist's commission, lifting up his 'voice in the wilderness', the content is clearly and exclusively identifiable in the book of Isaiah, according to Isa. 40.3, thus, placing this prophet in a unique position in the story of Jesus. There would be no Jesus without John the Baptist if considering the concordance of the Gospel stories in introducing Jesus.

⁶³⁵ Isaiah, Ἡσαΐας, is named 6 times in the Gospel of Matthew as the reference for identifying from the OT the actions of the life of Jesus and what happens around him as pertaining to the fulfilment of prophecy in a messianic context. This is 2 times more than in the Gospel of John that is evidently focussed on the messianic identity and the relationship of Jesus with the divine more than any other Gospel. Such is the determination of Matthew to anchor his story of the life of Jesus in the context of fulfilment of OT sayings. Mark and Luke respectively only mention the name of the prophet twice each. This is significant with regard to Matthew's personal touch and perspective on the Gospel story, whatever his sources. See, Mt. 3.3; 4.14; 8.17; 12.17; 13.14; 15.7, and Mk 1.2; 7.6, Lk. 3.4; 4.17, Jn 1.23; 12.38, 39, 41.

in the introduction of the Baptist who straight after that proceeds to baptise Jesus. It is at this baptism, which Jesus says is to fulfil all righteousness (Mt. 3.15), that this voice (verse 17), so recognisable in the OT prophet Isaiah through the wording, is publically heard for a witness.⁶³⁶ This heavenly voice in Mt. 3.17; 17.5 and 12.17, 18 calls Jesus ὁ υἱός μου, ὁ παῖς μου, terms that are equivalent in meaning both in Isaiah and Matthew to make it a prophetic announcement and fulfilment. In Isa. 42.1, 2 there is one particular element that allows a strong connection between all the elements under discussion here. Besides the fact that Mt. 12.19 also quotes from the second verse of Isaiah 42 in application to Jesus, there is in verse 1 the part that says, ἔδωκα τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπ' αὐτόν. God, who speaks of his servant in this text, declares in the same breath that he has δίδωμι 'given' his spirit to him. This verb δίδωμι is translated differently depending of the context in which it is employed.⁶³⁷ While the main use of its frequent occurrence in the NT has to do with the meaning 'to give', it also has in its semantic range the aspect of granting and bestowing.

It has been argued that this particular verb is equivalent to another verb, τίθημι, which is mainly translated 'put',⁶³⁸ and this element seems relevant to mention in the present context. In Mt. 12.18 that has been linked to Isa. 42.1, the verb δίδωμι in both texts has been translated according to the meaning of τίθημι in all major English translations.⁶³⁹ It appears that in the context of Isa. 42.1, concerning the giving of the Spirit to the servant, the word is used figuratively to express an

⁶³⁶ For a discussion on the voice from heaven, the rabbinic 'bat qôl', see, comments in Davies and Allison (1988, p. 335); Gundry (1982, p. 53).

⁶³⁷ See, Friberg et al. (2000); *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 242-43); Liddell and Scott (1869).

⁶³⁸ See, Friberg et al. (2000); *GELNT* (1998); Liddell and Scott (1869); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 1003-4).

⁶³⁹ See, ESV, KJV, NAS, NLT, RSV as they all have the same translation, that is 'put'. In the NET, it is another equivalent, 'to place', which has the same denotation as 'to put'.

appointment and the bestowal of authority upon this servant on the part of God.⁶⁴⁰

This aspect of things is relevant in the light of the connection mentioned earlier between Matthew and Isaiah in the context of Jesus' identification as one who does the work of God. Indeed, in terms of Jesus' deeds as a servant of God, the most direct connection is made through the parallel that has been established between the actions of Jesus as he points at them in Mt. 11.5, and a series of texts from Isaiah. Scholars have identified passages such as Isa. 29.18, 19; 35.5, 6; 42.18; 61.1⁶⁴¹ as the OT references that Matthew would have had in mind in this passage. However, among these, it is Isa. 61.1 that seems to provide more of a solid footing for this argument. Although it could be argued that in Matthew there is no such direct application of Isa. 61.1 to the ministry of Jesus as it is in Lk. 4.18, a direct connection can be established between the Spirit-appointed servant of Isa. 42.1 and the Spirit-anointed agent of Isa. 61.1. It is to be noted that in Isa. 42.7 there are particular actions of the servant that are strictly the same as those of the agent in Is 61.1.⁶⁴² A thematic comparison and a survey of the use of these texts clearly enable the link between the two sets as they relate to the work of Jesus in the minds of both Luke and Matthew as it is posited in scholarship.⁶⁴³

Therefore, there is no difficulty to expose the fact that Matthew sees Jesus' messiahship being authenticated through the realisation of these OT texts such as Isa.

⁶⁴⁰ The aspect of appointing is clearly seen in the use of this verb in Acts 13.20, where it is used by Luke to refer to the judges that God gave Israel to lead them with authority.

⁶⁴¹ See, *CNTUOT* (2007, p. 38); Gundry (1982, p. 206); D. A. Hagner (1993, pp. 300–1); Nolland (2005, p. 451).

⁶⁴² Cf. Isa. 42.7; 61.1. It is strange that in spite of the striking similarity, Isa. 42.7 is not systematically placed with other texts such as Isa. 29.18, 19; 35.5, 6. See the comments on the links between these OT and NT texts, and particularly the three Matthean ones in Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 337–38).

⁶⁴³ See, a number of scholarly views as put together by Marshall (1978, pp. 182–84), who although he does not mention in his list of OT texts that include Isaiah 61 on which he focuses, says that the passage in its 'original context ... may refer to the self-consciousness of the prophet that is called to make known the good news of...'. See also, footnote 9 in Nolland (2005, p. 451); D. Hagner (1993, pp. 300–1).

42.1 and Isa. 61.1 in terms of the δίδωμι of the Spirit of God. In Isa. 61.1, the term attached to the dealing with the Spirit is מָשַׁח in the HB and χρίω in the LXX.⁶⁴⁴ The main translation of these words into the English language for the OT and the NT in almost all Bible versions used in the thesis is ‘to anoint’. The main sense of this Greek verb in Is 61.1, χρίω, that is directly applied to Jesus in Luke and indirectly in Matthew, conveys the same principal idea of the figurative context of δίδωμι in Isa. 42.1 that is applied directly to Jesus in Mt. 12.18. This is to say that the notion of Jesus having been ‘anointed’ with the Spirit of God to do the work that is described in this Matthean text is evident. Jesus the servant of God as pre-told in Isaiah, according to Matthew, was at some point ‘anointed’ with divine authority by ‘the father’ to do the very works that he did. These works did not just happen, but they were prophetically announced, and then executed in an OT and NT context of Spirit-anointing. In Mt. 12.17-21 he impresses his readers with the thought that this long-awaited fulfilment of the Isaianic Spirit-anointed servant of God has happened through Jesus who has then become ‘the Christ’. The question then, with regard to the anointing, is when it happened and how. This question seems to find an answer in Matthew’s literary and redactional skills that have allowed him to textually link Mt. 12.18 to 3.17 on the one hand. But he also achieved the same theologically with Isa. 42.1-7; 61.1 and Mt. 12.17-21; 3.16, 17 on the other hand.⁶⁴⁵ In other words, what is happening in Mt. 3.16, 17 is the time when Jesus was anointed with the Spirit of God in order to do the works that the servant of God would do as foretold in the OT scripture.

⁶⁴⁴ Having dealt with this Hebrew word מָשַׁח before as meaning ‘to anoint’, it is the Greek equivalent word χρίω that needs focussing on. See for the LXX usage, T. Muraoka (2002, pp. 600–1), and for the NT usage, Friberg et al. 2000); *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, p. 1091); de Jonge 1974, pp. 493–521).

⁶⁴⁵ See, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 335–45).

Thus, the manifestation of the Spirit ‘descending like a dove’ and ‘coming on him’ fits the divine anointing-of-the-servant act that the OT texts of Isaiah are referring to. From this perspective, this baptismal event could be interpreted as an official and public anointing ceremony of the servant of God. This particular spiritual-in-nature anointing moment is validated by the public testimony of the voice from heaven that can be identified through the message that it delivers.⁶⁴⁶ This message is expressed through Matthew’s individual version of the same exclamation found in the parallel accounts of Mark and Luke.⁶⁴⁷ It has been recognised that in Mt. 3.17, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός is Matthew’s rendering, through the substitution of σὺ εἶ found in Lk. 3.22 and Mk 1.11 by οὗτός ἐστιν. While this Matthean redaction act on what most have identified as based on the LXX text of Ps. 2.7 does not change the synoptic happening *per se*, it fits better the Matthean context in which the event takes place. In Matthew’s perspective it is a public event that demonstrates to those who witness it God’s choice of his anointed one, Χριστός. In this case, οὗτός ἐστιν is more suitable than σὺ εἶ, because the action is intended to address the witnesses as well as the anointed one himself. For this reason, οὗτός ἐστιν becomes a strong element that is indicative of the nature and purpose of this whole ceremony.

With this textual element that helps clarify the context, it can be argued that as far as the manifestation of the Spirit is concerned in the baptism pericope, it marks the fulfilment of an event that had to take place in the life of the Messiah, ‘the anointed one’. This is the reason why perhaps all the Gospels record this phenomenon regarding the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit of God. This anointing ceremony happened at the baptism of Jesus, in a context that is different to that of an act that

⁶⁴⁶ See, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 335–40).

⁶⁴⁷ In Mk 1.11 and Lk. 3.22, the first part of the message from heaven is exactly the same, σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός. It is evident that Matthew has changed this part into οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, while the rest remains textually concordant with the two other accounts.

signified the turning away from sin. This baptism is congruent with the claims about the life of Jesus as one who needed not repentance, but had to be publically anointed, in order to be recognised as the ‘Messiah’. This Matthean emphasis would be confirmed in the Johannine record of the Baptist’s testimony regarding the main sign by which he knew that Jesus was the Messiah. Jn 1.33 stipulates that it was the visible ‘descending’ of the Holy Spirit upon the chosen individual that constituted for John the Baptist in particular, but not exclusively, the sign of this anointing of God.⁶⁴⁸ In fact, in the Johannine passage that deals with this baptism of Jesus, in verse 31, it is made clear that John through his water baptism was commissioned to expose who the Messiah was. This verse, *καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἔδειν αὐτόν, ἀλλ’ ἵνα φανερωθῇ τῷ Ἰσραὴλ διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον ἐγὼ ἐν ὕδατι βαπτίζων* in this context is unambiguous as it reveals the whole purpose of John’s ministry. He came ‘to prepare the way’ to ‘baptise with water’, so that he could baptise Jesus, and consequently *φανερώω* ‘reveal’ to ‘Israel’ ‘the anointed one’. This revelation came with the sign in verse 33 of the Spirit descending on Jesus at his baptism and constituting the epicentre of all John the Baptist was to accomplish.

There is no doubt that Matthew and John are relating the same event, but also the same interpretation of the action of the Spirit. Such is the case in all four Gospels, but Matthew decided to expand on this aspect so that it may be clear that there is a consistent biblical and OT-based explanation to the baptism of Jesus. This baptism is not one that Jesus undertakes for the confession and forgiveness of his sins as did others before and after him. It is one to which he submits because it fulfils a major part of what was expected to happen according to God’s will expressed in the above

⁶⁴⁸ This is not inconsistent with the fact that he had testified of Jesus’ status before the anointing, in Jn 1.29. In Jn 1.29, John recognises Jesus as *ὁ ἄμνος τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου* before the Holy Spirit anoints him, but this is not the main point of this testimony with regard to what follows in this baptismal episode.

OT texts. The Matthean version of the voice from heaven serves the same purpose as the Johannine testimony of the Baptist in Jn 1.33. This is Matthew's point in consistently repeating the message of this voice in Mt. 3.17 and 17.5 of which the prophetic sources are revealed in Mt. 12.18 through a direct quotation of the OT. Thus, in Matthew, the voice from heaven coupled with the anointing of the Holy Spirit become a defining factor in the initiatory nature of the event that is taking place in the baptism pericope. The expression *Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* that is found twice at the opening of this Gospel, in the very first verse Mt. 1.1, 18, becomes intelligible in the light of the nature of the baptismal pericope. Jesus becomes the actual awaited Messiah through the realisation of OT texts such as Isa. 42.1-7; 61.1 and Ps. 2.7 that had promised that the son in whom God is well pleased would be anointed with the Spirit of God as the servant of the Lord. In the Matthean text, Mt. 3.17, when this anointing takes place, it is the fulfilment of what had been announced by the prophet Isaiah and in Ps. 2.7.

This anointing is consequently an initiation of the servant of the Lord who has come to do the things that those same OT texts claimed that he would do when he is anointed. If obeying the requirement of God is to fulfil righteousness as it has been argued in this thesis, then the baptism of Jesus as viewed in Matthew with regard to the anointing is a fulfilment of righteousness. The ministry of the servant of the Lord would not have been validated without this public and overt anointing that marks the commencement of his service. If this is the commencement of Jesus' service as 'the servant' of the Lord, then, this baptism is initiatory in nature, and this is probably the reason why the disciples of Jesus referred to it as the beginning in Acts 1.22. It becomes clear that the focal point of the event is the anointing of Jesus at this baptism, and not the act of being baptised as others were. This point is further

confirmed by the evangelists Luke and Matthew when the first emphasised in Acts 10.38 what seems to have been the main element of recognition of who Jesus was. Luke evidently in this text focuses on the anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit. He says, *Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ, ὡς ἔχρισεν αὐτὸν ὁ θεὸς πνεύματι ἁγίῳ*. This anointing happened at his baptism, and according to this same verse, it was from this point forward that he went about and did the works that are attributed to him as the core of his mission in the Gospel tradition.⁶⁴⁹ As for Matthew in the chapter that follows the baptism pericope, in Mt. 4.23, he makes the same remark about the works of Jesus. It is implied in the context, form and content of this chapter 4 that the above verse marked the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Therefore, the anointing of Jesus initiated or inaugurated, as an event, his mission as the Messiah.

Nevertheless, there is this actual baptismal act, the formal washing with water that also took place before the anointing episode, in the context of the whole baptism experience. The question of the place and the necessity of it in this context of initiation or inauguration of Jesus' ministry seems not to be particularly addressed in these marker texts. Since the washing is linked to the anointing phenomenon, there must be a reason for it, and the fact that Matthew evokes this reason without clear explanations generates a number of questions that are legitimate and necessary. Among a list of them, one seems essential from the outset, and it is indeed the quest of this research. Why was it so important for Jesus to be baptised by John in order for this initiation ceremony to be a complete fulfilment of righteousness as specified in Mt. 3.15? It has been argued that it was not just Jesus who was involved in the fulfilment all righteousness, but that the declaration also included John the Baptist. If

⁶⁴⁹ Luke begins his fourth chapter following the anointing at the baptism with an exposition of the Holy Spirit's control of Jesus' movements to lead him in the wilderness. In verse 14 of that same chapter, he re-uses the expression found in verse 1 to restate the lead of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus, whom by then started to preach and to do the things that can be identified with the actions of the 'servant of God' as prophesied by Isaiah. See, Marshall (1978, pp. 176–77).

it is clear that the anointing of Jesus satisfies the question of the nature and purpose of this baptism, the act of John baptising Jesus in order to fulfil all righteousness still remains to be interpreted in the light of Mt. 3.15.

Matthew must have seen the act of John baptising Jesus as necessary in this initiatory context, otherwise, he would have left John outside of this statement in verse 15. So there are some questions that arise concerning his view of this immersion of Jesus in the definite context of initiation. Did Matthew see in the immersion of Jesus an initiatory element that fitted the anointing? If the anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit comes as a definitely essential component of the initiatory character of this experience, what about the washing with water? How does this washing with water fit in Matthew's idiosyncratic declaration in verse 15 of the pericope? How can the water baptism of Jesus be a response to God's requirement, and therefore, part of the fulfilment of all righteousness? Can Matthew provide an OT scriptural basis for his understanding of the baptism of Jesus being a requirement of God for the initiation of Jesus to his ministry as the servant of the Lord, the Messiah? These are the questions to which I wish to turn at this point, in order to ascertain the nature of the washing of Jesus by John in the context of a fulfilment of God's requirement. All these questions will be answered in a development of the thought, while dealing with the initiatory nature of Jesus' washing by John, based on an OT exemplar.

5.1.4 Matthew's Initiatory Perspective on the Washing of Jesus

The first question I will attempt to address is that of the possibility that Matthew could have seen an initiatory nature to the baptismal act, the washing of Jesus. In paying attention to the beginning of the short conversation of Jesus with John in verse 14 of the passage of interest, deductive reasoning allows a promising starting point on this. This verse is the first part of this concise and unique exchange between the

protagonists in this dialogue. The preceding verse, 13, sets the scene for it by saying that Jesus intentionally approached John with the intent of βαπτισθῆναι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ. John's reaction indicates that he saw no need for Jesus to do this. This declaration implies, in the light of John's message to the other people who came to him for the same purpose, in verses 7-12, that Jesus was not comparable to any of them. The message of repentance and forgiveness of sin that he delivered did not apply to Jesus, and consequentially, the baptism he administered was useless in the case of Jesus, from his perspective. It would be fair to think that this is the rationale behind John's opposition to Jesus' action, according to Matthew.

Thus, Matthew possibly aims at removing all doubts about Jesus needing the same type of baptism that anyone else did.⁶⁵⁰ This, in conjunction with the declaration of Jesus according to which they should both be involved for righteousness sake, would point to another reason for this baptism.⁶⁵¹ It is evident that Jesus, in verse 15, gives no explanation as to why this baptism should happen except for the fact that he believes it to be appropriate in terms of doing the will of God. The focus has often been on Jesus being the main subject of this fulfilment as said earlier, but Matthew's text indicates otherwise. The textual evidence is that the will of God was for both Jesus and John together, the subject of this fulfilment of God's exigency in this baptismal scenario. They are in the act, the baptism, the washing and being washed, joined to give a faithful response to the divine mandate, which legitimacy, from the

⁶⁵⁰ Many scholars in the briefness of their comments on this verse have failed to see this point for what it is at its basic level. For some others, they may only engage more with the uncertainties that surround the origin and purpose of this Matthean conversation. See, Luz (2007, p. 177); Gundry (1982, p. 50); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 323–24); Nolland (2005, pp. 153–55); D. Hagner (1993, pp. 55–7); Adams (2013, pp. 128–29); F. P. Viljoen (2013, pp. 5–6); Przybylski (1980, pp. 91–4); McCuiston et al. (2014).

⁶⁵¹ See in McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 1) the list of seven reasons why Jesus would have gone through this process of baptism as he reviews them from the perspective of Davies and Allison. It should be said that those reason are the ones that are mostly given by scholars in general with perhaps little variations of their own.

Matthean perspective, must be sustained by an OT scriptural basis.⁶⁵² The interest must then be concentrated on exhibiting the possible OT basis for Matthew's perspective on the ritual washing of Jesus by John in this pericope that fits the initiatory context already established through the anointing part of this baptism. With this clear objective in mind, it is now the time to come back to the relationship between the first ritual washing presided over by Moses in Exod. 29.4; 40.12, Lev. 8.6, and John the Baptist's baptism. More specifically, the focus will be on the possibility of a Matthean reference to this unique OT event as the main source of inspiration for understanding the washing of Jesus by John.

5.2 The Matthean Typological Perspective on the Washing of Aaron by Moses, and the Baptism of Jesus by John

It has been argued in this thesis that there is a tangible parallel in some aspects, between Moses in the OT and John the Baptist in the NT. The shared ethnic and tribal background between the two is one that is noteworthy. They both, significantly, descend from the family of Levi, but perhaps this is not the most prominent feature that exhibits the essential parallel between the two in this discussion. The main connexion is particularly notable in the context of the present discussion on the administration of ritual washings. In fact, the chief argument is that the link between these two, Moses and the Baptist, in this situation is exclusive. Moses is the only character in the OT who is reported to have presided over the ritual of integral washing of people in an initiatory context and under God's specific requirement. Also, it is appropriate to remember that this event only happened once, as consigned in the report in the above OT texts that are concerned with the dedication of the

⁶⁵² There is often a sense of precipitation to interpret the meaning of this baptism that seems so controversial that some commentators forget this essential part that is, John is also fulfilling all righteousness in baptising Jesus. See, Luz (2007, pp. 177–78); Gundry (1982, pp. 50–51) cf. Davies and Allison (1988, p. 325). It has been argued that in Matthew more than in any other Gospel, 'Jesus is the fulfiller of the Old Testament.' See, Bornkamm et al., n.d. (p. 253).

priests, and the inauguration of the Jewish sanctuary system. As for John, he is also historically and biblically well established as the first NT character mentioned in and outside of the Gospel tradition to personally administer to people a ritual washing, commonly called baptism, and which earned him the surname, the Baptist.⁶⁵³

Although the practice of baptism is attested in various writings of the NT as well as ritual washings are in the OT, according to biblical and historical evidence, this form of administered ritual washing in the NT originated with John the Baptist.⁶⁵⁴ The analogy between Moses' washing of Aaron and his sons, and the washing of Jesus by John in the Matthean literary context is more than palpable for the biblical and historical reason just mentioned. This factual comparison becomes much more intense in looking at the baptism of Jesus in the OT fulfilment setting of the first canonical Gospel. When considering the contextual factors that compose the rationale for both proceedings, the washing of the priests and the washing of Jesus, the typological link from a Matthean perspective is compelling. The initiatory backdrop against which Moses bathes Aaron is as unequivocal as that of the washing of Jesus', as already demonstrated. What makes it so evident is that this bathing of Aaron by Moses was followed by his anointing as it was the case for the washing of Jesus that was followed by his anointing with the Holy Spirit. As mentioned earlier, the Hebrew verb for this action of anointing the first officially-chosen-by-God priest⁶⁵⁵ of the new Levitical system is מָשַׁח, for which the LXX equivalent is χρίω. Exod. 29.7 is of great interest, as it says וְלָקַחְתָּ אֶת-יַשְׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וַיִּצַקְתָּ עַל-רֹאשׁוֹ וַמָּשַׁחְתָּ אֹתוֹ: We

⁶⁵³ As noted with the administration of the washing by Moses, according to biblical evidence, 'John's baptism appears to have been administered only once', Taylor (1997, p. 70).

⁶⁵⁴ Although 'entirely understandable in the context of Second Temple Judaism', 'John's immersion' or his baptism in other words, 'was distinctive', and novel, see, Taylor (1997, p. 49–52,57).

⁶⁵⁵ The divine choice for Aaron as the first high priest of this new system is also indisputable because of the miraculous nature of it, according to the biblical account found in Num. 17.1-13, looking particularly at verses 7, 8.

note that in this statement Moses was to take ‘the anointing oil’, *אֶת־שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה*, and ‘pour out on his head’, *וַיִּצְקֵהוּ עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ*. This was qualified as an action ‘to consecrate’ him, so that he may ‘minister in the priest office’, according to Exod. 29.1, 7. In other words, and maybe in more illustrative terms, Aaron and his sons were to be ‘holified’ or more commonly ‘sanctified’, set apart, dedicated publically to this office and ministry.

Whatever took place in this ritual was in the context of a public initiation, dedication, inauguration of Aaron for the priestly ministry. The anointing in Exod. 29.7, *הַמִּשְׁחָה* for which the LXX equivalent is *χρῖσμα*, was a defining part of the consecration of the priest as the reason for it is found in the first verse of the chapter. It is, ‘as what has been spread on *ointment, unguent, anointing*, used in the Old Testament to symbolize appointment to and empowerment for a task;’⁶⁵⁶ As noted in Exod. 29.7, the oil is literally ‘poured’ on the head of the priest, and this action is the literal consecration of the individual to the task. In verse 35 of the same chapter that deals with this special initiation, dedication, consecration, inauguration, and ordination event, the rationale behind all the happenings is re-emphasised.⁶⁵⁷ Everything that was done to the priest, the washing, and more specifically the anointing, were done as a means to validate the ordination of those priests. Thus again, this is marking the initiation character of this episode, rightly viewed as an ordination ceremony. The washing, which is what we currently discuss, preceded the

⁶⁵⁶ See, Friberg et al. (2000); *BDAG* (1957, p. 1090); *GELNT* (1998). For the LXX use, see, T. Muraoka (2002); *GEL LXX* (2003), and for the Hebrew word see, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000); *TWOT* (1980).

⁶⁵⁷ "This is how you will ordain Aaron and his sons to their offices, just as I have commanded you. The ordination ceremony will go on for seven days. (Exod. 29:35, NLT) cf. other English versions to see the different renderings of the Hebrew word *וָאֵלֵךְ*, and of its LXX equivalent *τελειόω* in this text. Most of the versions cited in this thesis have the word ‘ordain’, and at least one has ‘consecrate’.

anointing, however central this one was. Along with the other stages mentioned, it was part of the ordination service and it would not have been skipped over.

With regard to the baptism of Jesus, there were at least two stages; the washing was one, and the anointing the other. In a Matthean perspective of Jesus' actions being the fulfillment of OT prophecies, there is evidence for a typological link here. The same way that the washing of the priests in Exod. 29.4 was a necessary initial stage in the process, and the anointing was another one in verse 7, all in an initiatory or ordination context, so it is with this baptism. Nevertheless, if the washings in the specific OT and NT accounts are the same in essence, as already discussed, there are differences in the other stages. Those differences, however, do not disturb the equilibrium and soundness of relationship between those events. The main difference between the priest in Exod. 29.7 and Mt. 3.17 is with regard to the natural means of anointing. It is the fact that in the former case, the agent of the anointing is the holy oil, and in the latter, the agent of the anointing is the Holy Spirit.⁶⁵⁸ The word *χρῖσμα* that we find in Exod. 29.7, as noted, is used 'figuratively in the NT as the gift and empowering of the Holy Spirit for a task *anointing, endowment, appointment*'.⁶⁵⁹

It is clear that after the washing, the anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit fits this picture of him being appointed, endowed and consecrated at this point for a special task. In Exod. 29.1-35, the process that includes the washing (verse 4) aimed at 'holifying' the priest, parallels that of Mt. 3.17 in which Jesus is consecrated to serve God by being washed by John, as Moses did to the priests, and anointed with the Holy Spirit. The washing stage at the baptism of Jesus was part of a dedication

⁶⁵⁸ In fact, this difference is rather serving to the argument in favour of the typological link between these two events since it is widely accepted that oil and water in the biblical context are symbols for the Holy Spirit. For instance, in the prophetic books of Joel 2.28-30; Ezek. 36.25-27; Hos. 6.3, and some other texts the typological language is clear. However, perhaps one of the best examples is what has been considered in this study, Isa. 61.1, where the analogy between the Spirit of the Lord, and oil-anointing is undeniable.

⁶⁵⁹ See, Friberg et al. (2000); *GELNT* (1998); Grundmann (1974, p. 572).

ceremony, much the same way as it was in Exodus 29 for the priests. It is important to remember that this washing happened in relation to the wearing of the special garments, and that these garments symbolised or signified the position of the priests as ‘holy to the Lord’. Subsequently, these garments were so symbolic of the special holy relationship between the priests and the Lord that, the priest had to annually bathe himself upon wearing and removing them.⁶⁶⁰

Therefore, there seems to be a typological link between the washing of the priests by Moses that preceded their anointing at the ordination ceremony in the OT text, and the washing and anointing of Jesus at his baptism. This typological link emphasises prophecy on the one hand, and fulfilment on the other. After being washed, Jesus is not wearing holy garments to publically symbolise his position, and he is not anointed with special oil; rather, he is endowed with the Holy Spirit who comes upon him publically as a holy garment and special anointing. The anointing of the priests after wearing the holy garments marked their new status among the people, but that implied first, being washed or baptised with water. The Spirit-anointing, accompanied with a divine audible testimony, publically marked the status of Jesus as the special OT-announced servant of the Lord or Messiah, but he first had to be washed or baptised. No one else experienced this phenomenon even though John baptised all who came. Only Jesus, once, like the priests in the context of their ordination to their service to the Lord had that unique washing and anointing experience. We should remember that John’s only sign to recognise the Messiah was this Spirit-anointing. This typological link between the washing of the priests by Moses, and the washing of Jesus by John tangibly exists textually and contextually.

⁶⁶⁰ See, Leviticus 16. For comments on the different interpretations and views on the reasons possibly underlying this particular practice, see, Milgrom (1991, pp. 1015–17) who posits that the wearing of special vestments on that occasion is relative to the level of difference in ministration of the high priest. The ‘entry into the adytum is equivalent to admission to the heavenly council’ thus, expressing the above thought.

The washing of Aaron is related to the wearing of the holy garments that symbolised the nature of his ministry. John washes Jesus in the same ministerial initiation, ordination, consecration, inauguration context to symbolise the nature of his ministry also.

As a sign of his identity and the nature of his service to God, like the special garments of the priest was a visual sign of his consecration to the Lord's service, Jesus has more than a priestly-garment-like sign.⁶⁶¹ In Matthew, Mark and Luke there is a common report of a particular visual sign. However, Matthew has a slight, but significant difference with the others regarding that cosmological sign, 'the heavens were opened' he specifically says.⁶⁶² This sign is coupled with an audible testimony, a voice from the heavens that is unambiguous about the status of this baptismal candidate. In the baptism pericope, the voice from the heavens calls him 'my son' in Mt. 3.17, but Matthew consistently linked the status of son with that of the 'servant' or 'minister' in Mt. 12.18 by using words which make a strong link between three occurrences in Mt. 3.17; 12.18; 17.5. This point is not new in this thesis, but this time it constitutes another typological link that is clearly established between Matthew's baptism of Jesus, and the Priest's ordination in the OT.

This typological link is shown in the fact that, like the washing and anointing of the priest happened in an initiation context, so it is with the washing and the anointing of Jesus. Both sets of people in the OT narrative and the NT pericope are

⁶⁶¹ It is appropriate to note that in Matthew's account, while the text says that it is Jesus who saw the Spirit descend on himself, as it is also the case in Mk 1.10, the message of the voice (this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased), suggests that this phenomenon was intended for others also. This argument is congruent with the testimony of the Baptist in Jn 1.31. As for Luke's account of the event, it could also be supportive of this understanding since there is no notion of exclusivity, because the text is not specific about who saw the Spirit descending of Jesus, according to Lk. 3.21.22. See, Davies and Allison (1988, p. 330).

⁶⁶² In this commentary, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 328–29), the remark on Matthew's 'heavens' instead of Mark's 'heaven', coupled with the change to the passive form 'opened' would be significant. The first is a change to a plural that is Semitic, and with the second, 'both modifications' would point to a particular OT source for the imagery. This could well be the case, given the determination of Matthew to place the baptism of Jesus in a recognisable OT framework.

similarly involved in actions and purpose. A synoptic analysis of these two events shows that it is possible that Matthew viewed the immersion of Jesus by John in the light of the washing of Aaron by Moses. If all the Gospel writers saw the anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit as the official initiation to his OT-announced messianic ministry, it is consistent to think that Matthew may have interpreted the immersion that preceded the anointing of Jesus in that same light. This would not be strange in the context of the Matthean Gospel.

Textually, substantially and theologically, these elements are convergent in the context of Matthew's work. His dedication to the traceability of Jesus in the OT in every aspect of his life is undeniable. This is a fact from the very beginning of his Gospel with a genealogical arrangement, and an infancy account of the life of Jesus in the first two chapters that is unparalleled in terms of fulfilling the OT predictions. In Matthew's literary organisation of Jesus' story, the baptism of Jesus follows in chapter 3 with the same dedication to the OT reliance and authentication role. These first three chapters, as argued before, are introductory in nature in Matthew's Gospel. Literarily, and thus uniquely in the Gospel tradition, they initiate the NT encounter with the long-awaited Jewish Messiah. In Matthew's composition, they inaugurate the time of the fulfilment of OT messianic prophecies. It is for this very reason that four out of ten of the formula quotations of Matthew are found in the infancy story, and one straight after the temptation pericope in Mt. 4.14. This is the context of Jesus' first steps in his public ministry, in the context of Matthew's introductory section of the full Jesus story.

Therefore, two OT identifiable ritual acts of initiation might have been in view in Matthew's attempt to explicate Jesus' two-step ritual baptism, the washing and anointing stages. These two OT ritual acts, the public and integral washing with water

of the candidates to the priesthood, administered by Moses, and the anointing of these with holy oil become the OT type of the baptism of Jesus. The baptism pericope in Matthew, which would be the account of Jesus' official initiation into his role of servant of the Lord, would be well placed in Matthew's introductory section.

Literarily, it makes sense to find this pericope of the baptism of Jesus, his ordination or appointment as Messiah placed where it is. The baptism of Jesus with the ritual acts of washing and anointing is the point toward which everything that precedes is culminating to officialise the status of Jesus as the OT Messiah. In the same manner, everything that follows from this point rests on this specific moment of identification.

By form and content, the baptism of Jesus, from Matthew's perspective, is antitypical of the story of the ordination of the first priests in the wilderness, according to Exodus 29, 40 and Leviticus 8, 9. The washing of Jesus and his immersion is plausibly of the same nature as the washing of Aaron, an act of initiation in an introductory context. It is the consecration of the servant of God announced in the OT and identifiable in Isa. 42.1. The same upon whom the Spirit of God was to descend and anoint as was also announced in Isa. 61.1. This baptism in Matthew's depiction was the scene at which the divine pronouncement found in Ps. 2.7 was to be publically heard to testify of the nature of the relationship between this Jesus and the God of heaven. In Matthew's context, the washing of Jesus by John, before he could be established in his messianic role, follows the example of the washing of the priests before they could be anointed for the service of God in the new sanctuary system.

5.3 Matthew's Understanding of the Two-Step Baptism of Jesus as for the Fulfilment of All Righteousness in Mt. 3.15

In view of the above elements and the developments in this research, the question of the meaning of this Matthean statement in Mt. 3.15 may become much clearer. In the

light of the arguments presented, it would be consistent to infer that Matthew in this unparalleled statement is intelligible in the uniqueness of his perspective on telling the story of Jesus. Reading Mt. 3.15 in the context of the whole Matthean perspective, there is room for a consistent understanding of the text. It does not appear that he is trying to release a tension between a claimed sinlessness of Jesus and the troubling fact that this one is subjecting to John's baptism of repentance, by using an obscure saying. If Matthew is so careful to vindicate the identity of Jesus as the Messiah in details that no other Gospel writer affords, it may simply be because he understood some aspects of this story in a unique way.⁶⁶³ It is precisely for this reason that the baptism of Jesus in Matthew's account contains those elements that seem so peculiar. The main one of these is the statement of Jesus in the short and revealing conversation between John and Jesus in Mt. 3.14, 15. In that latter verse, the interest in meaning is heightened by the fact that Jesus seemed not to need baptism at the hands of John, yet, submitted to it. Through the exegesis of the text, the main reason for that, according to Jesus was that both John and him, by acting each in their roles were to fulfil all righteousness. The meaning of righteousness in Matthew indicates the response of man to God's requirement, in other words, the obedience of man to the command of God. Thus, in this text, it would mean that from Jesus' perspective on the event, baptising him was a command of God to John, and submitting to John's baptism was also a command from God to him.

5.3.1 The Water Baptism as the Fulfilment of All Righteousness in Mt. 3.15

If both protagonists in this pericope, John and Jesus, did their part by obeying the divine command, they would faithfully and positively respond to God's expectation or

⁶⁶³ Stanton argues that it is possible that Matthew was the first to see the relevance of some of the OT passages that he refers to, in a Christian setting. See, Stanton (1992, p. 360). This remark is justified in the fact that Matthew's use of the OT in his Gospel is in many ways unique, although I may not agree with Stanton on the reasons why Matthew's text is such as it is.

requirements. This is very likely the reason why, ultimately, John who would have understood this comment of Jesus in this light, accepted to proceed with the ritual washing with no further complaint or opposition. Whether John fully understood what he was doing at this point in this discussion is irrelevant since the main point is that he submitted to God's will at that particular moment. The reason for his submission to God through Jesus' comment could easily be found in his declaration about who he believed Jesus to be, one who is greater than himself, Mt. 3.11. Matthew's anchorage of Jesus' story in the OT could not have allowed this event to take place without scriptural justification. Although there is no further clear biblical explanation given by Matthew on this immersion of Jesus in the waters of baptism, the reader is invited to find out the meaning of this sentence within Matthew's literary structure. Matthew tells the story of Jesus' life events and actions through a strong and systematic OT prophetic fulfilment basis. As for the baptism pericope, it is the nature of what follows the immersion of Jesus by John that sheds ample light on the meaning of the whole experience, and therefore, the sense of Mt. 3.15.

Indeed, the OT language used to record the phenomenon that took place after Jesus is literally baptised by John, the descent of the Holy Spirit and the voice from heaven, acts as an identifiable and explanatory seal of approval by God. The happenings in this way confirmed that they had both fulfilled a requirement of God, and therefore, they had fulfilled righteousness as the concept occurs in the Matthean context. The reference to all righteousness might be with regard to the combination of the water washing, the immersion, and the anointing as both acts are necessary in the unique OT event of the priest's initiation. It seemed that John expected the Holy Spirit to visibly come upon Jesus, which for him would have been the evidence of his

identity and mission.⁶⁶⁴ He might even have understood the experience in Mt. 3.16, 17 as the public anointing of God's servant, which would have in his eyes made Jesus officially bear the title and responsibility of 'the anointed one', the OT announced Messiah. However, it is clear from Mt. 3.14 that he was not expecting the use of water washing as part of the sign of the Messiah's revelation to the public. Nevertheless, the evidence found in Mt. 3.15 demonstrates that Jesus did understand it this way, and consequently, asked that it may be done in accord with the specific requirements. If he were being anointed for the service of God, as at the unique event of the anointing of the first priest of OT Israel, he had to be administered the washing that preceded the anointing.

Thus, in this way, following the OT pattern set by God himself in the unique experience of the setting in motion of the new era that opened before Israel in terms of how they were now to relate to God, this baptismal procedure was essential. In this manner, both men, John the Baptist and Jesus the chosen one of God, were each fulfilling their part of the divine requirements. The response of Jesus to the perplexed John in Mt. 3.15 is fully understandable from this perspective. By doing this, baptising Jesus with water, and being baptised with water by John, is the fulfilment of all righteousness. The washing of Jesus in Matthew, like that of the Aaron under God's command when chosen to serve as the priest of Israel was one that all could witness and acknowledge. Whether this was understood immediately or retrospectively as the beginning of his service, it is to be understood by the readers of the Gospels.⁶⁶⁵ The witnesses, quite likely, did not understand the washing of Jesus

⁶⁶⁴ Cf. Mt. 3.11-14; Jn 1.27-34. In view of the evidences, it could be inferred that John by some means recognised Jesus as who he was through indication from God, before the baptism took place. This means that to him Jesus was already identified as the dispenser of the Spirit-baptism, and therefore was also himself under the Holy Spirit manifestation, however that was done.

⁶⁶⁵ As mentioned before, the disciples in Acts 1.21, 22 recognised the baptism of Jesus as the official start of his ministry on this earth and made it the point that they referred to in choosing a replacement

for the same reasons that John did not understand it. This is why Matthew's narrative reflects back on the nature of the baptism of Jesus, from Mt. 12.18, enlightening Mt. 3.17 through the formula quotation of Mt. 12.17 that precedes the OT text in use. Thus, Matthew is exhibiting the ordination nature of this baptism from an OT perspective that can mainly be identified in the combination of Isa. 42.1-7; 61.1, Ps. 2.7.

If the washing of Jesus is part of an ordination ceremony, then there is a place for it that provides a resting point for Matthew's view of the validation of the OT's sanction of the Jesus-story. It would be unimaginable that such an essential part of the story of Jesus, in the Matthean context, would have no relationship with the writer's main tool of the authentication of what is taking place in the life of the identifiable Messiah. What better place to identify the Messiah than at the event where he is publically recognised as such, and begins his messianic ministry? How can Jesus not be fulfilling the OT expectation at the time when he becomes the fulfilment of the long-awaited messianic prophecy? How can this servant of God begin his ministry and not be the object of clear fulfilment of messianic prophecy? The descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus is the anointing, and the washing with water is also part of it. Both parts are fulfilments of an OT concept of how one is qualified to serve in a messianic capacity. This concept was set in place when God asked Moses to wash Aaron and his sons on that unique occasion, before they could be anointed. Moses did as the Lord commanded him to do, he washed them, and so did John to Jesus. As in the OT concept of how one is qualified to serve in a messianic capacity, Jesus had to be washed by John on that day, before he could be anointed, and this was a fulfilment

for Judas. It is likely that most Christians hold the same view. It must have been the case also for John the Baptist considering Mt. 3.14, and the subsequent developments in Mt. 11.2, 3, where he clearly voices his doubts about the identity of Jesus with regard to how he had understood it. See, D. A. Hagner (1993, p. 300); Nolland (2005, pp. 450–51).

of the OT concept. In both cases, this was not a purification of their uncleanness, although there may have been some notion of it, in the light of the usual use of water-purification rites in the Jewish religious tradition. The washing of the priests by a third party, as here, is a special event that takes place in a very unique context. This bathing was an exceptional OT event that composed the induction ceremony of Aaron and his sons into an unprecedented form of service that necessitated the wearing of the holy garments, and the receiving of an anointing that publically exposed their role and identity.

On account of the textual and contextual particularity of this OT occurrence, and the textual and phenomenological singularity of Jesus' baptism in the NT, it can be argued that the two narratives, although different in some ways, are comparable. It would not be a stretch of the imagination to think that in the OT-fulfilment-focussed context of the Matthean Gospel, there is an attempt to anchor the baptism of Jesus in an identifiable OT prescription. For this reason, there is only one place to go in the OT that can provide a typological link with what happened at the baptism of Jesus. As already argued, this OT event constitutes a model through which Matthew could have interpreted the baptism of Jesus as imperative to mark the nature of his mission, and the authority behind it. Therefore, in Matthew's account, through Mt. 3.14, 15, there is an attempt to show that Jesus' baptism is an ordination ceremony. It was an antitypical ceremony that had to include a water washing that had no cleansing implication for Jesus, in contrast to that of the other candidates who had been defiled by sin.

In other words, Matthew unlike the other Gospels, unequivocally presents a strong argument for the necessity of this baptism, by means of the OT-fulfilment underlining theme that characterises his story of Jesus. Jesus did not undertake the

process of baptism or the washing of his body by a third party, John the Baptist, like the other did, or for the same reasons. In the light of the unique event that was recorded as ordered and fulfilled in Exodus 29, 40 and Leviticus 8, 9, the text in Mt. 3.15 makes complete sense as an OT based ceremony. The presentation of the baptism of Jesus being a response of submission to the will of God, a fulfilment of all righteousness for both John and Jesus, is congruent with the Matthean literary style. It has to be interpreted in the context of Jesus being ordained for his service to the Lord as a special servant, the one known to this day as the Messiah.⁶⁶⁶

While most commentators have concentrated on the washing, the baptism in a narrow or etymological sense, in order to make sense of this episode of the life of Jesus and particularly of the statement in Mt. 3.15, it appears that there must be a larger scope of consideration to that effect. The washing is important in the search for the meaning of the phase, but it is the whole of the procedure as described in Mt. 3.14-17 that necessitates careful examination in trying to understand verse 15. This verse conveys the thought that John had to baptise Jesus, and that Jesus had to submit to this baptism in obedience to God. However, it is clear that the washing only triggered the phenomenon that exposed its true value, and defined it as an initial step in a process that had to be completed by another step. This washing or baptism of Jesus is intelligible in the Matthean context, and so is the statement in Mt. 3.15, in the light of the combination of the washing, the Spirit-anointing action, and the audible heavenly testimony.

⁶⁶⁶ It is noteworthy, that in the synoptic Gospels, Matthew is the one using the most the title ὁ Χριστός, the Greek word for the Hebrew original מָשִׁיחַ from which comes the English form 'the Messiah', in association with Jesus. Matthew uses it 16 times, while Mark and Luke do 7 and 12 times. It is also noteworthy that in the synoptic tradition, there is only one instance where Jesus is overtly recognised by one of his disciples as 'the Christ, the son of the living God', Mt. 16.16. Other declarations that would match this one in the Gospels are mostly found in the fourth Gospel. See for instance, Jn 1.41; 4.25, 29, 42; 6.69; 7.41, and some others. In Lk. 4.41 this testimony is given in the manner Peter did, but it is from the mouth of impure spirits.

Without the accompaniment of the supernatural happenings, there would be no initiation, ordination, inauguration, or messianic-identity recognition of Jesus, at least by John. This fact means that Mt. 3.15 does not find its meaning in the interpretation of a simple use of water-washing ritual, but in the role it played in bringing into focus the point in time, when Jesus officially became the Messiah, the anointed one of God. This very point legitimises the washing of Jesus by John as a prerequisite in the anointing. From this perspective, it can be argued that Jesus did not do anything that was not expected of him from God by allowing himself to be baptised by John. As Aaron allowed Moses to bathe him under God's command as the first step of the priest ordination process, so did Jesus with John.

Thus, Mt. 3.15 that refers to the whole process can be construed as aiming to shed light on the OT validation of this apparently strange occurrence, and differentiates Jesus from the rest of John's baptismal candidates. For others around Jesus on that particular day, at least, baptism was mainly a water process that one undertook in order to obtain the forgiveness of sin as John understood it. It was a washing that essentially involved the notion of repentance because of sin, and an embracement of a certain moral rectitude of life. The aim of such change in one's experience with God was to be saved from the punishment that awaited those who were 'chaff' rather than fruitful trees in the Lord's field.⁶⁶⁷ This was the clear message that John preached to anyone who listen to him and came to be baptised, according to Mt. 3.5-12. The reason for their baptism is stipulated in no unclear terms. They needed forgiveness, and salvation from the wrath of God. It is in the same way that Mt. 3.15 states in no unclear terms a different reason for Jesus' baptism. He was with John fulfilling all righteousness by accepting the water rite. This means that

⁶⁶⁷ See, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 311–20); Webb (1991, pp. 184–96).

Matthew makes it clear in this verse that there are two different sets of baptism in this chapter, two groups of people, and there are also two separate reasons why these people are baptised.⁶⁶⁸ One group is made of all the people who came to John before, on the day and after Jesus was baptised, and the other group is Jesus.

While the first group came for the reasons related to John's message, Jesus came for the reason he gave in verse 15.⁶⁶⁹ He came to do what was expected of him and of John as in the OT experience of Aaron and his sons on the day they were set apart or ordained to be special ministers or servants of the Lord. Consequently, the water baptism of Jesus was not the same as the water baptism of the others as the special Spirit-anointing and heavenly testimony proved it. He was baptised in order to fulfil the water ordination rite that was prefigured in the OT text about the installation of the priests. By doing so, as Mt. 3.15 says, he fulfilled all righteousness according to the specific Matthean use of this word.

The opposition of John to Jesus' submission to the water ritual was with regard to mistakenly applying to Jesus the type of baptism the first group was subjected to, repentance expressed through symbolic water-cleansing of the body.

⁶⁶⁸ Some scholars have come to the conclusion that the baptism of Jesus indeed is different from that of the other candidates, but not for the above considerations. See, in Beasley-Murray (1962, pp. 45–92) the host of scholarly opinions that are advanced to differentiate the baptism of Jesus from that of others. Although, some may mention aspects of the argument pursued in this research, Jesus' 'consecration as Messiah', 'to begin the messianic task in its fullness' 'Jesus sees it as a divine imposed duty', none of the arguments is in line with the proposed reason for the baptism of Jesus in this thesis. Eventually, one of the most prominent views in this book and other commentaries is that Jesus was baptised with this repentance baptism for the sake of others, however differently this can apply. See, White (1960, pp. 90–6); Nolland (2005, p. 152) and the other already mentioned in this thesis.

⁶⁶⁹ This idea of the 'uniqueness rather than likeness' of the baptism of Jesus with the others' baptisms as found in Beasley-Murray (1962, pp. 63–4) seems to be accepted by many, but not specifically for the reasons proposed in this thesis. Also, as stated in Nolland (2005, p. 154), the idea that the water baptism of John is one step in a process, that of the recognition of the identity and role of Jesus through the endowment of the Holy Spirit is acknowledged, but again not in the perspective that has been exposed in this research. The need though, for such task as to study this baptism in its Matthean setting is expressed by Nolland in the above reference. Again, White (1960, pp. 94–5) declares that, Jesus' 'submission to baptism seems an altogether natural an inevitable step.', and he mentions 'Jesus' developing awareness of God, and of His own destiny' led him to this baptism, but there is no consideration for the specific Matthean context as exposed in this thesis.

John was fully aware that Jesus would not need to be subjected to this baptism, and he voiced his thought out clearly, according to Mt. 3.14. Matthew here, possibly, suggests that even John did not understand, at least at first, the nature of Jesus' action in submitting to this water rite.⁶⁷⁰ It is also probably the case for all the witnesses who were gathered at the riverbank until the next stage in the process took place. This may be the reason why it is clear in the rest of the Gospels, and for the disciples of Jesus in Acts 1.22, that this baptismal ritual undertaken by Jesus was the starting point of his official mission as the 'Christ', 'the anointed'.⁶⁷¹ In that sense, they most probably reflected on the baptism, the washing in water of Jesus, and saw the initiatory or inaugural nature of it with clarity.

However, they did not attempt to explain it, and probably thought that it was not necessary to do so if the crux of the matter were clear to all. Their focal point was that Jesus is the Son of God, and the lamb without blemish that was sacrificed for the sins of others.⁶⁷² Matthew on the other hand, had to express the OT dimension to this major event in the life of a Jesus, the washing, as in order to fulfil the OT scriptures. There would have been no other OT experience than the washing of Aaron and his sons that would have typologically suited this episode of the life of Jesus to such an

⁶⁷⁰ This part, Mt. 3.14 has often been seen as expressing the embarrassment of John, and sometimes of Matthew himself, but all it could really express is the thought developed in this thesis, see, Nolland (2005, pp. 152–53); D. A. Hagner (1993, p. 55); Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 323–24).

⁶⁷¹ It is to be noted that this aspect of the question is consensually accepted among scholars because it is supported by what the disciples believed about it. This may be one of the reasons why, according to Beasley-Murray (1962, p. 45), 'modern commentators pass by in silence', 'the confusion' brought up by attempts to deal with the issues concerning the meaning of the baptism of Jesus.

⁶⁷² In Mt. 16.16, the declaration of Peter according to context is one that was public, or at least in the presence of the 12. When Jesus asked the question about who his disciples thought he was in verse 15, it was after they reported to him what the general public was thinking on it. This means that the question of Jesus' identity was an important one. In Peter's personal answer, he mentions two things, for him Jesus was ὁ χριστός 'the anointed one', and 'the son of the living God'. Not only does Jesus in response to this declaration accepted the answer, but he also consolidated it by identifying its origin as divine in the following verse. As for being the sin bearer, Mt. 1.21 is evidence that this understanding that constitutes the essence of the Gospel (1 Pet. 1.19; Acts 20.28; Rom. 3.25; Eph. 1.7; Heb. 9.14; Rev. 1.5), stemmed out of the testimony of heaven itself. This is why John the Baptist publically referred to him at the baptismal site, in Jn 1.29, as 'the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world'.

extent. The washing of the priests in the context of their ordination, and the inauguration of the Levitical system is a definite OT scriptural model for Jesus' washing. It would be difficult to argue against a specific Matthean perspective of this washing of Jesus being different from that of the other people, even without identifying the specifying elements of it.⁶⁷³

Again, there is a typological link between the nature of the bathing that Moses administered to Aaron and his sons, with the one John administered to Jesus in that they were not of a sin-cleansing nature. In spite of the purification context in which water rites are generally used in biblical and extra-biblical literatures, there is an element of difference in both accounts. This element of difference also creates a typological link that cannot be overlooked. As noticed earlier, there are instances in the OT such as Leviticus 16, particularly in relation with the anointed priest, where the bathing, even self-administered, is not connected with uncleanness, but just with the wearing and removing of the holy garments that identify the function of the priest. These two washings share distinctive attributes, in that they were both part of a public two-step procedure that took place in different circumstances, but in similar contexts. Also, Jesus in fact was not just washed, but he was also anointed, he became at his baptism 'the anointed one, the Son of the living God' as Mt. 16.16 declares it. He became the Messiah, the one whose coming was long expected, according to OT scriptures⁶⁷⁴ and the testimony of different individuals such as in Jn 4.25.⁶⁷⁵ Thus, in

⁶⁷³ It is on account of this palpable evidence that so much has been written in an attempt to identify what it is as the different scholarly theories noted in this research attest.

⁶⁷⁴ Matthew's genealogy of Jesus as the opening of his Gospel points to this element of scriptural fulfilment in Jesus' life when he mentions that Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ. David is the reference in time of the chosen king of God, and the one through whom the Messiah was to descend according to scriptures. See, Mt. 22.42-46 in which Matthew refers to Ps. 110.1, from the lips of Jesus, to not only confirm this idea, but to establish the order in which it should be considered. Jesus is not only expected as the son of David, but he is the Lord to David according to scripture. The other OT texts in view concerning this promise are such as Ps. 132.11, Jer. 23.5; Mic. 5.2. In Jn 7.42, it is the understanding of the people that this relationship between the Christ and David is scriptural. Abraham

the Matthean literary perspective, the washing administered to Jesus is a necessary part of a two-step baptism that officialised the Messiahship of Jesus as in the OT type. This washing of Jesus by John is indeed for the fulfilment of all righteousness.

5.3.2 The Spirit-Anointing as Fulfilment of All Righteousness in Mt. 3.15

In the two-step process of this baptism it was, technically, the second step that provided Jesus with the title of ‘Christ’. Through the experience of Mt. 3.16, 17, the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus and the vocal testimony of the father from heaven, Jesus became ὁ Χριστός, ‘the anointed one’. It is noteworthy that this Greek term is first found in the LXX,⁶⁷⁶ in the book of Leviticus, and is used as an element of distinction among those who served in the sanctuary. In Lev. 4.5, 16; 6.15, we find the expression ὁ ἱερεὺς ὁ χριστός, meaning ‘the anointed priest’, and referring to one such as Aaron who was ordained under God’s request to minister in the office of priest. This LXX expression is of course the translation into Greek of the Hebrew הכֹהֵן הַמָּשִׁיחַ. A wooden Anglicism of the latter would be something to the effect of ‘the priest Messiah’. This expression would definitely echo in the mind of Christians

is the father of the nation from which the Messiah was to come, and he was the one to whom the promise of becoming this nation was made. The relationship between Jesus and Abraham is an obvious fact that needs not a demonstration; Matthew can just state it with confidence that all would accept this genealogical link.

⁶⁷⁵ The reality of this expectation is clearly demonstrated, for instance, in texts such as Jn 1.41; 4.25, 29, 42; 11.27 through the testimonies of common people outside that of the disciples. This confirms the very point that Matthew through the particular literary style of his Gospel and the frequent use of OT material is trying to make about the identity of this Jesus, he is the expected ‘the anointed one’.

⁶⁷⁶ See, T. Muraoka (2002, p. 600); *GEL LXX* (2003). The general absence of comments on the contextual biblical origin of this term in exegetical and scholarly discussions on the subject of Christ is very apparent. The reference to the direct link between the Hebrew term for Messiah, and the Greek term ‘Christ’ is unavoidable, however, no time is spent on the very first occurrence of the term as a title for someone in the biblical context. See, *BDAG* (1957, p. 1091); Nolland (2005, pp. 72, 661–63) who although he mentions the priestly aspect of the question, he characteristically focuses on the usual royal aspect of it that all would rather be concerned with, and like with the disciples of Jesus, only the kingship of Jesus is emphasised. See also, D. Hagner (1993, p. 10); Davies and Allison (1988, p. 161) whose comment on Dan. 9.25 suggests that ‘the anointed one’ is a ‘king’ while the Hebrew word that juxtaposes the word ‘Messiah’ in the text is מָלִיךְ, and it conveys the meaning of leadership that can be expressed in other ways than in kingship. See, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000); *TWOT* (1980) who interprets the term as ‘high priest’ in Neh. 11.11; Dan. 11.22, and in other ways in the context of leadership.

with the title ‘Jesus the Messiah’ or ‘Christ’ which is the commonly used term to refer to the one they worship as their Lord and saviour.⁶⁷⁷

However, the point here is that this expression, ‘the anointed one’ in the Bible is first employed in the context of priestly functions, and should send the reader straight back to one particular OT event where it originated.⁶⁷⁸ That event is the ordination ceremony that took place at the inauguration of the sanctuary as designed in Exod. 28, 29, 30, 40 and performed in Leviticus 8, 9. While this ceremony consisted in the administration of a long and complex ritual that was executed in stages, according to the above texts, it is significant that only one stage in the whole process is historically defining. It is the anointing part that is used in identifying under the form of a title, the position, role, and the extent of the priest’s prerogatives within the sanctuary system.⁶⁷⁹

Indeed, the priest is called the ‘anointed one’, the Christ. It seems essential to recognise that of all that happened when undertaking the investiture of Aaron as priest, it is the act of anointing him that gives rise to the title that will serve to distinguish not just him in his context, but the historically most important figure in the various expressions of Judaism. On that day, through that event, he became what all

⁶⁷⁷ This view is also one that is applicable, at least to some extent, to some of the communities of Matthew’s contemporary Judaism such as the Qumran community. See, in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (1997, p. 579), CD-B xx, 1, and comparable fragments such as CD-B xix, 10; 4Q266 Frag 10. 12 that clearly speak of the rise or coming of a Messiah out, and of Aaron. It is difficult to conclude from these passages that the expectation was such as what I have defined in terms of the baptism of Jesus being a priestly anointing that would fit here, but the point to be considered is that there was such a notion of a messianic priesthood that constituted an expectation to be fulfilled at that time, whether it was confined to this community or not. See some of the discussions on this in, Geza Vermes (1962, pp. 58–64); Liver (1959); Abegg (1995).

⁶⁷⁸ It is appropriate to remember that there were different messianic expectations among the different factions of the Jewish strata. It is said that while the Pharisees were waiting for a kingly messianic figure, the Sadducees, and Essenes were looking for a priestly one, or one who would be both priest and king. See, (D. Hagner, 1993, p. 10); (Florentino Gartia Martinez Julio Trebolle Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson, 1993, pp. 159–61, 170–89); (Marshall, 1978, pp. 747–49).

⁶⁷⁹ In Lev. 4.16, only ὁ ἱερεὺς ὁ χριστός, could officiate in the temple in the capacity described in this text. In Lev. 6.15, the anointing that took place at the ordination ceremony is to be perpetuated by lineage on the basis of the original event. In Exod. 30.33, the holy ointment that was used by Moses to consecrate Aaron and his sons is so exclusively reserved for them that anyone outside of that filiation is called a ‘stranger’, and would face death if they used this oil.

would subsequently expect in prophetic terms, ὁ χριστὸς in the LXX, and in the HB **הַמָּשִׁיחַ**. The question that arises from this observation is quite simple, but extremely important. Why has the action of anointing the priest become the one stage in the whole process by which he is identified as different, among the other partakers, to the rest of the people? The answer to this is also very simple, and yet, paramount. An analysis of the narrative concerning the ordination of the priests, and more so of the preparations made for this event is revelatory of the enigma. First, it has been shown that in Exod. 28.41 where God speaks to Moses about the ordination of the priests, there is a series of words that are in apposition to explicitly identify the event. These are to be remembered as **מָלַח**, **מָלַח**, **מָלַח**, and as central to the Israelite concept of priesthood in the OT as that of the Messiahship of Jesus in the NT. Technically speaking, without this anointing there is no consecration or sanctification of the priests in the OT. Similarly, without this anointing of Jesus at his baptism there is no Messiah or Christ identified as such in the NT. The bathing of Aaron and his sons by Moses being the first step towards the major step, the anointing, is equivalent to the baptism of Jesus by John being the first step towards the major step of Jesus' messianic authentication, the Spirit-anointing.

Therefore, in Christological terms, the pronouncement of Jesus in Mt. 3.15 relates to the typological relationship between what happened with Moses, Aaron and his sons in Lev. 8.10, and with Jesus in Mt. 3.16, 17 in the presence of John the Baptist. In both events the anointing followed the bathing in order to reveal and establish their identity and differentiate them from the rest of the people around them in terms of their mission in the service of God among men. In both scriptural contexts, the same is achieved by this one action that in itself is construable as type and antitype

with regard to the oil and the Holy Spirit.⁶⁸⁰ In the OT and the NT contexts both the priest and Jesus acquire the title, ὁ χριστός in the LXX and מָשִׁיחַ in the HB, that is derived from the action that constitutes the stage that completed the ordination process.⁶⁸¹ The typological link between the anointing of the priests and the anointing of Jesus is perceptible through the fact that they are the only one to receive this special anointing preceded by a special washing.⁶⁸² The oil used for the priests is holy in nature and purpose, according to God's requirements stipulated in Exod. 30.30-33, and it should not have its like made for other purposes. Surely, the anointing of Jesus at baptism is unique since it was the sign that would identify him among all others for John the Baptist. There is no record in the Bible of any like-event in the context of baptism in general.⁶⁸³

In the context of this baptism, the event is clearly defined by Peter in Acts 10.38 as the anointing of Jesus, the OT expected servant of God. This anointing is unique and special in the whole of biblical narratives, but with an identifiable OT basis that makes it the fulfilment of prophecy in the Matthean context.⁶⁸⁴ The acquirement of the first messianic title in the OT is an experience that shares the same characteristics with the last one in the NT. This anointing of Jesus that followed his bathing was as unique as what happened with Aaron and Moses. This uniqueness is

⁶⁸⁰ In his treatment of Exod. 30.30, Cassuto (1997, p. 398) uses the expression 'token of holiness' with regard to the oil that was used to anoint the priests in this context. This idea is perfectly fitting in the context of fulfilment of scripture at the baptism of Jesus who is anointed with the Holy Spirit descending upon him corporally.

⁶⁸¹ The title, ὁ Χριστός, is used 529 times in the NT to identify the Jesus of the Gospels. There is only one book in the NT where this title is not used, and that is in the third epistle of John.

⁶⁸² See, Cassuto (1997, p. 396).

⁶⁸³ It is to be noted that while the Bible records the association of baptism and the receiving the Holy Spirit in the Christian experience, subsequently to this baptism of Jesus there is no report of such a combination of action between the two, as at the baptism of Jesus. See, Mt. 3.16, 16; Mk 1.10, 11; Lk. 3.21, 22; Jn 1.31-33, cf. Acts 1.5; 2.1-5; 3.38; 4.31; 9.17, 18; 10.44-48. See, White (1960, pp. 180-200) and the last comment in the footnotes of the last page.

⁶⁸⁴ There is no explicitly identified OT prophecy that says that the Messiah should go through this experience, but the Matthean specific use of the OT in conjunction with the use of 'fulfilment' language and the Matthean concept of righteousness are defining in this conclusion.

not visible at first, but it becomes apparent when considering, beyond the means and procedures, the main reason and outcome for both events. It is the anointing of the priests that started the biblical messianic concept,⁶⁸⁵ and it is the anointing of Jesus that confirmed its ultimate goal in ways that are linked through tangible typological elements. This fact may have been neglected because of emphasis put the latter development of messianic kingship that was in view in the Gospels.⁶⁸⁶ This aspect of the identity of Jesus as king should not detain us⁶⁸⁷ since we are dealing with an anointing that is part of a two-step procedure, which is only applicable to the baptism of Jesus.

⁶⁸⁵ The messianic concept spoken off here is strictly in reference to the concept of a special anointing upon someone who is known as ὁ χριστός and מָשִׁיחַ in order to signify a special role that is conferred to the individual in the biblical perspective. This concept is usually viewed in the light of kingship, but it is appropriate to remember that the anointing of a person as king over Israel is only a late development compared to that of the priests. See, the first occurrence of this sort of kingship anointing in 1 Sam. 9.16; 10.1.

⁶⁸⁶ First of all, Jesus was crucified with epitaph, 'king of the Jews'. This element of the crucifixion scene is present in all four Gospels, in Mt. 27.37; Mk 15.26; Lk. 23.38; Jn 19.19. The reason for that is embedded in the expectations of the people, who would have favoured the kingship aspect of the anointing, according to OT passages that promoted it. Of such passages is Ps. 132.17 that Lk. 1.69 quotes in the context of the prophetic birth, and mission of Christ, whom he introduced in verse 32 as the heir of David's throne, and according to the heavenly messenger, is one in particular in this context, Jer. 23.5. In Mt. 22.45 Jesus asked the question to his audience about the paternal filiation of the Messiah with biblical characters, and the answer they gave was one that was conclusive of the understanding and expectation of the people around him, and it was based in part on the above OT texts. For them the Christ is the son of David. Thus, revealing the kingship or kingly role that they expected him to play as his mission. This expectation is also found in the Qumran community according to several texts of which, 4Q252 Frag 5. 3, 4 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (1997, p. 505). Florentino Gartia Martinez Julio Trebolle Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, pp. 161–64) expands on this Qumranic text, 4Q252 as the longest of all fragments that deal with the subject in the context of the 'Davidic Messiahism' aspect. For a more detailed discussion on the subject in relation to the Qumranic texts, see the list of all the texts that contain references to the 'Messiah', and an analysis of those, in the particular chapter 'Messianic hopes in the Qumran Writings' of Florentino Gartia Martinez Julio Trebolle Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (1993, pp. 158–189). One key point from this treatment of the question in this book is that there seems to have been a three-dimensional view of 'Messiahism' in this community. They would have expected a kingly, a priestly and a prophet Messiah at the time of the Gospel story. it is not clear if it would have been one person invested with those three aspects of ministerial activities, or if there would have been three Messiahs. See, Abegg (1995); Liver (1959).

⁶⁸⁷ The first encounter with this kingly messianic notion comes with the introductory part of Matthew's Gospel in chapter 2. In verses 2-6, the new-born baby is inquired about by officials and dignitaries who seem to think of him as a promised king of the Jews. The messianic aspect is palpable in terms of the discussion that involves the mention of prophetic texts with regard to his place of birth in verses 5, 6 that Matthew identifies as Bethlehem, a small town in Judah, according to Mic. 5.2. The usage of this OT text is not exclusive to Matthew's Gospel, although, Jn 7.42 indicates the same source in a less direct way.

5.4 Implication and Applications of the Matthean Perspective for Christian Baptism

The specific Matthean perspective of Jesus' baptism is perceptible and established in the uniqueness of the literary context in which he places the event. The meaning of this baptism in the Matthean view, as expressed in this thesis, is as different from those of the usual propositions within scholarship as Matthew's account is from that of the other Gospels. If there has been any common ground between the meaning of Jesus' baptism at the hands of John the Baptist, and Christian baptism in general, it should also be the case with this Matthean perspective. Even such specific understanding should find its place, with scriptural basis, within the body of the different meanings ascribed to Christian baptism in NT. By necessity, in the same way that there are implications and applications derived from John's baptism of all his candidates for the different meanings of Christian baptism, it should also be the case from the Matthean meaning of Jesus' baptism. The baptism of John continued to be applied in the rest of NT by the disciples to those who accepted the Christian faith, and it was administered in the name of Jesus. Therefore, the meaning of the baptism of Jesus in the Matthean context should be implied in, and applied to Christian baptism today. If Matthew could root this event in OT prophecy, and validate it as fulfilling the requirement of God, then, it is likely that this is also feasible with NT baptism as it is done in the name Jesus. The same priestly messianic meaning of the act could be applicable to Christian baptism today by virtue of the relationship between Jesus and Christians. If this is the case, there should also be conclusive scriptural elements that have to be brought to light in this context.

5.4.1 The OT and Matthew's Specific Perspective On Christian Baptism

Regardless of the various notions that form the corpus of versions concerning the origin and meaning of Christian baptism, there has always been a tangible link between Jesus and the subsequent practice of this rite.⁶⁸⁸ One way or another, the concept of Christian baptism carries the thought of a combination of Christ and administered washing. After the baptism of Jesus, who at this event became Jesus Christ, the fact that baptism, the washing by immersion in water, was practised in his name to enter the Christian-faith community, there is an implicit and explicit connection that was formed between the Christ and Christian baptism. Different biblical writers and theologians express this connection in different ways, and they all seem to have their own reasons to do it. Although it is appropriate to survey those, the main focus and the limitations of this research only allow me to acknowledge this state of affair without spending any time on it. It is not a study on the origin and meaning of Christian baptism, but on how Matthew may have expressed his understanding of Jesus' baptism through Mt. 3.15.

So, in this section, finding a connection between the OT, Matthew's perspective on Jesus' baptism, and Christian baptism will provide a basis for observing consistency in this interpretation. Focussing on this task while considering the above elements, it appears in all logic that there would be no notion of 'Christian

⁶⁸⁸ 'Various Christian traditions have come to understanding the various baptismal texts in different ways', see, Cross (1999b, p. 194). Whatever the perspective on the baptism of Christians, Christ is always the main reason for it as the following list of texts show. See all those instances at the very beginning of the Church, in Acts 2.38, 41; 8.12, 13, 16, 35-38; 9.17-20; 10.47, 48; 11.16, 17; 16.14, 15, 31-33; 18.8; 19.3-5; 22.16. It is also the same dynamics in the Pauline corpus, see Rom. 6.3; 1 Cor. 1.11-16, where the argument is that Christ is the central figure in baptism and not those who administer the rite. 1 Cor. 10.2-4, even in this text that refers to OT events that may not have a direct link with the practice of Christian baptism, since Paul uses the events that occurred there in conjunction with the rite, it is again Christ who is made the central figure there. 1 Cor. 12.12-27; Gal. 3.27. This idea of the centrality of Jesus on the topic is also demonstrated in the article of (Green, 1999) that deals with the relationship between the baptism of John and Christian baptism in Luke-Acts. In this discussion on baptism, the view of some is that there is a 'wider theological context' that 'must not be ignored' since all of the aspects that exist in this experience make the nature of what baptism is, see (Cross, 1999b).

baptism' without the notion of 'Christ'. Further, if this biblical notion of 'Christ' originated at the time and alongside the notion of baptism as administered to Jesus in an initiatory context, it would not be unreasonable to think that there is a link between the Matthean meaning of Jesus' baptism and that of Christian baptism. Establishing this link implies finding conclusive biblical evidence that expose a constant thread between the baptism of Aaron's and his sons, Jesus' baptism, and Christian baptism. This type of relationship, indeed, exists in a macro context of the biblical teaching concerning the priesthood topic, as it seems to permeate the scriptures.

5.4.2 An OT Inclusive Notion of Priesthood

While the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood of the OT is established in its function simultaneously with the sanctuary system that regulated the religious life of Israel in and outside of the wilderness experience, it is not the first priestly order spoken of in the biblical Israelite context. In other words, Aaron and his sons, and the tribe of Levi are not the first people appointed by divine will in order to serve in the capacity of priests after the liberation of the people from Egypt. A display of the biblical priesthood theory took place before there could be a practical demonstration of it through the above-mentioned priestly orders that exhibited the different aspects that composed the idea. The first occurrence of the priestly concept within the Israelite context is in Exod. 19.5, 6.⁶⁸⁹ Regardless of the opinion formed on the basis of the

⁶⁸⁹ This is not the first time that the word for 'priest', כֹּהֵן in the HB, and in the LXX, ἱερεύς, appears in the OT in the context of Israel's story, however, it is not in reference to the Israelites that it is used. In Gen. 14.18, the first time it occurs, it is to identify the function of the man to whom Abraham gives the tithe, with not much description beyond the fact that he is also a king. See historical discussions around the identity of this character in Jewish literature, according to Water (2016). Then, is the word used in Gen. 41.45, 50; 46.20; 47.22, 26, all in connection with individuals who fulfilled that function in the religious system of Egypt where the Israelites had been slaves. In Exod. 2.16; 3.1; 18.1, כֹּהֵן is used in reference to Moses' father in law who is presented as the priest of Midian. The first time that כֹּהֵן is used with reference to Israel in Exod. 19.6, it is not in an individual context, but a corporate one. This point is illustrated by the fact that the LXX has the word ἱεράτευμα instead of the above ἱερεύς. It is noteworthy that ἱεράτευμα is used only twice in the LXX, in Exod. 19.6, and 23.22 in the same context of God speaking to Israel as a people whom he desires to have as his own, in these terms. See,

various forms of criticism in scholarship, this text constitutes the biblical point from where this concept of God's people being a priesthood emerged and spread.⁶⁹⁰ Therefore, it is necessary to consider the implications of such concept within the context of Israel as the people of God. This analysis concerns the primary addressees in the text of interest, but also others at the biblical macro level. If the idea of a priesthood that includes the whole nation is consistently permeating the OT, and compares to the Levitical priesthood in nature and function, then the conceptual link between them is undeniable. Not only this link would be a solid one, but it would also, perhaps, mean that there are other aspects of this concept that may be discovered beyond these two. Consequently, Exod. 19.5, 6 would be the beginning of something that developed in stages, and possibly reached its apogee elsewhere in the grand biblical narrative.

Looking at the passage in Exod. 19.5, 6, there are several noteworthy elements, but the most telling one in the context of the argument pursued in this thesis is in verse 6. In the Hebrew it is the expression, *מְמַלְכֶת כֹּהֲנִים וְגוֹי קָדוֹשׁ*, and its Greek equivalent, *βασίλειον ιεράτευμα καὶ ἔθνος ἅγιον* that is of special note. In all the English translations of the Bible used in this thesis, the rendering of the expression is exactly the same, 'a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation'. Here, it is clear that the

T. Muraoka (2002, p. 268); Gnuse (2005, pp. 487–88). Also, *ιεράτευμα* only appears twice in the NT, in 1 Pet. 2.5, 9. The word *ιεράτευμα* conveys the idea of 'a body of priests' according to *GELNT* (1998). It is in that sense that it is interpreted as 'priesthood'. See how the usage of the OT text in the NT is viewed, according to McCabe (1963, p. 162), but I will come back to this Petrine passage in the appropriate section.

⁶⁹⁰ See the different comments made on the basis of literary criticism about the position and origin attributed to this text, according to some scholars in Dozman (2009, pp. 446–47). However, in this thesis, the consideration of the use of OT materials such as texts, thoughts and concepts should not be based on commentators' critical understanding of them and their origins, but on the fact they are part of the system that promotes them. In other words, they are part of the canonical scriptures, the Bible that constitute the basis of Jewish and Christian beliefs in the form that they are in the OT (Jewish), and in the NT (Jewish and Christians). See, Gnuse (2005); Timmer (2008, pp. 484–89).

expression ‘kingdom of priests’ stands in apposition to ‘a holy nation’.⁶⁹¹ The point that is relevant to this thesis in Exod. 19. 3-6 is rather self-evident and possibly requires no further analysis on the possible interpretations of the text. God is verbalising his intention to make the whole of ‘the house of Jacob’, and again ‘the children of Israel’ as specified in Exod. 19.3, his priests. As in verse 3, ‘the house of Jacob’ is paralleled with ‘the children of Israel’, in verse 6, the words ‘a kingdom’ and ‘a nation’ mirror each other, and ‘priests’ and ‘holy’ do the same. It is essential to observe that not just some individuals would be concerned, but globally everyone is to be a priest to God in the context of Israel’s nationhood. This kingdom or nation would be made of priests only, and therefore, they all would constitute the first priesthood ordained by God in the biblical context. In that sense, they, the people of Israel, would corporately be ‘a kingdom of priests’ to the Lord. God’s vision of Israel is depicted in these words, and it must have projected a picture in the minds of the people about themselves. But how would it look-like in practical terms? How could they understand their identity and function as a nation of priests? So far, according to the biblical records, the Israelites had only physically witnessed the individual Egyptian and Midianite models of priesthood.⁶⁹² However, when the Levitical priesthood was instituted there was then within the nation a physical example of what God meant.

The succeeding establishment of a priesthood within the priestly nation, the Aaronic priestly order, and the selection of the tribe of Levi to serve in the sanctuary may provide answers to the above questions. These offer a point of reflection on how Israel as a nation must have practically understood its priestly identity and role among other nations. Being separated from a larger group for that function is a consistent

⁶⁹¹ See how this expression is consensually understood in scholarship, and the theological implications and applications that have marked the general understanding of the text through time in, Gnuse (2005); Chavel (2015, pp. 186–87); Timmer (2008, pp. 485–86); McCabe (1963, pp. 162–63).

⁶⁹² See the above footnote on the use of כֹּהֵן in the biblical narrative.

feature in the process of being called to priestly functions. This aspect is informative of what it means to be a priest in the different contexts where the notion occurs within the story of God's people. In verses 5, 6 of Exodus 19, Israel is separated from all other nations to be a priestly nation to God. The Levites,⁶⁹³ in Num. 1.49, 50; 3.12; 8.6, 14; 18.6; Deut. 10.8; 31.9; 1 Chron. 15.2 are separated from the other tribes of Israel to serve the Lord in a context of priesthood (אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי לֵוִי) Deut. 31.9).⁶⁹⁴ Although the choice of the Aaronic priestly order from among the Levites preceded the selection of the sons of Levi from among the other Israelite tribes, the above point remains true. It will not be false to state that it is within the global Levitical priesthood that the Aaronic priestly order functioned in the context of the sanctuary. The mutual visual observation of the different groups must have been helpful in

⁶⁹³ The term is originally used to identify the descendants of Levi, the third son of Jacob according to Gen. 29.34.

⁶⁹⁴ Strictly speaking, the Levites were not priests since the priesthood belonged to the family of Aaron according to Exodus 28; 29; 40, and among other particularly clear texts like Num. 3.10; 1 Chron. 23.13. Also, in Numbers 16, for instance, there is an incident that clarifies the difference between the two groups in terms of the priesthood. In verses 9, 10 of this chapter, the difference between the Levites and Aaron and his sons in terms of the priesthood seems evidently portrayed. To further reflect on the difference between the two groups, see the article, Begg (2004) in which there is a helpful historical account of the function of the Levites and the use of the term in biblical and extra-biblical documents. However, when the priest is spoken of as in Deut. 18.1-7, for instance, it is in a context that seems to qualify all those of the tribe of Levi, that is the sons Aaron and the other sons of Levi. They were all ministers of the Lord in the sanctuary and they stood between God and the rest in their respective spheres. In Deut. 17.18 is found the expression, הַלְוִיִּם הַכֹּהֲנִים to refer to the origin of the people involved in the priesthood. According to Brown (1907), there would be no distinction between the words 'Levites' and 'priests' in such expression in the book of Deuteronomy, as in Deut. 17.9, 18; 18.1; 24.8; 27.9 as well as in Josh. 3.3; 8.33 and some other texts. In those texts such as Deut. 17.18, several of the English versions mentioned in this thesis translate the above Hebrew expression as 'Levitical priests', RSV, NLT, NET, NAS, ESV, LXE rather than 'the priests, the Levites' as in the KJV, LXA. In that sense, they are all priests in essence, and it is possibly for this reason that the term 'the priests the sons of Levi' seems to be used at times inclusively, as in Deut. 21.5; 31.9 and elsewhere. See, Leuchter (2010, p. 108) as he comments on the view of the priesthood in Deuteronomy as 'not made of Aaronides, but Levites'. Although this view may be produced by the assumption that this book was not written at the time claimed by its content, the fact is that it still fits into the priesthood concept in its essence that pervades the biblical narrative. In 2 Chronicles 29; 30, and in 35.1-17 that recounts Hezekiah's, and Josiah's keeping of Passover, there seems to be a clear distinction between the sons of Aaron and the Levites as they seem to stand in their respective courses, yet, it is quite apparent that they virtually serve in the same capacity in these events, because of the specific circumstances they faced at that time. The point is that there are different orders within the Levitical priesthood. Aaron and his sons constitute the official Levitical priesthood, but with the Levites at times and in places, they functioned all as priests before God in the Holy things. See, 2 Chron. 29.34; 30.15-17; 35.1-6, 10-14. The same phenomenon is observed in Ezra 6.18-20 after the return from the Babylonian exile.

sharpening their individual understandings of the priesthood concept and in forging the identity of the nation.⁶⁹⁵ God in Exod. 28.1 set aside Aaron and his sons from the Levites for, לְכֹהֲנֵי-אֵלֵי, ‘to minister’ or ‘serve me as priests’.

Then, he separated the Levites from among Israel to serve him in the tabernacle where Aaron and his sons served. But, first of all, he had separated Israel, from which belong both afore-mentioned groups, from among the nations to serve him as ‘a nation of priests’. The procedure is the same in all instances; it is the selection of people from among others. The aim of such procedure also is invariably the same: their service as priests or intermediaries between God and others. This observation tends to impress on the mind the consistent and pervasive nature of the concept of the biblical priesthood in its different aspects from the beginning. There seems to be a clear sense of cohesion between these three groups when understanding their corporate identity essentially as being servants of God, however it was manifested individually. That understanding allows a better grasp of the one biblical concept of priesthood that is expressed differently, but based on the same unique principle. The three groups were chosen to relate to God in one specific way.

Although these three groups did not undergo the same ceremony that signified their calling to serve God as priests, the same essential notion of priesthood is exhibited in their individual functions. The main thought that drives the function, with or without an initiation ceremony at the start, is that the priest is a chosen servant of God⁶⁹⁶ before whom he stands on behalf of others. Whether it is the Levites as a tribe

⁶⁹⁵ An example of this is probably found in how the Qumran Community used this text of Exod. 19.5, 6 to define themselves within the context of the Jerusalem priesthood, see Timmer (2008, p. 488).

⁶⁹⁶ In the calling of Aaron and his sons in Num. 18.7 as well as in the promulgation of Num. 18.6 concerning the Levites, the Hebrew word that defines the function of both groups is כֹּהֵן. In this passage, Num. 18.1-7, and beyond, both Groups are separated for the same purpose, that is to serve God as priests, but only that they have different practical roles in this priesthood.

among the others,⁶⁹⁷ Aaron and his sons as a family within that tribe, or Israel as a nation among other nations, the concept is the same. It is noteworthy that it is in the context of the latter group, the nation, that the biblical notion of priesthood appears, and then is developed with a narrower focus. There is no observable ritual that accompanies the declaration made in Exod. 19.6, and though there is one with the tribe of Levi, what happened with Aaron and his sons ritually is very unique in the OT. Nevertheless, to be separated for service through divine appointment is the main characteristic of the concept of priesthood, regardless of the capacity of action specified with the calling. When there is a physical rite of ordination that accompanies this calling, this one serves to anchor in time and in the consciousness of all, a point of reference. In the context of priesthood, it is more of a tangible demonstration that signifies the reality found in the above-mentioned essential characteristic of being a priest to God. While the priesthood concept is strongly established in the Torah, the notion of a nation of priests that emerged from Exod. 19.5, 6 is not restrained to this part of the OT. It continued to expend as the story of Israel's relationship with God developed. Long after the establishment of the Levitical priesthood within Israel and the organisation of the Aaronic priesthood within the Levites, the notion of the priesthood of Israel within the nations remained relevant in the rest of OT.

Indeed, while there maybe a number of passages in the OT that could be construed as dealing with the notion of priesthood, as found in Exod. 19.5, 6, there are two specific places where it is explicitly the case. The first one is very relevant to this thesis in that it appears in the context of one of the main texts already used in the subject matter of this research. In Isa. 61.6, which is in the immediate context of Isa.

⁶⁹⁷ In Num. 1.53 the role of the Levites is to protect the rest of the tribe from God's displeasure and ensuing death, should they approach the sanctuary. For this the Levites had to pitch their tents all around the holy tabernacle. In Num. 3.38, the same idea of a group protecting another through the function of their calling is exploited. This time, it is Aaron and his sons who have to encamp in a particular place around the sanctuary, like in the case of the Levites, and for the same reasons.

61.1, a pivotal text in the messianic discussions about Jesus,⁶⁹⁸ there seems to be an address of God to the nation of Israel. This verse 6 is part of that which precedes it since it opens with a conjunction that makes that important link evident. The expression, *כֹּהֲנֵי יְהוָה מִשְׁרָתֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ* ‘minsters of our God’ stands in apposition to *כֹּהֵן* ‘priest of the Lord’ in this text as to signal their equivalence in meaning. The Israelite identity of those directly addressed is revealed by content and context, according to the preceding verse, and also very importantly, through the usage of the word *גֵּר* in contrast. The latter is consistently used in such context as to denote non-Israelites in distinction with God’s covenant people, Israel.⁶⁹⁹

This point is further confirmed by the use of two other very explicit expressions, *זָר* and *נָכַר* in verse 5 to which our verse of interest is related by the most likely disjunctive *וְ*.⁷⁰⁰ These elements in the passage indicate that the priests to be are the common people of the nation of Israel, and the Lord has separated them, according to context, from the rest of peoples. Here is found a similar idea to the one in Exod. 19.5, 6. The significance of this observation lies in the biblical chronological gap that separates Exodus 19 from Isaiah 61 and the difference in context of both passages.⁷⁰¹ Those characteristic differences, yet, establish a

⁶⁹⁸ This text of Isaiah is at the very centre of most discussions on the OT-announced messianic identity of Jesus because of its content in its relationship with other OT texts of the same nature, but also for its use in the Gospels and particularly in Lk. 4.18. Although the following articles go beyond the point made here, they do show the type of treatment that Luke’s quote of the Isaianic text still receives in scholarship for reasons that may be relevant to this discussion, see, Afulike (2018); Baawobr (2016); O’Toole (1995); Monshouwer (1991).

⁶⁹⁹ See, Brown (1907); Holladay 2000); *TWOT* (1980).

⁷⁰⁰ See, Brown (1907); Holladay (2000); *TWOT* (1980)

⁷⁰¹ According to the claims of the Bible in chronological terms, there are centuries of developments within the Hebrew context that separate those texts. The book of Isaiah, based on the claims of the first verse of the first chapter concerning the time of the kings mentioned, it would be from the 8th century BC, while according to the Bible in 1 Kgs. 6.1, the exodus from Egypt would be in the 15th century of the same Era. This is not the position of most in scholarship, but the perspective here is that of the biblical reckoning. See a summary of scholarly thinking on this issue for the book of Isaiah and the three different sections and times of writing attributed to it with various points of disagreement, for instance, in Baltzer (2010); Liebreich (1956); Eaton (1959).

continuity of this priesthood notion of common people being called to this ministry according to God's plan for them.⁷⁰² The concept of the priesthood of Israel as a nation seems persistent through time and circumstances in scripture.⁷⁰³ I will certainly return to the passage in Isaiah when looking at the connection between verse 6 and 1. For now it is appropriate to continue to investigate the existence of such concept with the second explicit passage afore-mentioned.

This text is also found in the book of Isaiah, in chapter 66 and verse 21. The immediate context of it provides comparable characteristics to that of Isa. 61.6 in terms of the contrast between Israel and the other nations. The interest here lays not on the exegesis of the passage as to find the details of what it all means, but simply in highlighting one following fact. At the end of verse 19, it is said that 'they shall declare my glory among the nations' and in v. 20 the personal pronoun, they, is clearly identified by grammatical means.⁷⁰⁴ It is the same subject at the beginning and at the end of this verse that is otherwise identified with and as 'the children of Israel' through the action of the same verb, and the same object attached to both subjects.⁷⁰⁵ Our verse of interest, 21, says 'I will also take of them' that is, of the children of Israel, 'for priests' and 'for Levites'. The subject of לָקַח 'to take' in 21 is 'I', the Lord, since he is the one speaking as indicated at the end of the sentence. It is reasonable to think in this context that the idea of the action of this verb is to separate

⁷⁰² Baltzer (2010, p. 270) notes that 'The heart of the Book (Isaiah 60-62)' is concerned with not just the fact that 'God's people' can become 'Levites priests', but 'even foreigners', those who would join the people of God.

⁷⁰³ There have been different critical opinions regarding the dates and compositions of these two books, but here it is of no consequence since I am looking only at the relationship between these texts in the context of the biblical chronological perspective on the priesthood of the nation as it appears to be in the texts. See the different discussion on the literary critical analysis of those books in scholarship with regard to their possible times of writings and compositions, see, Schmid (2012); Smith (1996); Baltzer (2010); Liebreich (1956); Eaton (1959).

⁷⁰⁴ In the English translation we have the personal pronoun 'they' for the Hebrew construction of the verb with the 3rd person plural as a termination, הֵיבִיאוּ.

⁷⁰⁵ 'they shall bring an offering', 'the children of Israel shall bring an offering'. In both cases as well, the idea is that it is to the Lord, even if this is said differently.

or select some among others, some who will serve the Lord in the capacity of priests and Levites without being naturally of that class by lineage. In this text again, it is the function (priests and Levites) that identifies the chosen ones in their role, as in Exod. 19.6 and Isa. 61.6, and not their filial or genealogical characteristics and origins. In all the cases the object of such calling is to serve the Lord in an intermediary position between him and the rest of people.⁷⁰⁶ This is the core of the concept of priesthood within the Israelite context that is once more applied to people outside of the formally established Levitical orders. The people could in principle make better sense of the implications of their calling to serve the Lord as priests, by observing established exemplars, the Levitical priestly orders. This is the most likely educational scenario that Israel as a whole would have followed in the wilderness and beyond.

Therefore, there is a wider concept of priesthood that applies to more than the Levites who were only one tribe among the people of God, Israel. In fact, we see that this wider scope of the concept of priesthood existed even before there was a Levitical priestly system. More importantly, we see that after the establishment of the Levites as servants of the Lord, Aaron and his sons and the rest of the people, this aspect of a priestly nation continued to exist concurrently with the other aspects above-mentioned. The essential functional characteristic of service to the Lord is exactly the same for the nation of priests as for the Aaronic priests and the Levites regardless of the entrance rite applied.⁷⁰⁷ However, it is only at the time of the establishment of the Aaronic priestly order that a ritual of ordination and consecration that includes a

⁷⁰⁶ For instance, Aaron and his sons serve as priests between God and the rest, that is the Levites, Israel, and the other nations. The Levites, including the Aaronic priests, serve as intermediaries between God and the other Israelites, as well as the other nations. Israel serves between God and the other nations. See, (Dozman, 2009, p. 446).

⁷⁰⁷ There is a difference in activities between the layers that make up this priesthood concept, and that can be resolutely qualified by reading about the respective daily tasks of the different groups, but that which is fundamentally the same is the notion of serving God and man as an intermediary between the two. Cf. Exod. 29; 30; Lev. 1.5-17; 16; Num. 3; 8.

‘baptism’ of the candidate was employed. There is no such aspect of ordination ceremony elsewhere in the OT, but doubtless that in the process both Israel as a nation and the Levites as a tribe within that nation could identify with what that ‘baptism’ meant in the calling. They knew that it was part of being separated, by divine appointment, from others to serve as intermediaries between God and the rest of the people.

Although they (the nation, the Levites) did not go through the ‘baptism’ applied to Aaron and his sons, they could understand how it conceptually and theologically concerned them.⁷⁰⁸ Through the common notion of service as priests to the Lord, the Levites would have understood more of the significance of their appointment through witnessing the ritual procedure that testified of the separation of the Aaronic priests from the rest. The ‘baptism’ of Aaron and his four sons may have been a showcase for the Levites for practical reasons also. Could all the Levites have been ‘baptised’? Could all Israel go through the Levitical rite of ordination? Maybe the answers is yes to both questions, but did they all witness and understand the implications of the ‘baptism’ for themselves even when exempted? The answer seems more evidently, yes, in the light of what it means to be a priest to God.

⁷⁰⁸ Reading the eighth chapter of the book of Numbers that deals with the consecration of the Levites, it becomes clear that these are set aside by the Lord to serve him through their service to Aaron and his sons. The Levites are ministers of the sanctuary like Aaron and his sons, but in a different role. It appears that the ritual of initiation and consecration for them is different from that of Aaron and his sons in some ways. For instance, the Levites are not subject to any administered bathing, and specific anointing, but they still go through a circumstantial dedication ritual that involves some of what the priests went through in Exod. 29. In Num. 8.6, 7 Moses is commanded to ‘cleanse them’ לַטְהָרֵם by ‘sprinkling’ מֵי־קֹדֶשׁ water upon them, see Brown (1907). Although the procedure is different from that used for Aaron and his sons, it is an act of consecration for service to the Lord (Exod. 28.1; Num. 8.11), and it takes place in the same public setting as for the others, cf. Exodus 29, Numbers 8. The gathering of the children of Israel at the door of the tabernacle is not as explicitly mentioned in Exodus 29 for Aaron and his sons, but it is to be understood in the light of the significance of the event, and the location it happens at. The reason for that is in the reading of the same event in Lev. 8.2-6 that does clarify the point and indicates that those two rituals, while different, are of the same in nature. In terms of the theological link between the Aaronic priests and the Levites, Num. 8.19 states the fact that the Levites were to act as priests on behalf of the congregation of Israel by serving them in the tabernacle, and making atonement for them. These are two different rituals involving two different groups of people, but with the same theological underlying meaning.

Thus in the OT, there is a fundamental concept of the essence of priesthood with and without the ritual of consecration that Aaron and his sons underwent. Although the nation of Israel, to some extent, like the Levites, did not undergo the particular initiation ritual used for the Aaronic priests, they are fundamentally implicated in the same divine priesthood plan through perhaps different actions.⁷⁰⁹ Perhaps for the nation there were other forms of rituals that somehow signified this calling to serve the Lord as priests, but it is not the aim of this research to investigate that.⁷¹⁰ The point is that there is evidence for a fundamental OT priesthood system that functions at different individual levels, perhaps like interdependent wheels that turn within a main wheel (analogy from Ezek. 1.16). As it is the case in the OT, this concept of priesthood may also be found in the NT and it is appropriate to examine the question in the following section.

5.4.3 An Extension Of the Inclusive OT Priesthood Concept in the NT Context

The general principal of a priesthood system did not disappear in the intertestamental period to make space for something novel in the Gospel era according to biblical

⁷⁰⁹ The whole idea of Israel being above all nations because of their ties with God testifies of this, see Exod. 19.5, 6; Deut. 7.6; 14.2; 26.19; 28.1; Pss. 135.4; 148.14; Isa. 40.8; 43.20-21.

⁷¹⁰ Could it be that the whole of the Laws, precepts, ordinances, and other regulations that were supposed to separate Israel from the other nations in effect regulated and organised the rituals that expressed their difference from others, (Deut. 4.5, 6), and therefore, their consecration as priests to the Lord? The basis of such idea could perhaps be found in the very passage where this concept of a nation of priests is found. In Exod. 19.5 that immediately precedes the first mention of Israel as 'a kingdom of priests', there is the idea of them becoming a 'special possession out of all nations' (NET), 'special treasure from among all the peoples' (NLT), (my own possession among all peoples' RSV), (my own possession among all the peoples' (NAS), and this is conditional to them obeying the voice of the Lord and keeping his covenant. It is in this context that the giving of the laws and ordinances that regulated Israel's life happened on Mount Sinai, including the establishment of the Levitical sanctuary and priestly system. The holiness of Israel among other nations is consistently dependent upon the keeping of God's covenant with them throughout the scriptures. See how frequently this is emphasised in the book of Deuteronomy, for instance, in Deut. 4.1-6; 5; 6; 26.19; 28, and elsewhere like in Ps. 135.4; Isa. 61.8, 9 Jer. 7.23, conversely, the demise of the people such as the Assyrian, and the Babylonian exiles came upon them so that other nations ruled over them because of their rejection of the laws of the Lord. The prayer of Daniel in chapter 9 and verses 1-19 expresses the fact in clear terms. All the rituals of purification that permeated the Jewish economy could have been part of an ordination ceremony that was on-going. There is also the mention of Israel having been baptised as a whole nation in 1 Cor. 10.2, and in verse 5, it is said that God was not 'well pleased'. Cf. Mt. 3.17; 12.18; 17.5.

evidence.⁷¹¹ The same priestly systems, in essence, that regulated the religious experience of the Israelites of the OT were also actively present in NT times.⁷¹² The Levitical priestly order was still active at the time of Jesus and his disciples. In fact, the Gospel story would not have been what it is without the involvement of the priesthood in the story of Jesus. According to Lk. 1.5, the father of John the Baptist, Zacharias, was a priest and his wife, John's mother, was 'the daughter of Aaron'.⁷¹³ The announcement of John's birth took place in the temple while he was on priestly duties. In Mt. 8.4, for instance, Jesus sent a man, whom he had healed, to the priest in order to follow the procedure established in the Law of Moses.⁷¹⁴ It was the priests and the Levites in Jn 1.19 who were sent to John the Baptist to inquire of his testimony about himself in relation to the Baptist's ministry. The role and function of

⁷¹¹ The biblical evidence for this is readily available in the Gospels and the book of Acts through the narratives about the temple affairs and personals such as the different festivals taking place in Jerusalem (Acts 2.1; 20.16. see Exod. 23.16; 34.22; Deut. 16.9, 10). This festival given to Israel in the desert is kept after the time of Jesus on earth. The priests and the high priest who officiated in the temple where the sacrifices were made at the time of festivals such as the Passover that preceded the harvest festival mentioned above. See, Mt. 26.2; 27.1, 6, 51; Mk 14.1, 12; Lk. 2.41; 22.1-11; Jn 2.13-16, 23; 6.4, 5; 11.55. See also, Boughton (2003) in the context of evidence for the link between the OT and NT priestly system. What may have been new in the Jewish priesthood model from the Mosaic time to the NT time is irrelevant to the present argument, see, Cody (1969); Bartlett (1970); Bond (2014).

⁷¹² This is in no way an attempt to ignore the many different developments that took place between the Hebraic priestly system of the OT as considered in this thesis, the priestly system at the time of the Jewish post-exilic identity-reconstruction phase, and the priestly system of the Judaism of NT period. Through the various political, socio-economic and religious changes that occurred between those periods, there were resulting modifications of some aspects of the original priesthood, but not the concept of it. For instance, the Aaronic priestly lineage question is one aspect that is important in this context, but there were changes that took place around this issue. See in these review articles, Bartlett (1970); Tucker (1970), summaries of the issue that identify the main points of the book, Cody (1969). See also, Schrenk (1965, p. 268) on the historical changes in the priestly lineage question, and for a good insight into the historical developments most concerned with by scholars in the context of this discussion, see, Nodet (2012). My concern here is that the fundamental or core reason and function of the priesthood was the same at the time Jesus came as it was in the OT, although, see, Schrenk (1965, p. 264) on how Jesus related to the priestly system. From a scriptural viewpoint, and according to Mt. 5.17, for instance, Jesus came 'to fulfil' the law and the prophets, and in Jn 11.29 he is 'the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world'. The priestly system designed to deal with the question of the oracles of God, sin and sacrifice in the OT, operated in the same way at the time of Jesus through the keeping of the same laws and festivals that took place in the Jerusalem Temple where priests such as Zacharias (Lk. 1.5) served. It is argued that 'The priestly motif is particularly prominent in Lk.' Schrenk (1965, p. 264), and that is evidence on account of the Gospel story, that the priesthood concept was as present at the time of Jesus as it was at the time of his forefathers in the OT.

⁷¹³ See comments on this point in Marshall (1978, p. 52).

⁷¹⁴ See, Lev. 13.2; 14.1, 2. Jesus requested of this man exactly what the Law given to Israel in the wilderness required in the above passages.

the ἱερεύς ‘priest’ in the NT Jewish context is broadly the same as that of the כֹּהֵן in the OT since the preceding original words refer to the same function.⁷¹⁵ Eventually, it was under the influence of the ἀρχιερεύς ‘the high priest’ that Jesus was sentenced to death, according to Mt. 26.3, 57, 59, 65, 66 and other Gospel parallels.⁷¹⁶ There seems to be continuity between the OT priestly system and the NT one at the time of Jesus, and essential to that continuity, in many respects, are titles and functions.

The notion of ‘high priest’ in the Gospels seems to be the same as in the OT where the equivalent Hebrew expression is כֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל.⁷¹⁷ This ἀρχιερεύς as specified in Lev. 21.10; Num. 35.25 in the LXX was the one ‘anointed’⁷¹⁸ with the special oil⁷¹⁹ to fulfil special duties such as in Leviticus 16, and he is in the NT the one who wears the special garments that Aaron wore.⁷²⁰ This is the one referred to among the OT people as the כֹּהֵן הַמָּשִׁיחַ or in the LXX, ὁ ἀρχιερεύς ὁ κεχρισμένος in Lev. 4.3, and in verse 5 as ὁ ἱερεύς ὁ χριστός, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew expression. In other words, the OT ὁ ἀρχιερεύς is the ὁ χριστός, and vocabulary, syntax and grammar define this understanding in Lev. 4.3, 5, 16; 6.22 (15. LXX).⁷²¹ It is perhaps from the semantic and theological consideration of the above references and the

⁷¹⁵ See, Abbott-Smith (1999, pp. 213–14); *GELNT* (1998); T. Muraoka (2002, p. 268).

⁷¹⁶ See, Jn 11.57; 18.13, 14, 24, 28 as well as Acts 4.6 that identifies in the Lukan context the same people and their functions at the time of Jesus’ death, but also after that, when the disciples of Jesus took up their mission as apostles of Jesus in his absence.

⁷¹⁷ See, Abbott-Smith (1999, p. 62); *GELNT* (1998).

⁷¹⁸ See, T. Muraoka (2002, p. 69).

⁷¹⁹ It is important to remember that this is special oil, the one spoken off in Exod. 30.30-33 that could not be reproduced or used among the people, and with which Aaron and his sons were anointed as priests to the Lord.

⁷²⁰ See, Exod. 29.29; 31.10; Num. 20.26-28, cf, Mt. 26.65. There would be no need for this detail in the context of his role as high priest if this garment were of no significance.

⁷²¹ In the first references, the grammatical structure, the attributive position of the adjective in both the Hebrew and the Greek shows how both the Hebrew כֹּהֵן הַמָּשִׁיחַ and the Greek ὁ χριστός came to be used as a noun to identify the high priest in the biblical context. See, Duff (2005, pp. 57, 59). See also how the title is used in extra biblical literature, although, the points made in these article are not the concerns of this thesis. They only prove that there is a usage of the messianic title for the high priest, and it stems from the biblical texts that were available to those who produced these extra-biblical documents such as those discussed in the following articles, Smith (1959, p. 67); Liver (1959, pp. 151–56); Brown (1966).

content of Exod. 29.4; 40.12; Lev. 8.6 that the link between the OT and the NT is most explicit regarding the ‘messianic’ nature of the baptismal rite applied to Jesus.⁷²² The expression ἀρχιερεὺς is very much in use in the NT, particularly in the four Gospels and in the book of Acts.⁷²³ In all biblical occurrences, ἀρχιερεὺς seems to naturally keep its essential meaning as previously discussed.⁷²⁴

However, the only other book in the NT that uses this word quite systematically in a somewhat different context is the epistle to the Hebrews. In the total of 17 occurrences of ἀρχιερεὺς in this epistle, 10 of those refer to Jesus, 5 to the OT high priest, and in 2 occasions, both Jesus and the OT figure are in view in a combined way.⁷²⁵ It is quite clear that the author of this epistle identified the nature of the role and the ministry of Jesus as to be placed in a priestly context. If he saw Jesus in the NT as a high priest, it can only be in reference to the OT role and function of

⁷²² I am using the word ‘messianic’ in the context of the first occurrence of the concept, that is the priestly context, as argued in this thesis, and as for the baptismal context, it is that of Jesus’ baptism primarily, and subsequently that of Christians.

⁷²³ This word ἀρχιερεὺς is used 122 times in the NT, in the Gospel of Matthew, 25 times, Mark, 22 times, Luke, 15 times, John, 21 times, in the book of Acts, 22 times, and in the epistle to the Hebrews only outside of the Gospels, 17 times.

⁷²⁴ It also seems to be the case in extra-biblical sources that the expression carries the same meaning. See, for instance, Josephus, in whose works where reference to the ‘high priest’ is quite numerous. For instance, in *Ant.* 1:11, 12; 13:88; 20:6; *War.* 1:33, 53; 4:155, 164; *Life.* 1: 3, 4; *Apion.* 1: 157, 187; 2: 185. See also, Schwartz (1981) about Josephus’ view on the priesthood of Jeremiah, and Ezekiel in the context of the relevance of the system in his time, before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

⁷²⁵ Out of the first 9 references to the word, only 1 is not addressed to Jesus. Those used for Jesus are as follow, Heb. 2.17; 3.1; 4.14, 15; 5.5, 10; 6.20; 7.26; 8.1, and for the last one in Heb. 9.11, it says, Χριστὸς δὲ παραγενόμενος ἀρχιερεὺς. This time the adjective, the one that occurred for the first time in Lev. 4.5 to designate the priest who had gone through the anointing ritual is used as a noun to identify Jesus as the ἀρχιερεὺς. The 2 places where the reference is for both Jesus and the OT figure are, Heb. 8.3 and Heb. 9.25. Finally, the 5 instances where ἀρχιερεὺς is solely referring to the OT figure are, Heb. 5.1; 7.27, 28; 9.7; 13.11.

the temple's ἀρχιερεὺς.⁷²⁶ The writer of this epistle could not have missed the fact that the ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς is the ὁ ἱερεὺς ὁ χριστὸς.⁷²⁷

Moreover, in several instances, such as in Heb. 5.5; 9.11, where the writer uses ἀρχιερεὺς to identify Jesus, he simultaneously uses the term Χριστός as commonly attached to the name Jesus.⁷²⁸ The term 'Jesus Christ' that has become like a proper name is the combination of a biblical common name (Ἰησοῦς), and the noun (Χριστός) that indicates the role or function of Jesus in salvation history.⁷²⁹ The appellation 'Christ' exclusively referring to Jesus in the NT only, historically, came into being after the event that took place in Mt. 3.13-17, his baptism and the descending of the 'Spirit of God' upon him.⁷³⁰ While there may be other aspects of the Messiahship of Jesus to consider, it was at his baptism that the action that defined

⁷²⁶ It has been argued that 'Nowhere in the New Testament is the listing of biblical quotations more difficult than in the letter to the Hebrews.' While there is no agreement among scholars on the exact number of those in Hebrews, it is rather clear that this book relies 'heavily' on the OT. It is the case with some particular texts such as Ps. 110.4, on the theme of the 'high priest, and with other parts of the OT that deals with the sanctuary service. However, it is also said to be in general, 'impregnated with the OT.' See, Lane (1991, pp. cxiii–cxviii).

⁷²⁷ While this remark may seem redundant to the Bible reader at a glance, because of the implications of the title of high priest, it is noteworthy that the messianic notion that originally defines and differentiates the Aaronic priests from the rest of the sanctuary attendants is not systematically in view when dealing with the priesthood question in general. Since the writer of this epistle 'draws most heavily upon the Pentateuch and Psalms', Lane (1991, p. cxvi), the high priest figure that he refers to must be the one exposed in Lev 4.5, the ὁ ἱερεὺς ὁ χριστὸς. See, T. Muraoka (2002, p. 600).

⁷²⁸ See, *GELNT* (1998).

⁷²⁹ The name, Ἰησοῦς, is not very common in the NT, although it is not because it was less in use at the time of Jesus than in the OT, where the Hebrew name from which it comes is more often found. See, *GELNT* (1998); *BDAG* (1957, pp. 471–72); Foerster (1965, pp. 284–85). See, Johannes E. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1988); *BDAG* (1957, p. 1091); Grundmann (1974, pp. 527–80) on Χριστός.

⁷³⁰ See, Nolland (2005, p. 72). As already mentioned, all four evangelists in the NT report this event, but here, we are considering it in the Matthean context specifically. While the synoptics agree on the fact that there was a divine spiritual manifestation upon Jesus at that occasion, only Matthew uses the term 'Spirit of God'. In Mk 1.10, it is 'the Spirit', in Lk. 3.22, it is 'the Holy Spirit', but Matthew is different. By saying '[τὸ] πνεῦμα [τοῦ] θεοῦ', he seems to be closer to the LXX text of Isa. 61.1, πνεῦμα κυρίου, for which the Hebrew is יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ . The latter expression can be translated, 'the Lord God' as it is the case in RSV, NAS, KJV, ESV and others. Also, in Isa. 61.1, there are other words such as, 'is upon me to anoint' ἐπ' ἐμέ οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν in the Greek, and עָלַי מָשַׁח in the Hebrew, and together, they describe the action that is taking place in both the OT and the NT, and this is an Spirit-anointing. Matthew is identifying this moment as the anointing, or 'messianisation' of Jesus.

his identity as ‘the anointed one’ or the ‘Christ’ took place.⁷³¹ The fact that Hebrews is mainly dealing with the priestly functions of Jesus⁷³² is evidence that the baptism of Jesus, along with his subsequent ministry, should be looked at primarily from a perspective of the priesthood.⁷³³

On account of the relationship between the baptism of Jesus and his priesthood, if there is a link between the baptism of Jesus and that of Christians, then there is necessarily a connection between Christian baptism and priesthood. This may be the priesthood concept spoken about earlier that is extended beyond the Levitical order. A concept that is expressed in various contexts in the OT and applicable in different ways with the same essential implications of people serving God as intermediary. Considering these elements, it would seem that this OT concept is applicable to Jesus and officialised in the NT through his baptism in Mt. 3.13-17. All this brings into play the idea that this OT priesthood concept is relevant and important

⁷³¹ This may not be perceived as being the case among most in scholarship when dealing with the meaning of the title ‘Christ’. A major aspect of this ‘Messiahship’, and indeed, the primary one for most interpreters would be the kingship. An appropriate example of this state of affair is perhaps in this article about the priesthood of Jesus in Hebrews 7, Rooke (2000) where the author is suggesting that even in this clear priestly context, the royal aspect governs the priesthood. Also, it has been argued among scholars that Matthew is perhaps keener than others to establish the royal genealogical line of Jesus from the start of his story, see for example, Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 161–88); Foerster (1965, p. 538) who stated that ‘The Gospels accept the fact that Jesus is the Messiah.’, however, this ‘Messiahship’ of Jesus, although, it is ‘a new concept of Messiahship’, is one that still emphasises the kingly aspect. ‘the Messiah has become the Lord over the power of evil in sin and death.’, see, Foerster (1965, pp. 539, 527–80). Scripturally, we also are aware of the title under which Jesus was executed on the cross, according to all four Gospels, Mt. 27.37; Mk 15.16; Lk. 23.38; Jn 19.19. The Gospels and other NT books indeed, seem to support the fact that the kingly aspect was often in view in conversations among friends and foes of Jesus. See, for instance, in Mt. 27.17, 22 the verses identify Jesus as ‘Christ’, whereas in Mk 15.12, the equivalent of Mt. 27.22, he is identified as ‘king’. Perhaps for this reason among others, (Foerster, 1965, pp. 531–32) views Matthew as emphasising the kingship of Jesus within the messianic context of his ministry.

⁷³² See, Rooke (2000, pp. 82–3) who sees the importance of the priesthood of Jesus in Hebrews, although, I differ from her concerning the nature of this priesthood. See also, Lane (1991, pp. lxxv–ciii) for the various structure and outline proposals that show the above point.

⁷³³ As argued in the preceding footnotes, it is the kingly aspect of the widely acknowledged ‘Messiahship’ of Jesus that is primarily in view for most people. Some have seen in the Spirit-anointing that took place at his baptism in all four Gospels, as a kingship-anointing as well as a prophet-anointing, see, for instance, Ryken (2018, p. 110); Foerster (1965, p. 534) but, what about the integral, administered water-rite through which he did not express the washing away of his sins? Neither kings nor prophets were subject to it in order to be anointed in their respective offices. It was only the experience of the priests as they were divinely appointed in the priestly charges like for Aaron and his sons.

in the NT alongside the baptismal rite. If indeed this is the case, there must be tangible elements to ascertain the thought of a relationship between priesthood and Christian baptism. Those would be elements that evidence and solidify the link between the OT and the NT on the priesthood concept, through baptism of both Jesus and Christians.

Indeed, the link between the OT and the NT, Jesus and Christians in the context of a consistent and constant priesthood notion is provided throughout the biblical narrative of salvation. Perhaps the main vein that carries this idea is the epistle to the Hebrews, but there are references in two particular biblical books that should be in view here. The first passage is one already met in two separate occasions in this thesis. The first was with the treatment of Isa. 61.1. Although the first verse was the main focus, the three following verses were identified as essentially applicable to Jesus as the Lord's Messiah. While it is Lk. 4.18, 21 that explicitly have Jesus applying the OT text to himself,⁷³⁴ Matthew would clearly be in agreement with this view about Jesus fulfilling the Scriptures as ὁ χριστός in Mt. 16.16.⁷³⁵ The main reason for identifying Jesus as the awaited Messiah in Matthew is his use of the OT to this end. Matthew thematically uses the content of OT messianic passages (Isa. 61.1-4 for example), and he also uses clear textual elements from Isa. 42.1, 3, 7 to describe Jesus' activities in a fulfilment context.⁷³⁶

In Mt. 4.23; 11.5; 15.30, 31, for instance, where perhaps Jesus' more common and frequent activity is reported (not occasional occupations), the OT expectation

⁷³⁴ See, Marshall (1978, pp. 182–85).

⁷³⁵ The following verses that report Jesus' response to Peter's remark in Mt. 16.17-20, there is no doubt that Jesus agrees with his understanding on the subject. Jesus even recommends in verse 20 that they keep it a secret by stating, ἵνα μηδενὶ εἰπωσιν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ χριστός. In Mt. 24.3-5, 23, 24, 27, Jesus identifies himself as ὁ χριστός when they asked him about the signs of his coming, and he answered about the coming of false 'Christs' before the 'Son of man' comes. This is the 'Son of man' who is the 'Son of God' and 'the Christ' in Mt. 16.16, as confirmed in the dialogue that took place between Jesus and his judges in Mt. 26.63, 64. See also, Fletcher-Louis (2007, p. 59).

⁷³⁶ We should remember that the connection between Isa. 61.1-4 and Isa. 42.1-7 was well established earlier as it relates to the same messianic figure identified in the NT as being Jesus. The texts from Isa. 42.1, 3, 7 are partially or fully used in Mt. 3.16, 17; 12.18, 20; 11.5.

concerning the work of the Messiah as outlined in Isa. 61.1- 4; 42.1, 7 is fulfilled.⁷³⁷ Thus, in identifying Jesus as the 'Christ' in the NT, the 'high priest' of the heavenly sanctuary, according to Heb. 3.1; 4.14-16; 7.26; 8.1, 2, a strong biblical link with the OT Messiah and the priesthood concept is expressed. The textual, typological, and theological connection between all of the above references about Jesus Christ and the nature of his Messiahship is firmly established. If the 'Messiahship' of Jesus is identifiable in the NT through the use of the OT texts of Isa. 61.1; 42.1, the temporal element of this fulfilment is also identifiable in the NT through the use of the OT. This anointing ceremony is recorded in Mt. 3.13-17, it is the baptism of Jesus, following the pattern of OT ordination of Aaron in Exod. 29.4-7 and other related texts.⁷³⁸ Jesus at this occasion was anointed as high priest on behalf of believers, Christians. This event happened at the Jordan River when Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist, and they both 'fulfilled all righteousness'.⁷³⁹

Furthermore, when considering the above in conjunction with Isa. 61.6, it all becomes specifically relevant to the subject matter here. Having established that Isa. 61.1- 4 is used to signify the priestly nature of Jesus' anointing, and that Isa. 61.6 exposed the continuity of the wider priesthood concept from Exod. 19.5, 6, the link between Jesus and the wider priesthood must be examined. It would seem as if the relationship is quite straightforward since verse 6 is clearly part of the immediate

⁷³⁷ In Mt. 11.5, these actions pointed at by Jesus in verse 3 are in response to the telling question of John the Baptist. Regardless of what John was really saying, the main idea is in the fact that there was an expectation to be fulfilled as announced in the OT by 'the one', and any confirmation of the realisation of the prophecy in Jesus was to bring stability to the Baptist's state of mind in this context. Some of the actions and teachings of Jesus have clearly been interpreted as 'bold claims to a high priestly consciousness' on his part, see, Fletcher-Louis (2007, pp. 62-3).

⁷³⁸ The related texts are those relating to the ordination of the priests as mentioned earlier in other parts of the research.

⁷³⁹ The best confirmation of this in the Gospels is the saying of Jesus in Lk. 4.21. This is Jesus claiming the fulfilment of his anointing or Messiahship as happening within a temporal framework. The preceding verses, 18, for instance, is a quote from Isa. 61.1, and this Lukan pericope follows the leading of Jesus by the Holy Spirit (Lk. 4.1) into the wilderness, after his baptism and anointing with the same Holy Spirit in Lk. 3.21, 22. Thus, Jesus self-declares the time when he became Christ.

context of verses 1- 4. In fact, there seem to be a relationship of cause and effect between them that poses no particular challenge. There is no need to go into a detailed study of this passage to understand that it is the actions, in Isa. 61.1-3, of the ‘anointed one’ that cause the actions of the recipients in verse 4. Having benefitted from the ministry of the ‘anointed one’ or Messiah, the recipients ‘are called tree of righteousness’ in verse 3. In the following verse, the same go on to ‘build old wastes’, and ‘repair waste cities’. The use of the ‘they’ in verse 4 is replaced in verse 5 by the use of ‘your’ to make it a direct speech without changing the subject. This subject is identified in verse 6 through the expression ‘ye shall be named priest of the Lord’. Thus, ‘they’ whom ‘are called tree of righteousness’ are ‘priests of the Lord’, and this is the result of the ministry of the ‘anointed one’ in Isa. 61.1. This means that the ministry of the ‘anointed one’ caused the recipients of his actions to ‘be called priests of the Lord’ (כֹּהֲנֵי יְהוָה), ‘ministers of our God’ (מִשְׁרָתֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ).⁷⁴⁰

Therefore, according to the above developments on Isa. 61.1- 6, the Messiah is the priest through whose ministry the priesthood expands outside of the Levitical circles. The idea of such expansion of the priesthood outside of the Levites was already in use in the Bible at that time, but the novelty here is that it happens through the agency of the ‘anointed one’. The prophetic application of Isa. 61.1 to Jesus would suggest that his priestly activities, as in Is 61.1- 4, were to result in making the beneficiaries, his followers, ‘Priests of the Lord’, as in Isa. 61.6. It would be reasonable to think that in the OT messianic announcement of Isa. 61.1- 4, there is also a prophetic pronouncement about a priesthood that is produced through the Messiah’s ministry. If the prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus being the Messiah, it should also be fulfilled in his followers, being called ‘Priests of the Lord’ as a result of their

⁷⁴⁰ There is no challenge regarding the translation of מִשְׁרָתֵי as ‘ministers of’ or ‘servants of’ as it appears in most English translations. See, מִשְׁרָת in Brown (1907); Holladay (2000).

connection to him. While the identification of Jesus in the book of Hebrews as ‘our high priest’ is intelligible terminologically, through the Aaronic model,⁷⁴¹ that of his followers would be so through the example of the Levites’ appointment and roles. This idea is in fact consigned in the NT, and we need not speculate about its relevance since it is plainly articulated in different places of the Christian scriptures. There are different textual references in the NT such as in 1 Pet. 2.5, 9 that leave no doubt about the continuity of the priesthood theme, in the above terms.

Those references clearly express through the Messiaship of Jesus, the strong thematic and theological links between the two Testaments on the priesthood subject. They deductively and precisely define in the NT context, the nature of the relationship between Jesus and Christians within the priesthood context, like in the book of Hebrews, for instance.⁷⁴² The ever-present OT priestly background of this epistle that focuses on the identity and role of Jesus and how it relates to Christians is undeniable. The whole purpose of it is exhibited in the seventh chapter that leads to the

⁷⁴¹ This remark here is only with regard to the different levels or categories that existed within the Levitical priesthood as already discussed. In the book of Hebrews, the nature of Jesus’ priestly lineage is clearly identified as ‘according to the order of Melchizedek’, and not Aaron. In Heb. 7.1, 10, 11, 15, 17, 21, the name of the almost elusive OT ‘Melchizedek’ is mentioned more than anywhere else in the entire Bible. Of the 9 times it occurs in the NT it is all in this book, and only in the context of the priesthood theme. The other 3 occurrences are as follows Heb. 5.6, 10; 6.20. The only reason for this name to be used in this way is that it comes from the two OT sources, Gen 14.18-20 where this character appears, and in Ps. 110.4, where his name briefly resurfaces without any warning or further details about him. It is the latter which is directly quoted in Heb. 5.6 as to begin the parallelism with Jesus in the epistle, see, Lane (1991, pp. 163–86). See also some of the remarks on Melchizedek that are reflective of scholarship opinions on the subject in Schrenk (1965, pp. 274–82); Lane (1991, p. 163); Water (2016). However, the question of the identity of Melchizedek and how it relates to Jesus’ identity in this epistle, or elsewhere is altogether a different matter from the one brought into light in this thesis, and it is not necessary, here, to further this point since it is not directly relevant to this thesis.

⁷⁴² There would be no understanding of the priesthood theme in Hebrews without the OT priestly detailed information that is found there. It is abundantly clear that the author of the epistle reflects back on the sanctuary system of the Israelite nation and its significance in the messianic context of Jesus’ life and ministry in heaven on behalf of people.

culminating point in found Heb. 8.1, 2, establishing that the priesthood of Jesus is ‘forever’.⁷⁴³

Indeed, this ἱερωσύνη ‘priesthood’⁷⁴⁴ of Jesus is presented in Heb. 7.24 as ἀπαράβατος ‘unchangeable’ or everlasting⁷⁴⁵ since it characterises a Jesus whose life is endless. It is this idea of the typological high priesthood of Jesus that generates the belief according to which, through his ministry, Christians are made priests also.⁷⁴⁶ This teaching is plainly expressed in Rev. 1.6; 5.10; 20.6 to mark the identity present and future of those who follow Christ. Jesus’ messianic identity and mission resulting in the salvation of people, all happens within the priesthood theme. For instance, in Rev. 1.5, 6, it is through the blood of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ that John and his audience are ‘made’ ‘a kingdom, priests to God’ as it appears in the Greek, βασιλείαν, ἱερεῖς τῷ θεῷ.⁷⁴⁷ While it is impossible to overlook the thematic relationship between the texts in Revelation, and the Petrine quote in 1 Pet. 2.9 from the already-mentioned Exod. 19.6 and perhaps Isa. 43.20-21; Hos. 2.23,⁷⁴⁸ there may be a greater need, in this

⁷⁴³ For the different comments that have formed the views in scholarship about the OT Melchizedek character, and the different theological applications that have been drawn from his occurrence in Hebrews, see, Lane (1991).

⁷⁴⁴ While the use of the words, priest and high priest is quite regular in the Gospels as we already established, this word, ἱερωσύνη, is restricted to the epistle to the Hebrews and in fact used only in chapter 7 verses 11, 12, and 24, see, *GELNT* (1998); Schrenk (1965, pp. 247–48); *BDAG* (1957, p. 471). Also, while the idea of the priestly function contained in the use of this word is very frequent in the LXX, the word ἱερωσύνη appears as a hapax legomenon in the LXX, in 1Chron. 29.22. This point is relevant here in the fact that in this OT text, there is a reference to being anointed for the priesthood as it is the case for Jesus in the NT. See, T. Muraoka (2002, p. 268).

⁷⁴⁵ See, Friberg et al. (2000); *GELNT* (1998); Schneider (1967, pp. 742–43); *BDAG* (1957, p. 97).

⁷⁴⁶ ‘though in a subordinate way’, see Grudem (1994, pp. 629–30).

⁷⁴⁷ Although, the Greek grammatical form in this passage would require the above translation since ‘priests’ seems to be in apposition to ‘kingdom’, some have translated the sentence as ‘a kingdom of priests’, probably because of a possible thematic approach in relation with Exod. 19.6. See, for instance, NLT. Also, see, G. K. Beale and Sean M. McDonough (2007, pp. 1081–88) who clearly exposes the fact that this book of Revelation is like ‘No other book of the NT’, Revelation ‘is permeated by the OT’. There should be no surprise of a thematic connection between the OT texts that deal with the specific priesthood context as above described, and this particular passage in Rev 1.6.

⁷⁴⁸ See, D. A. Carson (2007, pp. 1030–32) and how scholars disagree on the extent to which Peter uses these texts to make his own. There is no doubt that his idea of the priestly identity of his addressees originates with the OT texts mentioned. See also, G. K. Beale and Sean M. McDonough (2007, p. 1090)

context, to compare Rev. 1.5, 6 with Isa. 61.1- 6.⁷⁴⁹ In doing so, it appears that both texts are related in terms of the idea they convey. Both sets of texts imply that the priestly ministry or service to God of ‘the anointed one’ in Isaiah, and ‘Jesus Christ’ in Revelation results in the priestly appointment of those who are ministered onto and saved. It would not be, in this way, a distortion to suggest that these texts could function as prophetic announcements in the OT, and prophetic fulfilment in the NT. The priesthood theme as it appears in the OT, permeates the whole of the Bible, and ultimately finds its main significance in the relationship between Jesus’ identity and mission, and Jesus’ relationship with Christians.⁷⁵⁰ In the Isaianic passage, the anointing of the Lord’s servant causes the people of the Lord to become priests and servants of God. In parallel, the anointing of Jesus in Mt. 3.13-17 and subsequent ministry as the Isaianic Messiah causes Jesus Christ’s followers to become priests to God.

Furthermore and with noteworthiness, the procedure through which the anointing of Jesus took place, that is his baptism, is also the ritual sign by which his followers validate their connection to him in his name.⁷⁵¹ As discussed earlier, baptism generally speaking, is the rite of initiation into the community of Christ’s

⁷⁴⁹ Although the text might be differently approached, the focus here is on the priestly aspect and that is the main argument in view. This is why it is appropriate to note that Rev. 1.6 is variously translated in the English Bibles. The Greek, βασιλείαν, ἱερείς is rendered in the ESV ‘a kingdom, priests’, in NAS ‘a kingdom, priests’, in NET ‘a kingdom as priests’, in NLT ‘a kingdom of priests’, in RSV ‘a kingdom, priests’ whereas, in the KJV it is ‘kings and priests’. However, the meaning is the same as it follows a pattern that is already in existence in the OT, but perhaps now more exposed in the NT.

⁷⁵⁰ Although I would not concur with G. K. Beale and Sean M. McDonough (2007, p. 1090) on the idea that (speaking of the congregation of Israel), ‘Moses consecrates them in precisely the same manner as Aaron and his sons, by the sprinkling of sacrificial blood’, the comment on Rev. 1.6 concerning the relationship between the OT and the NT, Jesus and the people of God in the context of the priesthood remains appropriate.

⁷⁵¹ See, White (1960, pp. 148–53) on the argument about the significance of being baptised in the name of Jesus, and the analogical link that there is between the OT people of God in this context, and Christians using the baptismal formula, in the name of ‘Jesus’, ‘Christ’, ‘the Lord’. In both the OT and the NT it is the relationship that is expressed as the people belonging to God.

followers who are called Christians.⁷⁵² Even when already initiated into Christianity, they demonstrate their affiliation to Christ by undergoing baptism so that in all cases, the rite is central in expressing the relationship between the Messiah and his people.⁷⁵³ A relationship that Rev. 1.6; 5.10; 20.6 describe in the same terms as in 1 Pet. 2.9, and that finds its model in Isa. 61.1-6, and its most distinct source in Exod. 19. 5, 6. Thus, there seems to be an undeniable link between initiatory baptism, and priestly identity and functions in both the OT and the NT on the basis of the above developments. If the baptism of Jesus was an initiatory event, one that officially marked the beginning of his priestly ministry as ‘the anointed one’ of God, Christian baptism could certainly be viewed in the same light in terms of its meaning.⁷⁵⁴

There would not be a strain on either the biblical historical fundamental priesthood concept as exposed above or on the function of the baptismal rite performed in both the OT (on Aaron) and the NT as an initiation ceremony marking entrance into servanthood. There are multiple aspects that have been explored concerning the meaning of Christian baptism.⁷⁵⁵ However, this priestly aspect may not have been recognised as a sound element of the composite nature of this rite.⁷⁵⁶ In

⁷⁵² See, Porter and Cross (1999); Green (1999); White (1960, pp. 133–34).

⁷⁵³ See, P. Beasley-Murray (1999); White (1960, pp. 133–34, 148); Cross (1999b).

⁷⁵⁴ See, Mitchell (1966, p. 29). The practice of anointing with oil at Christian baptism, whether it is pre or post-baptismal or both even, though a development over time, it is still the outgrowth of an understanding of Christian baptism as intricately linked with the meaning of the baptism of Jesus and the fact that he was anointed at this occasion as the long-awaited servant of the Lord, the Messiah, and Christians follow this example. See some backgrounds and historical developments of that in Mitchell (1966).

⁷⁵⁵ Over the years of study of the meaning of Christian baptism, many in scholarship have explored and proposed various ideas as to what it is, and the general thought revolves around it being an act that signifies devotion to God and entrance into his church. Within this global understanding are all the specific aspects such as forgiveness of sin, conversion, dying and resurrecting, burial of the old man and new birth, new covenant, initiation into the church, acceptance of salvation, fleeing from judgement. All these notions can be found in the books already mentioned in this research that deal with the topic of baptism. See, for instance, Oepke (1985) White (1960); P. Beasley-Murray (1999); Beasley-Murray (1962); Mitchell (1966); Green (1999); Porter and Cross (1999); Cross (1999b); Cambell (1999); Nolland (1999) and others.

⁷⁵⁶ It is noteworthy that while some have seen and spoken of this priestly aspect of the baptism of Jesus, there is generally no application of that to Christian baptism. See, for instance, (Elisha Fish,

the same way that Paul defined baptism in Rom. 6.3, 4; Col. 2.11, 12 using the symbolism of the death and life in Jesus with theological soundness,⁷⁵⁷ so can it be biblically the case about the priestly role and identity of the believer being affirmed through the baptismal rite.⁷⁵⁸

Thus, interpreting Matthew's baptism of Jesus, and more specifically Jesus' unparalleled comment in Mt. 3.15 as addressing his initiation into his priestly role, as based on the unique OT experience of the initial establishment of the Levitical priesthood has biblical historical and contemporary bearing on the meaning of Christian baptism. It should be expected that this understanding of the meaning of Jesus' baptism is applicable also to Christian baptism since it happens in his name. This perspective could firmly be anchored in the permeating biblical concept of a priestly identity and function that affects every individual within the people of God in both the OT and the NT. Applying this Matthean view of Jesus' baptism to the baptism of his followers is congruent with the consistence of the biblical concept of priesthood and its ultimate connection with Jesus. The idea of baptism being a rite of initiation and consecration into the priestly ministry for Christians is a tangible one.

1791) who clearly perceive the priestly-messianic-inauguration nature of Jesus' baptism, but also warns that this baptism should not be compared to that of Christian. At the same time most scholars advocate the link between the two like it is said in White (1960, p. 90) that 'In the apostolic catechesis baptism and the initiation of Christ lie side by side.' The main view for the baptism of Jesus among scholars being his 'identification with sinners' is a hindrance to recognising the priestly messianic aspect of Jesus' baptism and its application to Christian baptism.

⁷⁵⁷ There are several places in the Pauline corpus where the writer uses the image of life and death to explain the dynamics of accepting Christ in one's life, and the changes that systematically take place. In 2 Cor. 13.4; Gal. 2.19, 20; Eph. 2.1; Col. 3.1, for instance, where being in Christ is to die to sin and live in Jesus a new life. See, Dunn (1993, pp. 143–47). As for the Pauline analogy of death and life for baptism, see Harrisville (1980, pp. 87–96); Longenecker (2016, pp. 611–14), and for further discussion, see Wagner (1967, pp. 287–94), and while the whole of the this book is a helpful insight into the study of the 'Religio-Historical "Parallels"' of 'the Pauline Doctrine of Baptism' in Rom. 6.1–11, the portion referred to here is sufficient to inform the reader of the essence of the matter. Also see, Capes et al. (2007, p. 187).

⁷⁵⁸ See, Cambell (1999).

This inference is based on the exclusive typological, and theological link between Aaron and Jesus, and ultimately between Jesus and Christians.⁷⁵⁹

Some have argued, to some extent in this context, that ‘the picture of the baptism of Christ in Jordan underlies much Christian baptismal practice.’⁷⁶⁰ In fact, there is historical evidence that at the time of the Church Fathers, there was a view of Christian baptism that significantly linked it with ‘the anointing of Aaron’, and ‘the messianic anointing of Christ’.⁷⁶¹ This view is understandable in the light of an interpretation of Mt. 3.13-17 as following a theological pattern set in the OT, and brought to its *raison d’être* when the Messiah went through the baptismal rite. The difference between the baptism of Jesus and that of his followers is in the fact that Jesus came as the anti-type of the OT high priest. He was fulfilling prophecy as the Messiah, and the event of his consecration as such took place according to the first messianic rite of the OT. Then, at this same event, he became the prototype of the NT priests, those who would follow him in the service of God, and perhaps, enriching this rite of baptism with a refreshed priestly aspect.⁷⁶² His anointing as the OT-announced

⁷⁵⁹ This is in terms of the priestly nature the Messiahship of both Jesus and Aaron, according to Exod. 29.4, 7 and Mt. 3.13-17, and also, the relationship between Jesus and his followers that is established in the context of the wider priesthood through the connective elements in Exod. 19.5, 6; Isa. 61.1-6; 1 Pet. 2.5, 9; Rev. 1.5, 6; 5.10; 20.6.

⁷⁶⁰ See, Mitchell (1966, p. 16) as he helpfully and widely surveys the views in scholarship regarding the notion of ‘Chrism’ while he deals with the topic of the ‘Origins of Baptismal Anointing’. See also, Beasley-Murray (1962, pp. 233–36) who declares that ‘it is all but universally that the occasion for the impartation of the chrism was baptism and that the chrism was the Holy Spirit.’

⁷⁶¹ See, Mitchell (1966, pp. 11, 17, 18, 22, 80, 170). Although, there may be different stages mentioned here as part of ritual practices of the Church according to the ‘Fathers’ like ‘Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine’, with regard to becoming a Christian, the main point is in the fact that the three main elements of priesthood, messianism, and baptism are all linked with the experience of Aaron, Jesus, and Christians through the same concept of initiation into the service of God. One is led to believe that there is continuity through the rites that made one a priest in the OT and in the NT, with the experience of Jesus being at the centre between the OT priest and the NT priest.

⁷⁶² Jesus is believed to have fulfilled the role of ‘prophet’, ‘priest’, and ‘king’ when he came and ministered to people on this earth, and through his ministry, he also made ‘us’ ‘prophets’, ‘priests’, and ‘kings’. See this argument in Grudem (1994, pp. 624–31) as he systematically traces back to the OT the origin and support for such belief. Although the three roles seem indivisible according to what was announced of the Messiah in the OT, the point of interest for this thesis is the priestly role that Jesus assumed and how it is linked to the priestly role of those who follow him as they both underwent baptism at the start of their ministries. ‘[I]n his baptism and in his death Jesus was seen to be the Christ

servant of God was not demonstratively with oil as for Aaron, and sometimes Christians in the Early Church, but with the Holy Spirit that the oil symbolised in both the OT and NT rites of initiation and consecration.⁷⁶³ The doubtless priestly nature of Jesus' ministry that began with and at his baptism should necessarily have some implications in the meaning of Christian baptism.

Consequently, it must be acknowledged that among the servants of God, there is a sharing of identity and functions regarding the biblical concept of priesthood that is consistent in both the OT and the NT. The relationship between Israel, Aaron, the Levites, Jesus Christ, and Christians is established in the fact that they are all 'priests' to God. The exposition of the biblical concept of the servant of God and priests of the Lord reached its climax in the coming of the Messiah. The realisation of the messianic promise proclaimed by the OT prophets officially took place at the baptism of Jesus, when at that occasion he became the 'Christ'. The baptism of Jesus was as much a fulfilment of prophecy as his coming and priestly ministry was. This specific priestly role was played within, and yet, as the epitome and culmination of the multi-faceted biblical priesthood concept. The baptismal ceremony of Jesus was common in form, but unique in nature and purpose,⁷⁶⁴ because it was the anti-type of the Aaronic priestly ordination rite not commonly in view in John's baptism. There may have been various expressions of consecration of groups and individuals to God, but baptism

and the Christ was seen to be Jesus...the Church possesses a counter-part to the baptism of Christ, in the sacrament of baptism...', see Beasley-Murray (1962, pp. 238, 240).

⁷⁶³ It has been argued that concerning the Church practice of anointing with oil, 'it is impossible to discuss the New Testament evidence without considering the Jewish and Old Testament background.' See, Mitchell (1966, pp. 20–25); Smith (1989, p. 60); Milgrom (1991, p. 553). It has been argued that 'The descent of the Spirit is not understood as a divine "begetting" of Jesus (Ps. 2:7) but rather as equipping him for his task.' This remark, although not made specifically to address the matter discussed here, does show the link with the notion of divine unction for a specific task that the use of oil in the OT context of a ceremonial anointing was for. Read the article of Grundmann (1974) as he succinctly surveys the different types of 'anointings' that took place at the different periods that constitute the history of Israel, in the biblical and extra-biblical literatures that mention the topic.

⁷⁶⁴ See, White (1960, p. 91); Marshall (1978, p. 150). Seeing that Jesus did not fit the requirements for baptism as exposed in the Baptist's address of the crowds in Mt. 3.1- 12, for instance, the above statement is confirmed.

accompanied with an anointing is unique to the priestly initiation rite in the Bible. This is the experience of Aaron, and that of Jesus. By implication, it should also be that of the followers of Jesus who are called priests and go through the baptismal rite.

What is of primary interest here is the ideas that the Bible has consistently used the priesthood concept to both literally and symbolically identify those appointed to serve God. Such practice began in the OT with the divine choice for Israel to be a nation of priests among other peoples. The priestly role and function has remained fundamentally the same in nature through all the various developmental stages of this priesthood concept in biblical history. From the historical-literal people of God, Israel, to the eschatological people of God, Christians, initiated through the coming of the Messiah, this priesthood concept is maintained.⁷⁶⁵ It is somewhere on this spectrum that the priestly messianic concept that Jesus incarnated at his baptism takes all its prophetic and actual meaning. The baptism of Jesus that marked the official commencement of such ministry lends to Christian baptism the same theological value.⁷⁶⁶ Therefore, Christian baptism functions as the initiation and consecration of the candidates into the priestly role that God expects them to fulfil as they minister to other on his behalf.

⁷⁶⁵ This point is very clear through the re-use in 1 Pet. 2.9 about the priesthood calling addressed to the children of Israel in the desert on their way to nationhood and the Promised Land in Exod. 19.5, 6. The calling is the same in 1 Pet. 2.9, but it is addressed to Christians of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds. See again the comment of D. A. Carson (2007, p. 1030) as he tries to identify the exact source of Peter's quote from the OT. The point is that in this same Petrine passage, several OT sources have been brought together to form this text that identifies Christians as God's people sharing the historical plan he had for Israel as his priests.

⁷⁶⁶ At the opening of the chapter that deals with the baptism of Jesus in White (1960, p. 90), there is this quote that says, "between the baptism of John and that of the early Church there is a gulf only to be bridged by the baptism of Jesus." As a remark on this quote, another one is found in the footnote and it makes it very clear that there is an argument in favour of seeing Christian baptism in the light of Jesus' baptism. This comment states, "Christian baptism apart from the baptism of Christ would be meaningless."

5.5 Final Conclusion of this Thesis

This research has focussed on finding the meaning of the unparalleled Matthean expression ‘to fulfil all righteousness’ as it occurs in Mt. 3.15 in the context of Jesus’ baptism. This text is part of a larger passage identified as the baptism pericope in Mt. 3.13-17. In order to accomplish the above-stated task, the methodology used was that of doing an exegetical analysis of the central text, Mt. 3.15. For this purpose, in the first chapter, I examined the different literary aspects of the Gospel of Matthew and exhibited the following contributory points. While an absence of a consensus in Matthean scholarship on the structure of this Gospel was observed, it was made evident that Matthew’s Gospel is not structurally void. This research in its initial stages pointed at the fact that the Matthean story of Jesus was a unit, specifically structured to flow as the writer connected the individual pericopes that make the grand narrative. Not only did he carefully use a number of literary devices to do this, but also, he essentially anchored this narrative in the OT through the use of formula quotations, allusions, themes, and other thematic and textual devices. As said in that chapter, ‘the introductory part of the Gospel, which contains the baptism pericope with the brief and unique dialogical element in Mt. 3.14, 15, is structurally merging with the rest of the story’. This observation determined that the premise on which to understand Mt. 3.15 is to strictly remain within the specific Matthean literary context as defined. It is also to consider the context of a sustained use of *πληρόω* and a strong focus on the fulfilment of God’s will as identifiable in the OT and demonstrated in the life of Jesus.

While it is the whole life of Jesus that Matthew viewed as a fulfilment of OT prophecies, in the second and third chapters of this research, I was primarily concerned with the analysis of Mt. 3.15 within its micro and macro context. The

procedure led to the establishment of this verse as also being within the same OT-fulfilment perspective. It was to this aim that Matthew used the word πληρῶσαι in Mt. 3.15, thus expressing that the baptism of Jesus somehow belonged to the same OT feature as the rest of his life. There is no OT text used in conjunction with πληρῶσαι in this Matthean verse, however, the use of it here implies that this baptism is as much a fulfilment of the OT as the other acts and facts of Jesus' story. The main reason to think this way was because of the association of πληρῶσαι with δικαιοσύνη in Mt. 3.15. It was demonstrated that the Matthean use of δικαιοσύνη is another peculiarity within the Gospel tradition. It was argued that Matthew consistently and exclusively employed δικαιοσύνη to mean 'the demand of God upon man'. Thus, in Mt. 3.15, Jesus would have expressed to John that it was God's requirement that he baptised him. In so doing, they were both fulfilling God's expressed will. However, finding no OT text that explicitly articulated this requirement made it necessary to examine the possibility of an OT source for Jesus' declaration that is other than the usual Matthean quotation, or other textual uses.

It was then argued in the following chapter, 4, that only one OT element would qualify as a possible source underlying Jesus' statement in Mt. 3.15. This OT source was identified as the event of the consecration or initiation of Aaron into his priestly ministry in Exodus 29, 40 and Leviticus 8. An analysis of these texts brought into light a clear typological link between the baptismal experience of Jesus and the consecration of Aaron at the inauguration of the first Israelite sanctuary. The typological nature of this link was ultimately established through the relationship between the characters involved, the practises, the roles, and the theological significance of the two distinct events. Beyond a significant common tribal origin within Israel, a link was established between Moses and John the Baptist in a more

marked way. In terms of their ministries, they both uniquely administered a non-cleansing baptism at a specific time to two specifically related individual, and for reasons that are exclusively correlated. Moses, under divine command, washed and anointed Aaron with special oil as the first high priest of Israel's Levitical priestly organisation. John the Baptist, under divine mandate, administered a non-cleansing baptism to Jesus who became the ultimate and heavenly high priest of all believers. This baptism of Jesus was followed by the special Spirit-anointing that in itself was viewed as antitypical to the oil-anointing of Aaron according to biblical analogy and symbolism that followed his baptism. In the last chapter of the research, I established the fact that on each occasion, in the OT and in the NT, both Aaron and Jesus became priestly Messiahs.

Furthermore, by virtue of their common titles, they particularly shared in the mission and role of being special intermediary figures between God and his people in the context of a priestly service. This service, in both cases, officially started with a public two-step initiatory ceremony of consecration to the priestly ministry. They both undertook the ritual through which Aaron at that occasion became ὁ ἱερεὺς ὁ χριστός and Jesus became ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὁ χριστός. This picture was painted in harmony with the biblical concept of messianism as defined in this research in its original priestly context. It is also in line with what has generally been viewed, but specifically by Matthew, as OT prophecies regarding the identifying characteristics of the Messiah, whom Jesus was clearly identified as such. This is principally according to Matthew's combined and distinct use of passages such as Isa. 42.1-7; 61.1-3; Ps. 2.7, in Mt. 3.17; 11.5; 12.18; 17.5 as identifying and identifiable markers of OT fulfilment elements in the life of Jesus.

Although the priestly anointing of Jesus here is a tangible element that should characterise and justify his messianic role and identity, commentators might not have seriously considered this aspect of biblical messianism yet.⁷⁶⁷ However, the view of the priestly anointing of Jesus here is in total theological continuity with the OT in which the whole of Matthew's story is solidly and intentionally grounded. Matthew more than others adopted this literary style through the constant use of formula quotations, but also typology. His aim was to provide this strong sense of fulfilment of the OT scripture that caused him to see and to present Jesus as the long awaited *ὁ χριστός* and *מָשִׁיחַ* of prophecy. Matthew's desire to sustain this fulfilment connection between the OT and the NT has even, in places, been counted as his own personal contribution to the art. However, while most would agree on this fact, the observation is that the baptism of Jesus had not seemed to strictly qualify for such a treatment. How could it be, in such literary context, that an essential event such as the baptism of Jesus had not specifically and definitely been identified with a particular OT template?⁷⁶⁸

⁷⁶⁷ This is not to say that there is no recognition of a parallel between the Spirit-anointing and the oil anointing of priests, prophets, and sometimes kings in the OT. It is rather the fact that the typological relationship is not established between these two anointings in the context of this peculiar baptismal act in which Jesus subjected himself to a priestly ordination service. See, Plummer (1986, p. 121).

⁷⁶⁸ See the variety of views that commentators have held on the meaning of this baptism and especially on Mt. 3.15 without ever considering that Jesus may actually be fulfilling a precise requirement that does not need to be guessed, but is expressed in a precisely outlined OT pattern. See, McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 7); Chouinard (1997), Mt. 3.13-17; Hendriksen (1973, p. 213). Some leave it as they think it is, without explanation, but only as an attempt to cover the tension between the sinlessness of Jesus and his need to go through a purification rite, see, Allen, n.d. (p. 28); Moore (1964, p. 506). However, there has been an attempts to consider this OT pattern as in the observation of Ryle (1993, pp. 15–17), but unfortunately, it is too brief and shallow to make any consequential difference in the analysis of the question. The view here does not take into consideration the main reason for, and the nature of this bathing of Jesus. In Elisha Fish (1791), the pattern is clearly identified, and the reason for the baptism of Jesus which he gives (1791, p. 14) is congruent with the argument developed in this thesis about the typological link and the meaning of Mt. 3.15 regarding the fulfilment of righteousness through the ritual bathing. Nevertheless, the link that he discussed in that essay is only confined to the bathing of Aaron and the baptism of Jesus and goes no further. The anointing, which in this thesis is the finality and the main point for the water rite is greatly neglected there. The treatment in Elisha Fish (1791, p. 10) of the typological link between the anointing of oil at the priest's ordination in Exodus 29; 40; Leviticus 8, and the descending of the Holy Spirit on Jesus is considered, but does not seem to be viewed in the specific Matthean context established in this thesis.

This state of things is inconsistent with the fact that this episode of the life of Jesus is so central to the Gospel story that it is missing in no account or tradition, and with the fact that it is significantly different in Matthew. If Matthew is so determined to place in an OT-certifying context, even some of the events of Jesus' life that could seem irrelevant, like for instance Mt. 2.15, 23, the return of Jesus from Egypt,⁷⁶⁹ how could a major element of the story such as the part that made Jesus, forever, the 'Christ' be not subject to the same OT-identifiable treatment? Surely, the baptism of Jesus would be validated by the OT in Matthew's literary style, would it not? It has been rightly argued that in this Gospel, 'every major theological emphasis... is reinforced by Old Testament support'.⁷⁷⁰ The *modus operandi* is 'the addition of segments of texts to the source Matthew employed',⁷⁷¹ and we cannot help but notice that this phenomenon occurs at the baptism of Jesus. It is noteworthy that Matthew places this characteristic addition on the lips of Jesus in the context of the first words ever spoken by him in this Gospel. It is Mt. 3.15 that validates the very action that

⁷⁶⁹ Although Matthew's reasons for the application of the OT text of Hos. 11.1 has left commentators divided on the role of the fulfilment quotation used by Matthew in there, they have proposed some interesting explanations for it. However, the question of value that this usage of the OT, in terms of the information given in Mt. 2.15, brings into the story is very debatable. See, D. Hagner (1993, pp. 36–37) who emphasises the typological link between Jesus and Moses, Jesus and Israel in the context of the exodus and the redemptive parallels between the two sets. If this is true, there is a great deal of effort on the part of Matthew to use the OT text to this effect, and it shows how it is important to him to interpret this part of the life of Jesus in the light of the OT as being fulfilled. Gundry (1982, pp. 33–34) chooses to emphasise another aspect that he thinks is the main reason for the use of the OT here. He thinks that the Sonship of Jesus is the main interest of Matthew here. As for Davies and Allison (1988, pp. 263–64), the briefness of the comment on this text shows that even if there is significance in Matthew's use of the OT here in terms of his literary plan, the certification of Jesus' Messiahship here is not indispensable, yet, Matthew makes the effort. Others have recognised the difficulty sometimes, like the case of Mt. 2.23, to identify the OT source for this fulfilment of prophecy according to Matthew, see, Menken (1998, p. 253). Yet, the most convincing argument comes from Osborne (2006, p. 333) who recognises that typology is one hermeneutical principle that Matthew uses to insure the link between the life of Jesus and the OT text when there is no direct prophetic link that can be established. Although, some have viewed the baptism of Jesus as the 'climax' of the episode that introduces and defines the ministry of the Baptist. See, McCuiston et al. (2014, p. 4); Luz (2007, p. 140). This view is important in the context of the whole Gospel, and of the importance of the baptism pericope in the whole.

⁷⁷⁰ See, Blomberg (2007, p. 1). Blomberg also remarks on the fact that Matthew's reference to the OT, in what could be considered as quotations, is overwhelmingly more significant than any other of the synoptists and the fourth Gospel. In fact he counts about fifty-five texts that could well be identified in Matthew as quotations, for about sixty-five in 'the three other canonical Gospels put together'.

⁷⁷¹ See, Blomberg (2007, p. 1).

triggered the act that made Jesus who he is known for in relation to God and human beings, 'the Christ'. It would be impossible to conceive, from a Matthean perspective, that the baptism of Jesus is without an OT basis. Mt. 3.15 in its content and literary singularity offers not an obscure relief from a historical embarrassment for the baptism of Jesus, but a real explanation in context for it.

In conclusion, in view of all the different points exposed in this research, I have argued that Matthew's unique account of the baptism of Jesus, again, in conjunction with his specific literary style indicates a different view of the nature of the event. There is enough room to interpret these elements as possibly indicating that Matthew saw the baptism of Jesus as a priestly anointing ceremony. A priestly ceremony that was the anti-type of the ceremony that took place with Moses and Aaron at the institution of the Levitical priestly ministry that would pre-figure the ministry of Jesus as the servant of the Lord. I have argued that the washing of Jesus by the Baptist, followed by the divine Spirit- anointing was a two-step initiatory ceremony that introduced Jesus into his high priestly Messiahship. This interpretation of the baptism pericope of Mt. 3.13-17 is based on the typological rapport there is with Exod. 29; 40; Lev. 8, 9, and the two-step consecration ceremony of Aaron as the first high priest of Israel.

Of all the arguments proposed to explain the meaning of Mt. 3.15, and consequently the meaning of Jesus' baptism in this context, this one is the most fitting to the OT-centred Matthean Gospel. I have argued that in baptising Jesus, John the Baptist would have fulfilled the expressed will of God according to this typological link, and so would have done Jesus by submitting to the same divine implicit requirement. In this perspective, the baptism of Jesus would be coherent with his identity and role throughout the Gospel story and according to the OT expectations,

and with his post ascension high priestly ministry explained in Hebrews. It would also be coherent with the OT and NT priesthood concept that goes beyond the Levitical order as exposed in Exod. 19.5, 6; Isa. 61.1-6, the Israelite setting as revealed in 1 Pet. 2.5, 9; Rev. 1.5, 6; 5.10; 20.6 to incorporate all those who serve God.

Lastly, the biblical practise of Christian baptism would be coherent with such perspective on the Matthean baptism of Jesus. The baptism of Jesus made him 'the Christ', the term from which the appellation, 'Christians' was derived to identify his followers. Those 'Christians' in the NT underwent the same ritual baptism in the name of Jesus Christ as an initiatory rite into Christianity. Not only would this perspective on Jesus' baptism be consistent with his priestly Messiahship and the permeating biblical priesthood concept, but also, it would be relevant to the meaning, or to aspects of the meaning of NT Christian baptism. Through this baptism, Jesus fulfilled the status of 'anointed one', and he would make of those who follow him, priestly 'anointees' through baptism in his name. Did not Christ make his followers 'a kingdom of priests'? Would there be a different meaning to one's sense of identity as a Christian if the relevance of baptism in contemporary Christianity were defined from such an understanding as one from Matthew's account of Jesus' baptism, particularly Mt. 3.15?

Bibliography

- A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*
Third Edition Based on Walter Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Worterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments Under Fruhchristlichen Litreratur, sixth edition, ed. Kurt Alan and Barbara Alan, with Victor Reichmann and on previous editions by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, University of Chicago Press. ed, 1957. . Frederick William Danker, Chicago.
- A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti Translated, Revised and Enlarged by Joseph Henry Thayer, D. D* 1889, International Bible Translators. ed, 1998.
- A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint Revised Edition Compiled by Johan Lust/Erik Eynikel Katrin Hauspie*, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. ed, 2003. Stuttgart.
- Abbott-Smith, G., 1999. *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, T & T Clark Ltd. ed. Bodmin, Cornwall.
- Abegg, M.G., 1995. The Messiah at Qumran: Are We Still Seeing Double? *Dead Sea Discov.* 2, pp. 125–144.
- Adams, M.M., 2013. 12th January: The Baptism of the Lord. *Expo. Times* 125, pp. 127–129. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0014524613507666a>
- Afulike, C.C., 2018. Luke's Portrayal of the Social Dimension in the Ministry of Jesus and the Apostles (Luke-Acts) According to Isaiah's Message of Social Justice in Chapters 61:1–2 and 58:6. *J. Relig. Theol. Inf.* 17, pp. 41–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10477845.2017.1369765>
- Albright, W.F., Mann, C.S., 1971. *Matthew*, Doubleday & Company, Inc. ed, The Anchor Bible. Garden City, New York.
- Allen, W.C., n.d. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St Matthew* by Willoughby C. Allen Third Edition, T & T Clark. ed. Edinburgh.
- Anstey, M., 2010. 9th January: The Baptism of our Lord. *Expo. Times* 122, pp. 132–134. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00145246101220030402>
- Baawobr, R.K., 2016. Opening a Narrative Programme: Luke 4.16-30 and the Black Bagr Narrative: *J. Study New Testam.* <https://doi.org/10.1177/0142064X07081544>
- Baltzer, K., 2010. The Book of Isaiah. *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 103, pp. 261–270.
- Bartlett, J.R., 1970. *J. Theol. Stud.* 21, pp. 464–466.
- Bauer, D.R. [Main author], 1988. *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel : A Study in Literary Design*. Almond, Sheffield.
- Baumgarten, A., 2004. Who Cares and Why Does It Matter? Qumran and the Essenes, Once Again ! *Dead Sea Discov.* 11, pp. 174–211. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1568517041717818>
- Beale, G K. and D A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*, Baker Academic Apollos. ed, 2007. Grand Rapid, Michigan.
- Beasley-Murray, G.R., 1999. *John*, Word Books Publisher. ed, Word Biblical Commentary. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Baker, Dallas, Texas.
- Beasley-Murray, G.R., 1962. *Baptism in the New Testament*, The Paternoster Press. ed. Australia.

- Beasley-Murray, P., 1999. Baptism For the Initiated, in: *Baptism in the New Testament and the Church Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O. White*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Sheffield, pp. 467–476.
- Begg, C.T., 2004. The Levites in Josephus. *Hebr. Union Coll. Annu.* 75, pp. 1–22.
- Bekkum, W. van, 2010. Seder Avodah for the Day of Atonement by Shelomoh Suleiman Al-Sinjari. *J. Study Jud.* 41, pp. 397–398.
<https://doi.org/10.1163/157006310X503793>
- Belleli, L., 1904. The High Priest's Procession on the Day of Atonement. *Jew. Q. Rev.* 17, pp. 163–167. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1450884>
- Bercot, D.W., 1998. Baptism. *Dict. Early Christ. Beliefs*.
- Blomberg, C.L., 2007. Matthew, in: *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. G K. Beale and D A. Carson, Grand Rapid Michigan, pp. 1–109.
- Bockmuehl, M., 2012. The baptism of Jesus as “super-sacrament” of redemption. *Theology* 115, pp. 83–91. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040571X11430891>
- Bond, H.K., 2014. Caiaphas the High Priest. *J. Study Jud. Persian Hell. Roman Period* 45, pp. 429–430.
- Bornkamm, G., Barth, G., Held, H.J., n.d. *Tradition & Interpretation in Matthew*, SCM Press. ed. 1963.
- Boughton, L.C., 2003. The Priestly Perspective of the Johanne Trial Narratives. *Rev. Biblique* 1946- 110, pp. 517–551.
- Bovon, F., 2002. *Luke 1 A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, Fortress Press. ed, Hermeneia A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Elmut Koester, Minneapolis.
- Bromiley, G.W., 1999. Baptism in the Reformed Confessions and Catechisms, in: *Baptism, the New Testament, and the Church*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 402–18.
- Brown, F., 1907. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, Clarendon Press. ed. Oxford.
- Brown, R.E., 1966. J. Starcky's Theory of Qumran Messianic Development. *Cathol. Biblic. Q.* 28, pp. 51–57.
- Burnish, R.F.G., 1999. Baptismal Preparation Under The Ministry of St John Chrysostom In Fourth Century Antioch, in: *Baptism, The New Testament and the Church Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R. E. O White*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 378–401.
- Burridge, R.A. 1955-[Main author], 1995. *What are the Gospels?: A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography*, New ed. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Burrows, E.W., 1999. Baptism In Mark And Luke, in: *Baptism, The New Testament and the Church Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O White*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 99–115.
- Burton, E., 1893. *Burton, Moods and Tenses of the New Testament Greek*. Chicago.
- Cambell, A., 1999. Dying with Christ: The Origin of the Metaphor?, in: *Baptism, the New Testament, and the Church*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield.

- Capes, D.B., Reeves, R., Richards, R.E., 2007. *Rediscovering Paul An Introduction to His World, Letters and Theology*, InterVarsity Press. ed. Downers Grove: Illinois.
- Carson, D. A. 2007. 1 Peter, in: *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. G K. Beale and D A. Carson, Grand Rapids, Michigan, pp. 1015–1044.
- Cassuto, U., 1997. *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University. ed. Jerusalem.
- Chavel, S., 2015. A Kingdom of Priests and its Earthen Altars in Exodus 19-24. *Vetus Testam.* 65, pp. 169–222. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685330-12341190>
- Chilton, B., 2002. John the Baptist: His Immersion and His Death, in: *Dimensions of Baptism Biblical and Theological Studies*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 25–44.
- Chouinard, L., 1997. *The College Press NIV Commentary Matthew*, College Press Publishing. ed. Joplin, Missouri.
- Cody, A. [Main author], 1969. *A history of Old Testament priesthood*. Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome.
- Comby, J., 1985. *How to Read Church History Volume 1 from the Beginnings to the Fifteenth Century*, SCM Press Ltd. ed. Westminster.
- Connors, A.F., 2010. Matthew 3:13–17. *Interpretation* 64, pp. 402–404. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002096431006400407>
- Cosgrave, B., 2009. Baptism Today – changes of emphasis. *The Furrow* 60, pp. 223–228.
- Crisp, O.D., 2007. Was Christ Sinless or Impeccable? Sage Publ., *Irish Theological Quarterly*, pp. 168–186.
- Cross, A.R., 1999a. One Baptism (Ephesians 4.5) A Challenge to the Church, in: *Baptism in the New Testament and the Church Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O. White*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 173–209.
- Cross, A.R., 1999b. “One Baptism” (Ephesians 4.5): A Challenge To The Church, in: *Baptism in the New Testament and the Church Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O. White*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 173–209.
- Culpepper, R.A., 2015. Fulfilment of Scripture and Jesus’ Teachings in Matthew. *Skriflig* 49, pp. 1–8.
- Davies, W.D., 1988. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew : in three volumes / by W.D. Davies and Dale C. Allison*. T & T Clark, Edinburgh.
- Davies, W.D., 1964. *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, Cambridge University Press. ed. Cambridge.
- Davies, W.D., Allison D. JR, 1991. *A Critical And Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel of Saint Matthew Commentary on Matthew VIII-XVIII*, T & T Clark International. ed, International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. London - New York.
- Davies, W.D., Allison, D.C., 1988. *Matthew I-VII A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, T & T Clark. ed, The

- International Critical Commentary. J.A Emerton, C.E.B Cranfield, G.N Stanton, Edinburgh.
- Davies, W.D., Allison, D.C.J., 1991. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew Commentary On Matthew VIII-XVIII*, T & T Clark International A continuum imprint. ed, International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. London - New York.
- Davison, James E., 1985. Anomia and the Question of Antinomian Polemic in Matthew. *Soc. Biblic. Lit., Journal of Biblical Literature* 104, pp. 617–635.
- de Jonge, M., 1974. *χρίω. Theol. Dict. New Testam.*
- Deane, J.F., 2013. Baptism. *The Furrow* 64, pp. 87–91.
- Dennert, B.C., 2015. John the Baptist and the Jewish Setting of Matthew, *Mohr Siebeck*. ed, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament. Jörg Frey, Tübingen Germany.
- Dihle, A., 1991. The Gospels and Greek Biography, in: *The Gospels and the Gospels*. Peter Stuhlmacher, pp. 361–386.
- Dozman, T., 2009. *Eerdmans Critical Commentary on Exodus*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- Duff, J., 2005. *The Elements of New Testament Greek*, Cambridge University Press. ed. Cambridge.
- Dunn, J.D.G., 1993. *The Epistle To The Galatians*, A & C Black. ed, Black's New Testament Commentary. London.
- Eaton, J.H., 1959. The Origin of the Book of Isaiah. *Vetus Testam.* 9, pp. 138–157. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1516363>
- Elisha Fish, 1791. *The baptism of Jesus Christ not to be imitated by Christians* [electronic resource] : considered and illustrated in an essay. By the Rev. Elisha Fish, of Upton. And the Rev. John Crane, of Northbridge. [Three lines of Scripture text]. Boston, printed: New-London, re-printed by T. Green, & Son, New London, Conn.
- Eubank, N., 2014. Storing up treasure with God in the heavens: celestial investments in Matthew 6:1-21. *Cathol. Biblic. Q.* 76, pp. 77–92.
- Evans, C.A., 2002. The Baptism of John in a Typological Context, in: *Dimensions of Baptism Biblical and Theological Studies*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 45–71.
- F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, 1979. *Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, The University of Chicago Press and London. ed. Chicago.
- Fenton, J.C., 1982. Review of Righteousness in Matthew and his World of Thought. (S.N.T.S. Monograph Series, 41.) *J. Theol. Stud.* 33, pp. 247–248. <https://doi.org/10.2307/23957599>
- Fides, P.S., 2002. Baptism and the Process of Christian Initiation, in: *Dimensions of Baptism Biblical and Theological Studies*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 280–303.
- Fletcher-Louis, C.H.T., 2007. Jesus as The High Priestly Messiah: Part 2. *J. Study Hist. Jesus* 5, pp. 57–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476869006074936>
- Florentino Gartia Martinez Julio Treballe Barrera; Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson, 1993. *The People of The Dead Sea Scrolls Their Writings, Beliefs and Practices*, E. J. Brill. ed. Leiden.
- Foerster, W., 1965. *Ἰησοῦς. Theol. Dict. New Testam.*

- Fowler, A. 1930-[Main author], 1982. *Kinds of Literature : An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes*. Clarendon, Oxford.
- France, R.T., 1981. The Formula-Quotations of Matthew 2 and the Problem of Communication. Camb. Univ. Press, *New Testament Studies* 27, 233–251.
- Friberg, B., Friberg, T., Miller, N.F., 2000. . *Anal. Lex. Greek New Testam.*
- G. K. Beale, Sean M. McDonough, 2007. Revelation, in: *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. G K. Beale and D A. Carson, Grand Rapid, Michigan, pp. 1081–1158.
- García Florentino Martínez and Eibert J.C. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, Brill. ed, 1997. Tigheelaar, Leiden
- Garlington, D., 2010. The “Better Righteousness”: Matthew 5.20. *Inst. Biblic. Res., Bulletin for Biblical Research* 20, pp. 479–502.
- Garry Yamasaki, 1998. *John the Baptist in Life and Death: Audience-Orientated Criticism of Matthew’s narrative*, Sheffield Academic Press. ed, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series*. Stanley E. Porter, Sheffield.
- Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* as Edited and Enlarged By The Late E. Kautzsch Professor of Theology In the University of Halle Second English Edition Revised in Accordance with the Twenty-eight German Edition (1909) by A. E. Cowley, Oxford University Press. ed, 1910. . E. Kautzsch, Oxford.
- Geza Vermes, 1962. *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English Revised and Extended Fourth Edition*, Sheffield Academic Press. ed. Sheffield.
- Gnuse, R.K., 2005. A Royal Priesthood: Literary and Intertextual Perspectives on an Image of Israel in Exodus 19.6. *Cathol. Biblic. Q.* 67, pp. 487–488.
- Gottfried R Quell, 1964. The Concept of the Law in the OT. *Theol. Dict. New Testam.*
- Gould, E.P., n.d. *A Critical Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St Mark*, T & T Clark. ed, International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Edinburgh.
- Grams, R.G., 2004. Not “Leaders” but “Little Ones” in the Father’s Kingdom: The character of discipleship in Matthew’s gospel. *Transformation* 21, pp. 114–125.
- Green, B.J., 2002. “She and Her Household Were Baptized” (Acts 16.15): Household Baptism in the Acts of the Apostles, in: *Dimensions of Baptism Biblical and Theological Studies*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 72–90.
- Green, B.J., 1999. From “John’s Baptism” to “Baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus”: The Significance of Baptism in Luke-Acts, in: *Baptism, the New Testament, and the Church*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 157–72.
- Grudem, W., 1994. *Systematic Theology An Introduction to Biblical Doctrines*, InterVarsity Press. ed. Nottingham, England.
- Grundmann, W., 1974. Χρίω - Χριστός -. *Theol. Dict. New Testam.*
- Guelich, R., 1989. *World Biblical Commentary Mark 1-8:26*, Word Books Publisher. ed, World Biblical Commentary. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Baker, Dallas, Texas.
- Guelich, R., n.d. The Gospel Genre, in: *The Gospels and the Gospels*. Peter Stuhlmacher, Grand Rapids, Michigan, pp. 173–208.
- Gundry, R., 1982. *Mathew, A Commentary on his Literary and Theological Art*, William B Eerdmans Publishing Company. ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan.

- Hagner, D., 1993. *World Biblical Commentary 33A Matthew 1-13*, Nelson Reference & Electronic. ed, Word Biblical Commentary. Colombia.
- Hagner, D.A., 1995. *Matthew 14-28*, Word Books Publisher. ed, Word Biblical Commentary. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Baker, Dalas, Texas.
- Hagner, D.A., 1993. *Matthew 1-13*, Word Books. ed, Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas.
- Harrington, D.J., 1991. *The Gospel of Matthew*, A Michael Glazier Book, The Liturgical Press. ed, Sacra Pagina Series. Daniel J Harrington, Collegeville, Minnesota.
- Harris Laird R. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Moody Press. ed, 1980., Chicago.
- Harrisville, R.A., 1980. *Romans*, Augsburg Publishing House. ed, Augsburg Commentary On The New Testament. Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- Hartman, L., 1992. Baptism, in: *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary. David Noel Freedman, New York, pp. 583–93.
- Hendriksen, W., 1978. *New Testament Commentary By William Hendriksen Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, Baker Book House. ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- Hendriksen, W., 1973. *New Testament Commentary By William Hendriksen Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew*, Baker Books House. ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- Heron, J., 1955. The Theology of Baptism. *Scott. J. Theol.* 8, pp. 36–52.
- Hietanen, M., 2010. The Gospel of Matthew as a Literary Argument. *Argumentation*, pp. 63–86.
- Hoffmeier K., J., 2005. *Ancient Israel in Sinai the Evidence for the Authenticity of the Wilderness Tradition*, Oxford University Press. ed. Oxford.
- Holladay, W.L., 2000. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament Based upon the Lexical Work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner*, Brill NV. ed. Leiden.
- Holtz Horst Robert and Gerhard Schneider *The Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, Eerdmans. ed, 1990, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Howard, J.K., 1970. *New Testament Baptism*, Pickering & Inglis Ltd. ed. London.
- Howes, L., 2013. “To refer, not to characterise”: A synchronic look at the Son-of-Man logia in the Sayings Gospel Q. *HTS Theol. Stud.* 69, 12 pages.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v69i1.1344>
- Huub van de Sandt, 2005. Two Windows on a Developing Jewish-Christian Reproof Practice: Matt 18:15-17 and Did, 15:3, in: *Matthew and the Didache, Two Documents from the Same Jewish Milieu?* Huub Van De Sandt, pp. 173–92.
- Huub Welzen, 2013. A Hermeneutic of Justice. Justice as Discernment in Matthew. *Acta Theologica*, UV/UFS, Suppl 17, pp. 89–109.
- Johannes E. Louw, Eugene A. Nida, 1988. *Greek-Engl. Lex. New Testam. Based Semantic Domains Second Ed.*
- Josephus, n.d. *Antiquities of the Jews*.
- Josephus, n.d. *War of the Jews*.
- Joüon, P.S., Muraoka, T., 2006. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico. ed, Suidisia Biblica. Roma.
- Kingsbury, J.D., 1986. *Matthew*, 2nd ed., and enl. ed. Fortress Press, Philadelphia.
- Lachs, S.T., 1987. *A Rabbinic Commentary On The New Testament: The Gospel of Matthew, Mark and Luke*, Ktav Publishing House. ed. Hobken, New Jersey.

- Lane, W.L., 1991. *Hebrew 1-8*, Word Books, Publisher. ed, Word Biblical Commentary. David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker, John D. Watts, Ralph P. Martin, Dallas, Texas.
- Leuchter, M.A., 2010. The Priesthood in Ancient Israel. *Biblic. Theol. Bull.* 40, pp. 100–110. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146107910364344>
- Liddell, H.G., Scott, R., 1869. *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 6th edition. ed. Clarendon Press.
- Liebreich, L.J., 1956. The Compilation of the Book of Isaiah. *Jew. Q. Rev.* 46, pp. 259–277. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1453218>
- Lindberg, T., 2007. What the Beatitudes Teach. *Policy Rev.* pp. 3–16.
- Liver, J., 1959. The Doctrine of the Two Messiahs in Sectarian Literature in the Time of the Second Commonwealth. *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 52, pp. 149–185.
- Longenecker, R.N., 2016. *The Epistle to the Romans*, William B. Eerdmans, Publishing Company. ed, The New International Greek Testament Commentary. I. Howard Marshall and Donald A. Hagner, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- Luz, U., 2007. *Matthew 1-7 A Commentary*, Fortress Press. ed, Hermeneia A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Helmut Koester, Mineapolis.
- Luz, U., 2001. *Matthew 8-20 A Commentary*, Fortress Press. ed, Hermeneia A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Helmut Koester, Minneapolis.
- MacArthur, J., 2004. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary 1 Peter*, Moody Publishers. ed, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary. Chicago.
- Marshall, H., 1978. *The Gospel of Luke A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The Paternoster Press, William B. Eerdmans Publishing. ed, The New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapid, Michigan.
- Marshall, H., n.d. The Meaning of the Verb “Baptize,” in: *Dimensions of Baptism Biblical and Theological Studies*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 8–24.
- McCabe, H., 1963. What is the Church?—VII: A Royal Priesthood. *Life of the Spirit* 1946-1964 18, pp. 162–174.
- McCuistion, P.R., Warner, C., Viljoen, F.P., 2014. Fulfillment of Righteousness: Historical and Ontological Perspective of Matthew 3:15. *Skriflig* 48, pp. 1–8.
- Menken, M.J.J., 1998. The Quotation from Isaiah 42:1- 4 In Matthew 12:18-21. *Bijdragen* 59, pp. 251–266. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00062278.1998.10739703>
- Metzger, B.M., 1994. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Second Edition. A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament (Fourth Revised Edition), Deutsche BibelGesellschaft United Bible Societies. ed. Stuttgart.
- Milgrom, J., 1991. *Leviticus 1-16*, Doubleday. ed, The Anchor Bible. New York.
- Mitchell, L.L., 1966. *Baptismal Anointing*, University of Notre Dame Press. ed. London.
- Monshouwer, D., 1991. The Reading of the Prophet in the Synagogue at Nazareth. *Biblica* 72, pp. 90–99.
- Moore, W., 1964. One Baptism. *New Testam. Stud.* 10, pp. 504-516
- Morgan-Wynne, J.E., 1999. References to Baptism in the Fourth Gospel, in: *Baptism in the New Testament and the Church Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O. White*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 116–135.

- Muraoka, T. 2002. *A Greek-English lexicon of the Septuagint: Chiefly of The Pentateuch and of The Twelve Prophets*. Peeters, Louvain.
- Murray, J., 1980. *Christian Baptism*, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing. ed. Phillipsburg, New Jersey.
- Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* Based on the work of Eberhard and Erwin Nestle, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. ed, n.d. . Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Calo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger 28th Edition.
- Neusner, J., 1975. The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism. *J. Am. Acad. Relig.* 43, pp. 15–26. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1460731>
- Neville, G., 2005. Sinlessness and Uncertainty in Jesus. SAGE Publ., *The Expository Times*, pp. 361–65.
- Nodet, É., 2012. Sadducéens, Sadocides, Esséniens. *Rev. Biblique* 1946- 119, pp. 186–212.
- Nolland, J., 2005. *The Gospel of Matthew A Commentary on the Greek Text*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. ed, The New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- Nolland, J., 1999. “In such a Manner it is Fitting for us to Fulfill All righteousness”: Reflection on the Place of Baptism in the Gospel of Matthew, in: *Baptism, The New Testament and the Church Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R. E. O White*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 63–80.
- Nolland, J., 1993. *Luke: 18-35-24:53*, Word Books, Publishers. ed, Word Biblical Commentary. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Baker, Dallas, Texas.
- Nolland, J., 1989. *Word Biblical Commentary Luke 1-9:20*, Word Books Publisher. ed, Word Biblical Commentary. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Baker, Dallas, Texas.
- O’Donovan, O., 2009. Prayer and Morality in the Sermon on the Mount. *Stud. Christ. Ethics* 22, pp. 21–33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0953946808100224>
- Oepke, A., 1985. , Eerdmans. ed, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Gerhard Kittel, Grand Rapids, Mich.
- Olden, M., 2011. Baptism and the Priest. *The Furrow* 62, pp. 94–103. <https://doi.org/10.2307/23046369>
- Osborne, R.G., 2006. *The Hermeneutical Spiral A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, InterVarsity Press. ed. Downers Grove: Illinois.
- O’Toole, R.F., 1995. Does Luke Also Portray Jesus As the Christ in Luke 4,16-30? *Biblica* 76, pp. 498–522.
- Overman, J.A., n.d. *Matthew’s Gospel and Formative Judaism: the Social World of the Matthean Community*, Fortress Press. ed. Minneapolis.
- Pao, D.W., Schnabel, E.J., 2007. Luke, in: *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. G K. Beale and D A. Carson, Grand Rapid, Michigan, pp. 251–414.
- Piper, R., 1983. Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought. *Scott. J. Theol.* 36, pp. 408–411.
- Plummer, A., 1986. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke*, T & T Clark. ed, ICC. London.
- Porter, S.E., Cross, A.R., 1999. Introduction: Baptism in Recent Debate, in: *Baptism, the New Testament and the Church Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O White*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament

- Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 33–39.
- Przybylski, B., 1980. *Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought*, Cambridge University Press. ed. Cambridge.
- Reynolds, N.B., 2012. Understanding Christian Baptism Through the Book of Mormon. *BYU Stud. Q.* 51, pp. 4–37. <https://doi.org/10.2307/43039857>
- Roberts, R.R., 2005. Matthew 3:1–12. *Interpretation* 59, pp. 396–398. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002096430505900407>
- Rooke, D.W., 2000. Jesus as Royal Priest: Reflections on the Interpretation of the Melchizedek Tradition in Heb 7. *Biblica* 81, pp. 81–94.
- Rooy, H.F. van, 2015. The Syriac Versions of Old Testament Quotations in Matthew. *Skriflig* 49, pp. 1–12.
- Rudolf Bultmann, 1964. Ἀφίημι. *Theol. Dict. New Testam.*
- Ryken, P., 2018. Christ-Centered Presidency: The Threefold office of Christ as a Theological Paradigm for Leading a Christian College. *Christ. Sch. Rev.* 47, pp. 107–61.
- Ryle, J.C., 1993. *The Classic Crossway Commentary Matthew Exposition Thoughts on the Gospels*, Crossway Books. ed. Wheaton, Illinois.
- Schmid, K., 2012. Genesis and Exodus as Two Formerly Independent Traditions of Origins for Ancient Israel. *Biblica* 93, pp. 187–208.
- Schneider, J., 1967. ἀπαράβατος. *Theol. Dict. New Testam.*
- Schrenk, G., 1965. Ιεράτευμα, Ιερεὺς, Αρχιερεὺς. *Theol. Dict. New Testam.*
- Schrenk, G., 1964. Δικαιοσύνη. *Theol. Dict. New Testam.*
- Schwartz, D.R., 1981. Priesthood and Priestly Descent: Josephus, “Antiquities” 10.80. *J. Theol. Stud.* 32, pp. 129–135.
- Scobie, C.H.H., 1964. *John the Baptist*, SCM Press Ltd. ed. London.
- Senior, D., 1998. *Abigdon New Testament Commentary Matthew*, Abigdon Press. ed. Nashville.
- Shrenk, G., 1964. Εὐδοκέω. *Theol. Dict. New Testam.*
- Shuler, P.L. [Main author],. *A Genre for the Gospels : the Biographical Character of Matthew*. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, Pa.
- Sim, D.C., 2011. Matthew’s Use of Mark: Did Matthew Intend to Supplement or to Replace His Primary Source? *New Testam. Stud.* 57, pp. 176–192.
- Sim, D.C., 1998. *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism*, T&T Clark. ed. Edinburgh.
- Skeener, C.S., 1993. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary New Test*, InterVarsity Press. ed. Downers Grove: Illinois.
- Smith, M., 1959. What Is Implied by the Variety of Messianic Figures? *J. Biblic. Lit.* 78, pp. 66–72. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3264402>
- Smith, M.S., 1996. The Literary Arrangement of the Priestly Redaction of Exodus: A Preliminary Investigation. *Cathol. Biblic. Q.* 58, pp. 25–50.
- Smith, R.H., 1989. *Augsburg Commentary of the New Testament Matthew*, Augsburg Publishing House. ed. Minneapolis.
- Soggin J., A., 2001. *Israel in the Biblical Period Institutions, Festivals, Ceremonies, Rituals*, T & T Clarck. ed. Edinburgh.
- Stanton, G.N. [Main author], 1992. *A Gospel for a New People : Studies in Matthew*, T & T Clark. ed. Edinburgh.
- Stanton, G., 1995. Introduction: Matthew’s Gospel in Recent Scholarship, in: *The Interpretation of Matthew*. Graham Stanton, Edinburgh, pp. 1–26.

- Steinmann, J., 1958. *Saint John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition*, Harper and Brothers. ed. New York.
- Stendahl, K., 1995. Quis et Unde? An Analysis of Matthew 1-2, in: *The Interpretation of Matthew*. Graham Stanton, Edinburgh, pp. 69–80.
- Steyn, G.J., 2011. “On Earth as it is in Heaven ...” The heavenly sanctuary motif in Hebrews 8:5 and its textual connection with the “shadowy copy” of LXX Exodus 25:40. *HTS Theol. Stud.* 67, 6 pages.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v67i1.885>
- Strong, J., 1996. *The New Strong's TM Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words*, Thomas Nelson Publishers. ed. Nashville.
- Swanson, J., 2001. *A Dictionary of Biblical Languages Greek New Testament*, Logos Research Systems, Inc. ed.
- Taylor, J.E., 1997. *The Immerser: John the Baptist Within Second Temple Judaism*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing. ed. Grand Rapid, Michigan.
- Thom, J.C., 2009. Justice in the Sermon on the Mount: An Aristotelian Reading. Brill, *Novum Testamentum* 51, pp. 314–338.
- Thrall, M.E., 1994. *A Critical Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, T & T Clark. ed, International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. London - New York.
- Timmer, D., 2008. Sinai “Revisited” again: Further Reflections on the Appropriation of Exodus 19-Numbers 10 in 1QS. *Rev. Biblique* 1946- 115, pp. 481–498.
- Tucker, G.M., 1970. *Cathol. Biblic. Q.* 32, pp. 270–272.
- VanderWeele, T. J., 2008. Some Observations Concerning the Chiastic Structure of the Gospel of Matthew. *J. Theol. Stud.* 59, pp. 669–673.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/23971066>
- Viljoen, F., 2013. Righteousness an Identity Formation in the Sermon on the Mount. *Aosis, HTS Theologiese/Theological Studies* 69.
- Viljoen, F.P., 2013. The Righteousness of Jesus and John the Baptist as Depicted by Matthew. *Skriflig* 47, pp. 1–8.
- Viljoen, F.P., 2011. The Foundational Statement in Matthew 5:17-20 on the Continuing Validity of the Law. *Skriflig* 45, pp. 385–408.
- Wagner, G., 1967. *Pauline Baptism and the pagan mysteries: the problem of the Pauline Doctrine of Baptism in Romans vi. 1-11, in the light of its Religio-historical “parallels,”* Oliver & Boyd. ed. Edinburgh.
- Wallace, D.B. [Main author], 1996. *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics : An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Mich.
- Water, R.V. de, 2016. Michael or Yhwh? Toward Identifying Melchizedek in 11Q13: *J. Study of Pseudepigrapha*.
- Watts, G., 2002. Baptism and the Hiddenness of God, in: *Dimensions of Baptism Biblical and Theological Studies*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross, Sheffield, pp. 268–279.
- Watts, R.E., 2007. Mark, in: *Commentary on the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament*. G K. Beale and D A. Carson, Grand Rapid, Michigan, pp. 111–249.
- Webb, R.L., 1991. *John the Baptizer and Prophet A Socio-Historical Study*, Sheffield Academic Press. ed, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Sheffield.

- Wet, F.W. de, Kruger, F.P., 2013. Blessed are those that hunger and thirst for righteousness: sharpening the ethical dimension of prophetic preaching in a context of corruption. *Verbum Eccles.* 34.
- White, R.E.O., 1960. *The Biblical Doctrine of Initiation*, Hodder and Stoughton. ed. London.
- Wilson, W.T., 2007. A Third form of Righteousness: The Theme and Contribution of Matthew 6.19-7.12 in the Sermon on the Mount. *New Testam. Stud.* 53, pp. 303–324.
- Yates, A.S., 1993. *Why Baptising Infants? A Study of the Biblical, Traditional and Theological Evidence*, The Canterbury Press. ed. Norwich.
- Yoon, S., 2004. *Baptism as Christian initiation: The origins and development of being united with Christ*. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- Ziesler, J., 1972. *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul A Linguistic and Theological Inquiry*, Cambridge University Press. ed, Monograph Series. Society for New Testament Studies. Cambridge.