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Disertační práce

**The Son of David in Matthew's
Gospel in the Light of the
Solomon as Exorcist Tradition**

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Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto disertační práci s názvem “The Son of David in Matthew’s Gospel in the Light of the Solomon as Exorcist Tradition” napsal samostatně a výhradně s použitím uvedených pramenů.

Souhlasím s tím, aby práce byla zveřejněna pro účely výzkumu a soukromého studia.

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Mgr. Jiří Dvořáček



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Anotace

Disertační práce „Syn Davidův v Matoušově evangeliu na pozadí tradice o Šalomounovi jako exorcistovi“ se zaměřuje na způsob užití titulu Syn Davidův v Matoušově evangeliu.

Práce vychází z předpokladu, že Matoušovo spojení mesiášského titulu Syn Davidův s uzdravováním, typický to znak Matoušovské christologie, musí být vysvětlitelné nejen z redakčního hlediska, t.j. že Matouš našel toto spojení u Marka 10,46-52 a rozšířil ho i do ostatních perikop, ale i z hlediska soudobé židovské tradice, jmenovitě tradice o Davidovu synu Šalomounovi.

V první části se proto autor této disertace snaží ukázat za pomoci exegeze nejrozličnějších židovských, gnostických a pohanských textů, že v prvním století po Kr. byl Davidův syn Šalomoun znám jako mocný exorcista a uzdravovatel a že označení Syn Davidův nemuselo tudíž být používáno pouze jako titul královského Mesiáše z Davidovské dynastie, ale užití v kontextu uzdravování či exorcismu mohlo odkazovat buď na Šalomouna, nebo na osobu, o které se věřilo, že vlastní Šalomounovy exorcistické schopnosti.

V hlavní části disertace se pak autor snaží ukázat, jak jsou královská a šalomounská tradice o Synu Davidovu spojeny a užitý v Matoušově evangeliu za účelem vytvoření obrazu uzdravujícího pokorného mesiášského krále, Syna Davidova, který ve svých uzdravováních a exorcismech převyšuje i Šalomouna, mocného exorcistu, uzdravovatele a mudrce (12,42; 9,33).

Klíčová slova

Mesiáš, Syn Davidův, Šalomoun, exorcismy, uzdravování, Matoušovo evangelium, Christologie, Nový zákon.

Summary

The dissertation “The Son of David in Matthew’s Gospel in the Light of the Solomon as Exorcist Tradition” focuses on the usage of the Son of David title in Matthew’s Gospel.

The thesis is based on the presumption that the image of the healing Son of David, as presented by Matthew, is not simply a result of Matthew’s redaction of Mark 10,46-52 but is explicable against the background of contemporary Jewish concepts – in particular in the light of the Solomon as exorcist tradition.

In the first part of the thesis, important Jewish, Gnostic and Heathen writings from first to sixth centuries C.E. concerning the Son of David are examined. On this base then it is argued that in the first century C.E. the designation Son of David could have referred not only to the triumphant royal Davidic Messiah, but – within an exorcistic and healing context – also to Solomon, a great exorcist and healer, or to a Solomon-like figure possessing exorcistic/healing powers comparable with those of Solomon.

In the second part of this thesis, Matthean Son of David texts are explored in order to show how creatively and critically Matthew used the royal messianic tradition and the Solomon as exorcist tradition for creating the image of a merciful, meek messianic healing king, the Son of David, who in his wisdom, healings and exorcisms even surpasses David’s son Solomon (12,42; 9,33), a mighty exorcist, healer and sage, shifting thus the Jewish messianic hopes from the “political” to the “human” level.

Keywords

Messiah, Son of David, Solomon, exorcisms, healings, Matthew’s Gospel, Christology, New Testament.

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Abbreviations

The abbreviations (unless secondary quotation) follow the guidelines set in Alexander, P.H., et al., eds. *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical and Early Christian Studies*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999.

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1. Introduction

1.1. The Problem

It is a well-known fact that the Davidic Messiah was not expected to heal or to perform miracles.¹ And yet already the first sight at Matthew's Gospel reveals that Matthew intentionally uses the messianic title Son of David as an appropriate² designation for Jesus within the context of his exorcistic and healing activity.

Various attempts have been made to explain this Matthean phenomenon – from claims that the connection between healing miracles and the messianic title Son of David represents a specifically Christian development unparalleled in Jewish tradition and taken over by Matthew from Mark 10,48,³ through attempts to explain it in the context of the Isaianic servant⁴ or Davidic shepherd⁵ traditions, eventually with the aid of the Hellenistic idea of Divine Man (θεῖος ἀνὴρ).⁶ However, one further “way of explaining Matthew's link of Jesus' identity as the Son of David to the miracles of healing is to relate it to certain traditions about Solomon who acts as a great exorcist.”⁷ And it is exactly this tradition and its usage in Matthew's Gospel I want to focus on.

¹ Charlesworth, “The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus,” 85-86; Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology*, 253-254; Burger, *Jesus als Davidssohn*, 44. Recently differently Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 292-296.

² Contra Gibbs, “Purpose and Pattern in Matthew's Use of the Title ‘Son of David’,” 464.

³ Burger, *Jesus als Davidssohn*, 106.

⁴ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 118-190.

⁵ Head, *Christology*, 183; Cousland, *Crowds in Matthew*, 120-122, 169-172, 185-191; Baxter, “Healing and the ‘Son of David’,” 36-50; Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 173-395; Konradt, *Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium*, 18-52.

⁶ Cf. Burger, *Jesus als Davidssohn*, 169: “Der davidische Messias zieht eine Funktion des hellenistischen θεῖος ἀνὴρ an sich.” For an overview, further literature and critique, see Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 291-292.

⁷ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 96.

1.2. A Review of Previous Research

Although the tradition of Solomon as an exorcist was known for a long time,⁸ it was omitted and not considered in the research of New Testament Christology⁹ and in attempts to explain the usage of the designation Son of David in the Synoptic Gospels,¹⁰ particularly in Matthew.¹¹

Impetus for new research of the Solomon as exorcist tradition and its importance for New Testament Christology came in 1968 from *Loren Fischer*. In his article "Can This be the Son of David?"¹² Fisher examined several Aramaic incantation bowls that mention Solomon, son of David, and his ability to exorcise demons. Fisher concluded that the designation Son of David did not have in the New Testament period only important messianic meaning, but that "at the popular level and in the context of magic, it refers to Solomon, the son of David... the great exorcist."¹³ Fisher further claimed that the cry 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' (Mark 10,47-48, paralleled in Matt 9,27; 15,22; 20,30-31) was originally "a cry of help, a cry for a great miracle worker such

⁸ Cf. Seligsohn, "Solomon in Rabbinical Literature and Legend," *JE* 11:438-444; idem, "Solomon - Apocryphal Works," *JE* 11:446-448; Salzberger, *Die Salomosage in der semitischen Literatur*; McCown, "Magical Wisdom of Solomon," 1-24; idem, *Testament of Solomon*, 48-49; Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 4:125-176; 6:277-303; Preisendanz, "Salomo," *PWSup* 8:660-704. See also Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 236, n. 7.

⁹ Cf. the absence of references to the Solomon as exorcist tradition in Hahn's, Fuller's and Cullmann's Christology. (Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology*; Fuller, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology*; Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*.)

¹⁰ Most striking is the absence of this motif in Burger's famous dissertation *Jesus als Davidssohn* for which he was rightly criticized by John P. Meier. (Meier, "From Elijah-like Prophet to Royal Davidic Messiah," 76.)

¹¹ In her review of previous research, Lidija Novakovic also noted the missing or unsatisfactory treatment of the link between the title Son of David and Jesus' healings in some important works on Matthew in general (i.e., not only what the Solomon as exorcist tradition concerns), such as: Gibbs, "Purpose and Pattern in Matthew's Use of the Title 'Son of David,'" 446-464; Suhl, "Der Davidssohn im Matthäus Evangelium," 57-81; Nolan, *The Royal Son of God*; Kingsbury, *Matthew*; idem, "The Title 'Son of David' in Matthew's Gospel," 591-602; Loader, "Son of David, Blindness, Possession, and Duality in Matthew," 570-585; Verseput, "The Role and Meaning of the 'Son of God' Title in Matthew's Gospel," 532-556; idem, "The Davidic Messiah and Matthew's Jewish Christianity," 102-116. See Novakovic, *Messiah*, 2-5.

¹² Fisher, "Can This Be the Son of David?," 82-97.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 90.

as Solomon.”¹⁴ Therefore, according to him, the people in Matt 12,23 “could be asking if Jesus were healing in the name of Solomon, or even better, if he were Solomon.”¹⁵

Shortly after Fisher, *Evald Lövestam*¹⁶ examined the usage of the title Son of David in Synoptic Gospels in the light of the Solomon as exorcist tradition, as preserved in the Testament of Solomon, *Ant.* 8,44-49, 11QApPs^a, and in the sermon of Leontios of Byzance (PG 86, 1980). He concluded, that the Solomonic exorcistic tradition was popular in Jewish as well as in Christian circles of the first century C.E. and that Matthew intended to present Jesus in this light. This can be especially seen in Matt 12,22.27.42 where Jesus’ and Solomon’s ability to exorcize demons are juxtaposed, whereas those of Jesus surpass those of Solomon (12,42). At this point Lövestam also recognized that Solomon’s exorcistic powers were seen as part of his wisdom¹⁷ and that they were used by Jewish exorcists (*Ant.* 8,44-49; Matt 12,27) of Jesus’ time.¹⁸

In an article published shortly afterwards, *Klaus Berger*¹⁹ also examined the same early Jewish texts and concluded that the Solomon as exorcist tradition originates from the wisdom traditions about Solomon. Berger observed that “Weisheit, der Titel ‘Sohn Davids’ und Herrschaft über Dämonen und Krankheit gehören daher im Salomo-Bild eng zusammen.”²⁰

“Aufgrund dieser Beobachtungen erscheint es als möglich, das Vorkommen des Titels ‘Sohn Davids’ in ntl. Heilungsberichten zu erklären. Weisheit und Herrschaft über Dämonen sind daher kein Gegensatz zur Figur des endzeitlichen Davididen, sondern diesem aufgrund der Salomo-Typologie zugeordnet.”²¹

Although Berger erred, when he attempted to reduce messianology to the category of wisdom and was therefore criticized by Duling,²² his observations

¹⁴ Ibid., 90.

¹⁵ Ibid., 90-91, cf. 89.

¹⁶ Lövestam, “Jésus fils de David chez les Synoptiques,” 97-109.

¹⁷ Ibid., 103-105.

¹⁸ Ibid., 101.

¹⁹ Berger, “Die königlichen Messiastraditionen des Neuen Testaments,” 1-44, esp. 3-9.

²⁰ Ibid., 8.

²¹ Ibid., 8.

²² Ibid., 44. For the critique, see Duling, “Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David,” 237.

about the origin of the exorcistic tradition in wisdom literature are correct (although his usage of sources is sometimes less critical and precise). Berger also stressed the titular use of the title Son of David in the Testament of Solomon and the independence of the cry βασιλεῦ Σολομῶν υἱὸς Δαυεὶδ, ἐλέησόν με τὸ γέρας in *T. Sol.* 20,1 on the New Testament.²³

One year later, *Dennis C. Duling*²⁴ tried to reconstruct the history of the Solomon as exorcist tradition and to consider its possible influence on the Gospels. After a brief analysis of 1 Kgs 5,9-14 (NRSV 4,29-34); Wis 7,15-22, 11QA^pPs^a; *L.A.B.* 60,3; *Ant.* 8,44-49; *T. Sol.* 20,1;²⁵ *b. Git.* 68a, Targum Sheni to Esther and the Aramaic incantations bowls, Duling concluded²⁶ that it is not possible "... to document with any certainty either an absolute use of, or an address, 'Son of David' in connection with exorcism or healing prior to Christianity."²⁷ Duling however admitted that even in *Pss. Sol.* 17,21 (i.e., with "classical" royal messianic expectations) "... 'Son of David' is not unambiguously a specific title."²⁸

"Thus, it would be possible to suggest that there was a convergence and/or conflict on the expectation of a Davidic descendant in a 'royal' sense with the Solomon-as-exorcist idea apart of any consideration of the title Son of David. A second alternative would be that the royal conception had become crystallized around the title and that since Solomon was a Davidic descendant, there was some correlation. In either case, if one grants the Solomon-as-exorcist conception to Palestine, a convergence or conflict could have occurred before Mark, perhaps in Judaism or Christianity."²⁹

²³ Berger, "Die königlichen Messiastraditionen des Neuen Testaments," 7: "Vieles spricht dafür, daß es sich hier nicht um eine Nachahmung, sondern um eine Parallele zu dem ntl. ἐλέησόν υἱὸς Δαυίδ handelt."

²⁴ Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 235-252.

²⁵ Duling, contrary to Berger, rejected the titular use of the designation Son of David in the pre-Christian period and in *T. Sol.* 20,1. See Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 243.

²⁶ On the base of his dating of the texts, assumed dependence of *T. Sol.* 20,1 on the New Testament tradition and distinction between titular and non-titular usage of the address 'Son of David.'

²⁷ Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 249.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 250.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 250.

At the end of his article Duling further questioned:

“Could it be that neither the full-blown royal sense nor the Solomon-as-exorcist sense is correct for Mark’s view of Son of David, but rather a less dramatic healing conception of the ‘Son of David’ in which he seeks to modify the other two alternatives in line with his suffering Servant conception? If so, the ‘royal’ and ‘Solomonic’ trajectories have converged.”³⁰

In an article published three years later, *Duling*³¹ analyzed the usage of the Son of David title in Matthew’s Gospel. He observed that while in Mark the primary activity of Jesus is that of preaching and casting out demons (Mark 1,39), in Matthew (Matt 4,23-24; 9,35; 11,4-6) it is first of all “preaching and healing in a more general sense.”³² Duling further concluded that Matthew intentionally “... removes the more elaborate description of a miracle worker’s techniques and eliminates Mark’s most manipulative miracles (Mark 7,31-7; 8,22-6; 1,23-8)”³³ letting Jesus exorcize only by word in order to identify “Jesus’ broadly based healing activity”³⁴ which “... fulfills the prophecies about healing various diseases”³⁵ (Isa 53,4; 61,1; 29,18-19; 35,5-6) on the one hand and which helps to disassociate Jesus from a manipulative wonder worker on the other.

According to Duling, “... Matthew is being cautious about portraying Jesus as an exorcist/Son of David”³⁶ and therefore he intentionally “... shifts the focus from an exorcism to a healing...”³⁷ “The Messiah of Deed in Matthew’s Gospel is primarily a Messiah who according to prophecy mercifully heals

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 252. Also in his later article, in which he stresses the therapeutic nature of Son of David in Matthew’s Gospel, Duling insist on the premise that the primary source for Matthew’s therapeutic Son of David was Mark. See Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 392-410.

³¹ Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 392-410.

³² *Ibid.*, 394.

³³ *Ibid.*, 397.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 397.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 397.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 401.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 402.

every disease and infirmity... a therapeutic Messiah.”³⁸ As such he “... is not simply the Son of David who exorcizes: that function is part of his larger healing activity”³⁹ but he is more – namely the Son of David who heals, the therapeutic Son of David.⁴⁰

Duling elaborates thus in this article the idea which he developed already in the previous one, namely “... that the healing Son of David supersedes the exorcistic Son of David.”⁴¹ This leads him to conclude that it is possible that “... Matthew has formed his Son-of-David Christology as a kind of apologetic on two fronts, the Jewish and Christian, the former represented by Tannaitic and possibly popular magical traditions, the later by Mark.”⁴²

The same year, *Morton Smith* in his study “Jesus the Magician” after researching various traditions of the first century C.E. Judaism, including the Solomon as exorcist tradition, suggested:

“Therefore it is clear that by Jesus’ time the Solomon legend had been shaped by popular stories about magicians’ powers and to some extent by knowledge of actual magicians, their practices and their perils. This illustrates the importance of magic in Jesus’ environment and helps to explain why Jesus’ powers were similarly interpreted. Moreover, that Solomon was not only a magician, but also King of Israel and son of David, may have helped some of those who thought Jesus a magician to believe that he might also be the Messiah, the promised son of David and King of Israel. Those of his followers who did think him the Messiah could easily draw on the Solomon legend to justify his dealings with demons, and to extend the story of his powers.”⁴³

A year later, *Brian M. Nolan* published his study “The Royal Son of God” in which he recognized an allusion to Solomon in Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem

³⁸ Ibid., 399.

³⁹ Ibid., 402.

⁴⁰ Cf. Ibid., 406-407, 410.

⁴¹ Duling, “Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David,” 251.

⁴² Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 409.

⁴³ Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, 79.

in Matt 21,1-17⁴⁴ and the importance of Solomon as exorcist and healer (Nolan stressed that Solomon was both – healer and exorcist)⁴⁵ tradition for the portrait of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel. According to Nolan "the appeal of the afflicted to the Son of David reflects a popular belief in the royal power over spirits. This cry, for Matthew, was testimony to the merciful Davidic Messiah, who conquers the powers of evil."⁴⁶ Nolan, however, ascribes the healing powers not only to Solomon, but also to David,⁴⁷ concluding:

"In first century Judaism, David, Solomon, and the Son of David (consequently), were admired as chosen and raised up by Yahweh, as sages who spoke on behalf of God, as mediators of grace to Israel, as endowed with the Spirit to heal, and teach, and conquer, and as Lords of the Gentiles. This image explains the prophetic teacher, healer, and Shepherd-King of the Twelve tribes, who in the power of the Spirit refashions essential Israel in Matt 3-28."⁴⁸

*David E. Aune*⁴⁹ published in 1980 a study, "Magic in Early Christianity" in which he suggested that:

"The title 'Son of David', which is embedded in two exorcism stories (Mt. 12:23; 15:22) and one healing story (Mk. 10:47-48; Mt. 9:27; 20:30f.; Lk. 18:38f) can now be understood as a possible reference to 'Solomon' and to a very considerable tradition of magic and healing which was associated with that name"⁵⁰ and that such a usage of this title provides a strong claim to historicity of Jesus' "miraculous feats of exorcism and healing."⁵¹

A significant contribution to the Solomon as exorcist debate was made by *Bruce Chilton*, who in his article "Jesus ben David: Reflections on the

⁴⁴ Nolan, *The Royal Son of God*, 181.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 215, n. 2.

⁴⁹ Aune, "Magic in Early Christianity," *ANRW* II.23.2:1507-1557.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1525-1526.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 1526.



Davidssonfrage”⁵² published in 1982, after researching the Solomon as exorcist tradition in Jewish sources (11QApPs^a; *Ant.* 8,44-49; *T. Sol.*), concluded that “... the possibility that ‘David’s son’ was known as an identification and address of Solomon in the context of exorcism cannot be excluded.”⁵³ He further examined the usage of the designation in the synoptic tradition and concluded that “... ‘David’s son’ was the address applied to Jesus at the level of tradition when he was to heal or exorcize in a manner reminiscent of Solomon.”⁵⁴ Jesus was “... addressed as David’s son because he was known as a descendant of David who was also, as Solomon was, a skilled healer.”⁵⁵ Similarly, as Berger before him, Chilton also recognized the connection between wisdom and Solomon’s healing abilities:

“Solomon’s wisdom included his healing and exorcistic craft so that this saying coheres well with the understanding that the address ‘David’s son’ was used of Jesus because he was considered to be of Davidic descent and to be possessed of powers comparable with Solomon’s.”⁵⁶

According to Chilton the original distinction between the non-titular usage of the designation David’s son in therapeutic context and the articular usage of the title “the son of David” in *Pss. Sol.* 17, is preserved in Matthew’s incomplete innovative synthesis of the address the Son of David.⁵⁷ “Matthew (21.9, 15) presents the innovative acclamation ‘the son of David’ in order to express both the therapeutic and (more especially) the messianic side of Jesus’ mission...”⁵⁸

In the same year, *H. Benedict Green* pointed out Solomon typology in Matthew’s Gospel,⁵⁹ however without any reference to the Solomon as exorcist tradition, ignoring Jesus’ healing activity as a significant reference to Solomon. Rather he emphasized Solomon’s wisdom, temple and visitation of other nations as a common factor between Jesus and Solomon. At the same time, the

⁵² Chilton, “Jesus ben David,” 88-112.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁵⁹ Green, “Solomon the Son of David in Matthaean Typology,” 227-230

Solomon as exorcist tradition was refused as “otiose”⁶⁰ for understanding Matthew’s Gospel by *Robert H. Gundry*.

Dennis C. Duling published his translation of *The Testament of Solomon*⁶¹ in 1983. In the introduction he offered a more detailed⁶² and elaborated overview of the development of the Solomon as exorcist tradition in Jewish, Christian and Islamic sources, referring to several of his previous articles. One year later *Detlev Dormeyer*⁶³ noted:

“Sohn Gottes und Messias-Erwartung sind in der frühjüdischen Tradition normalerweise nicht mit der Wundererwartung verbunden. Doch es gibt eine Ausnahme: Salomo, dem ‚Sohne Davids‘, wird von TestSal 1 und Jos Ant VIII 5 Wundertätigkeit, insbesondere Dämonenaustreibung, zugeschrieben. Das Wissen um die Wundertätigkeit und die Davidssohnschaft des vorösterlichen Jesus erlaubt in Analogie zur Salomo-Tradition die Verschmelzung der nachösterlichen Wundergeschichten mit dem ebenfalls nachösterlichen, messianisch verstandenen Sohn Gottes-Titel. Markus bringt die Reflexion auf diese Erweiterung der atl messianischen Sohn Gottes-Erwartung aber erst an späterer Stelle mit dem Davidssohn-Titel ein (10.45-52), nachdem er mehrfach zuvor von Staunen erregenden Wundertaten des ‚geheimen Sohnes Gottes‘ erzählt hat.”⁶⁴

In 1985, *Dennis C. Duling* published an article “The Eleazar Miracle and Solomon’s Magical Wisdom in Flavius Josephus’s *Antiquitates Judaicae* 8.42-49”⁶⁵ in which he focused on the key literary text of Solomonic legend – namely *Ant.* 8,42-49 – its structure, its setting in Josephus’ work and in contemporary tradition (also here Duling examines other texts concerning Solomon’s exorcistic wisdom) and its importance. He concluded that “it is probable that his (*Josephus*’) material about Solomon came from the

⁶⁰ Gundry, *Matthew*, 231. Cf. Gundry, *Mark*, 600-601 where he rejects the Solomon as exorcist tradition in favour of the Davidic shepherd tradition.

⁶¹ Duling, “*Testament of Solomon*,” *OTP* 1: 935-987.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 943-951. Cf. Duling, “Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David,” 235-252.

⁶³ Dormeyer, “*Evangelium*,” *ANRW* II.25.2:1543-1704.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 1616.

⁶⁵ Duling, “The Eleazar Miracle and Solomon’s Magical Wisdom,” 1-25.

widespread Solomon legend and was used as a redactional introduction to the Eleazar story”⁶⁶ which Josephus narrated in order to underline Solomon’s great wisdom.

In 1988, *William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison* published the first volume of their commentary on Matthew in which they stated:

“In the OT ‘Son of David’ refers, with one exception (2 Sam 13.1: Absalom), to Solomon. In addition, Solomon was later renowned as a mighty healer, exorcist, and magician (Josephus, *Ant.* 8.45-9; LAB 60.3; T. Sol. passim; *b. Git.* 68a-b; cf. Wisd 7.17-22; Sopher Ha-Razim...). In fact, ‘Solomon’ appears often in magical papyri (e.g., *PGM* 3,3040), and ‘David’s son’ is a name of power on incantation bowls.”⁶⁷

Davies and Allison concluded that “Matthew, who unlike Luke (3.31) traces the royal line through Solomon, *and who* tends to associate ‘Son of David’ with healings and exorcisms (9.27; 12.23; 15.22; 20.30, 31)... was familiar with the popular notions about Solomon and saw Jesus in their light.”⁶⁸

Consequently, they followed this thesis in their exegesis of Matt 2,11 and in the second volume of their commentary, published in 1991. Commenting on Matt 9,27, they postulated,⁶⁹ concurring with Chilton, that “pre-Matthean tradition (*namely Mark 10,47-51*) already linked Jesus’ healing ministry with his status as David’s son”⁷⁰ and that “‘David’s son’ at one time functioned not as a messianic title but to clarify Jesus’ ability to heal.”⁷¹

In 1989, *Marinus de Jonge* interpreted the connection between Jesus’ healings and his messianic identity in Mark’s Gospel not in the light of Solomon exorcist tradition, but with the aid of “the tradition about the psalm-singing David as exorcist in 1 Sam 16. 14-23”⁷² suggesting that “these traditions concerning David may have led people to interpret Jesus’ activity as

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 23. *Italics mine.*

⁶⁷ Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:157.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 157. *Italics mine.*

⁶⁹ Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:135-136.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 136. *Italics mine.*

⁷² Jonge, “Jesus, Son of David and Son of God,” 100.

prophet, teacher, exorcist and healer in terms of the activity of the expected Son of David – Messiah.”⁷³

One year later, *Ulrich Luz* published the second volume of his commentary on Matthew in which he rejected the relevance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition for Matthew’s Gospel, arguing that Solomon was known as an exorcist but not as a healer.⁷⁴ Luz also claimed (similarly as Burger before him) that the concept of the healing Son of David was developed by Matthew from Mark 10:46-52, and newly that “the primary interpretive framework for his understanding of the Davidic sonship is his own narrative, not a conception that existed prior to him in the history of the tradition.”⁷⁵

In 1991, *Martin Karrer* in his study “Der Gesalbte” in an excursus “Messias und Davidsson”⁷⁶ suggested that in Matthew’s Gospel:

“Der salomonischen wie der herrscherlichen Davidsson-Erwartung des Judentums gegenüber entsteht ein Drittes: das bild eines niedrigkeitsköniglichen Helfers/Heilers davidischer Familienherkunft, der gerade in seiner Niedrigkeit mehr ist als David und Salomo und mit Recht als ‚Herr‘ (Kirios) bezeichnet wird.”⁷⁷

Karrer, however, claimed:

“‘Der Gesalbte’ verbindet sich aufgrund Jesu Herkunft mit der davidischen Verheißung, doch nicht von der Vorstellung eines davidischen Königsgesalbten nach PsSal 17 (o.ä.) aus, vielmehr vermittelt durch die Grunddeutung Jesu nach der ohne Gesalbtenbegriff aufgenommenen Ansage Jes 7,14 ‘Gott ist mit uns’ (1,23). Wo es um sein Helfen und Heilen

⁷³ Ibid., 100. Cf. Jonge, “The Earliest Christian Use of Christos,” 334-335.

⁷⁴ Luz, *Matthäus*, 2:59-61. (English version: Luz, *Matthew*, 2:47-49.). Cf. Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 86: “Matthew did not see the healing son of David as the eschatological antitype to the first son of David, Solomon, who was known only in parts of Judaism (the Testament of Solomon) and only late as an exorcist but not as a miracle healer.”

⁷⁵ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:48. Cf. Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 86: “The only tradition from which Matthew’s image of Jesus as the healing son of David can be derived is the Christian one. Mark 10:46-52 appears to be the basic text which inspired Matthew to develop this idea.”

⁷⁶ Karrer, *Der Gesalbte*, 267-294.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 281-282.

geht, ist eine Annäherung aus Salomo-Davidssohntradition möglich (zwischen 9,27-31 und 21,15), aber ausschließlich eine Annäherung.”⁷⁸
In his later studies Karrer slightly changed his position when he claimed:

“Jesus konzentriert das Bild des idealen Davidsnachkommen (Davidssohns) auf sich. Daher wird Salomo, der einstige und nach der Geschichtserinnerung der Zeitenwende ideale ‚Sohn Davids‘ (Prov 1,1; vgl. Koh 1,1), *der medizinische Kenntnis (Weish 7,20) und Macht über die Dämonen hatte*, zur Folie Jesu.”⁷⁹ “Denn Salomos heilende Kraft leuchtet hinter der entsprechenden Anrede Jesu als Davidssohn in den Heilungserikopen auf, die die meisten Belege unseres Prädikats stellen (Mark 10,47f par; Mt 9,27; 12,22f; 15,22; 20,30). Bei Mt reichen sie bis 21,14f, der Akklamation des heilenden Jesus als ‘Sohn Davids’ im Tempel.”⁸⁰

However, Jesus, according to Karrer’s understanding of Matt 12,42, “überbietet den Typos des therapeutischen Davidssohns. Er geht in der Davidität nicht auf.”⁸¹

The next author who advocated the importance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition for the understanding of Matthew’s Gospel was *Daniel J. Harrington*. In his commentary on Matthew, published in 1991, he claimed that “the association of Solomon, the son of David, with magic and demons, becomes a major theme in portrayals of Solomon in NT times.”⁸²

“This background related to Solomon as exorcist highlights the distinctively Matthean response of the crowd: ‘Is not this the son of David?’ Matthew may well be alluding to such ideas about the Son of David and deliberately placing Jesus in line with them.”⁸³

⁷⁸ Ibid., 282.

⁷⁹ Karrer, *Jesus Christus im Neuen Testament*, 189. *Italics mine*.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 189.

⁸¹ Ibid., 189. Cf. Karrer, “Von David zu Christus,” 342-343

⁸² Harrington, *Matthew*, 186.

⁸³ Ibid., 186, cf. 291.

Harrington recognizes that Matthew presents the Son of David as a healer and further specifies his understanding of Matthew's usage of the Solomon as exorcist tradition when he says:

“Matthew has moved beyond concentration on the Son of David as an exorcist and portrayed Jesus the Son of David as one who heals many kinds of diseases and infirmities. So when the two blind men call on Jesus as the ‘Son of David,’ they bring up associations with the Solomon tradition and ask Jesus to heal their blindness.”⁸⁴

On the question ‘What kind of Son of David was Jesus?’ D. J. Harrington answers:

“From the genealogy of Jesus in Matt 1:1-17 it is clear that Son of David was an important title for Matthew and his community. But establishing genealogical descent does not exhaust Jesus' identity as the Son of David. Jesus does what Solomon (according to contemporary sources) did. He not only casts out demons but also heals every disease and infirmity. His healing ministry is directed especially to those on the margin of Jewish society: the blind, the possessed, and the Gentiles. With his concept of Jesus as the therapeutic Son of David, Matthew explained to other Jews why Jesus could associate and minister to such persons and still retain his dignity and importance as the Son of David.”⁸⁵

A year afterwards, *D.C. Duling*⁸⁶ published an article in which he examined the usage of the designation Son of David in Matthew's Gospel with the help of social scientific methods/models (ethic and macro-social model) in order

⁸⁴ Ibid., 291.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 291-292. Harrington expressed the same ideas also in an article published in the same year: Harrington, “Jesus, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham,” 185-195, esp. 191-194. Also there Harrington on p. 193 concludes: “Two problems about Jesus that Matthew's Jewish opponents could throw back concerned the people with whom Jesus associated and the source of his power. With his concept of Jesus as the exorcist-healer Son of David based on Solomon, Matthew had a ready-made explanation why Jesus associated with blind, possessed and Gentile people while still retaining his dignity and importance as the Son of David.”

⁸⁶ Duling, “Plurisignificant ‘Son of David’,” 99-116.

“to develop more socio-critically informed interpretation of Matthew’s Son of David text segments.”⁸⁷ He concluded:

“Matthew’s Son of David has all of the prerequisites for power, privilege, prestige, for ascribed honor from the rich and powerful ruling classes. However his honor is different: Jesus does not extract from the poor, crying, and needy what little they have to give; he offers them his great benefactions, his power of healing and health.”⁸⁸

In the question of the relevance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition, Duling maintained his previous position of the therapeutic Son of David.

In the same year *Ingo Broer*⁸⁹ refused, with similar position as Luz (that Solomon was known only later and only as an exorcist and not as a healer) the relevance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition for the picture of Jesus in Matthew’s Gospel and similarly as Luz and Burger before him concluded:

“Von daher ergibt sich, daß die Füllung des Davidssohn-Begriffes durch Mt im Sinne eines heilenden Wundertäter nicht aus dem Judentum abzuleiten ist, Mt hat sie vielmehr im Markus-Evangelium gefunden und weiter ausgebaut.”⁹⁰

In 1993, *Roman Hanig*⁹¹ in his article “Christus als ‘wahrer Salomo’ in der frühen Kirche” examined the image of Solomon in the Early Church, including the Solomon-Jesus typology while *Donald A. Hagner*, following Luz’s position, rejected the influence of the Solomon as exorcist tradition on Matthew’s presentation of Jesus as the Son of David as unlikely.⁹²

Also, *Graham H. Twelftree* examined the Solomonic tradition⁹³ and acknowledged its influence on the portrait of Jesus as exorcist and the

⁸⁷ Ibid., 99.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 113.

⁸⁹ Broer, “Versuch zur Christologie,” 1251-1282.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 1261.

⁹¹ Hanig, “Christus als ‘wahrer Salomo’ in der frühen Kirche,” 111-134.

⁹² Hagner, Matthew, 1:253.

⁹³ Twelftree, Jesus the Exorcist, 35-36, 38-39, 139.

messianic healer. In dealing with the question whether the messianic title the Son of David was originally connected with exorcisms, Twelftree states:

“The association of the title the Son of David with a therapeutic Messiah does seem to be a Christian innovation preserved in the Matthean tradition (Matthew 9.27; 12.33; 15.22; 20.30, 31). The innovative association of ‘Son of David’ with exorcism probably came about because, as LAB 60 adumbrates and the whole of the Testament of Solomon makes explicit, the title ‘Son of David’ was the one available messianic title that had strong healing connotations. So, in short, prior to its use in Christian circles ‘Son of David’ was not connected with the Coming One’s expected dealings with Satan and the demons and, thus, evidence in this area does not support the possibility that Jesus’ observers would have immediately responded to his exorcisms with the acclamation of Matthew 12.23.”⁹⁴

The strong healing connotations which Twelftree mentions refer to “the tradition of Solomon’s expertise in combating demons.”⁹⁵

In 1994, *Anthony J. Saldarini* proposed that the final picture of Jesus in Matthew’s Gospel comes from the combination of Matthew’s allusion to Isaiah and the Solomonic tradition:

“In some traditions, Solomon, who was the son of David, is associated with powers of healing, exorcism, magic and miracle. Thus by allusion to Scripture and popular tradition, Matthew gradually builds a picture of Jesus as an authentic healer in Israel’s tradition with access to the amplitude of divine power.”⁹⁶

That same year, *John P. Meier* argued that the connection of the miracles of healing with the title Son of David can be explained in the light of the Solomonic tradition. “By the first century A.D., King Solomon – who was the

⁹⁴ Ibid., 184.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 183.

⁹⁶ Saldarini, *Christian-Jewish Community*, 180.

only individual reigning monarch to be called Son of David in the OT – had acquired a reputation in Jewish circles as a great exorcist and healer.”⁹⁷

“It is against this Jewish background that the blind Bartimaeus’ appeal to Jesus as ‘Son of David,’ i.e., as miraculous healer, makes sense. Indeed, the combination of Jesus as wise teacher, exorcist, and healer would make the address ‘Son of David’ [= a latter-day miracle-working Solomon] natural to a fellow 1st-century Jew in need of healing.”⁹⁸

According to Meier:

“The isolated allusion to the Son of David as a Solomonic miracle worker in the Bartimaeus story is most probably not a product of Christian theology but a relict of how some Palestinian Jews with infirmities actually looked upon this particular Jewish miracle-worker and teacher of wisdom, who was believed to be of Davidic descent.”⁹⁹

Although Meier claims that the conception of Jesus, Son of David – the miracle-worker after the fashion of the miracle worker Solomon, speaks for the historicity of the Bartimaeus story in Mark 10,47-52, and that it even presents an “extremely primitive Jewish Christology”,¹⁰⁰ he denounces the further development of the Solomonic tradition in Christianity – namely in Matthew’s Gospel.¹⁰¹

Meier later changed his position on this issue and claimed that since “the Jewish tradition around the turn of the era exalted Solomon, the literal Son of David, as a great exorcist. So it is possible that the Son-of-David Christology in Matt. 12:23, connected as it is with exorcism rather than with Davidic dynastic claims, may represent early Jewish-Christian tradition or even the view of some Jews during Jesus’ ministry.”¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:689.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 689.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 690.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 690.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 690, n. 51.

¹⁰² Meier, “From Elijah-like Prophet to Royal Davidic Messiah,” 56.

Also *John M. Jones*¹⁰³ examined the usage of the title Son of David in Matthew's Gospel and came to the conclusion that "Matthew's narrative is liberating because it overturns the textuality of Davidic messianism. The new Messiah is not a nationalistic figure whose dual propose is to restore Israel and to destroy her enemies but 'is essentially a therapeutic Son of David.'"¹⁰⁴

That same year, *Dieter Trunk* published his monograph "Der messianische Heiler" in which he rejected the Solomon as exorcist tradition with the following words:

"Die Annahme, der Davidsohn-Titel sei im Mt-Ev vornehmlich auf das exorzistische Wirken Jesu zu beziehen, halte ich jedoch für wenig überzeugend. Zum einen ist mir keine Überlieferung bekannt, in der Salomo selbst einen Dämon aus einem Menschen austreibt. Zum andern wäre dann eine deutliche Anknüpfung an die Tradition von der exorzistischen Macht Salomos oder Davids zu erwarten. Dies ist jedoch nicht der Fall. In 12,23 steht ‚Sohn Davids‘ erstens in Beziehung zu einer Blindenheilung und zweitens im Kontext einer christologischen Kontroverse."¹⁰⁵

In 1995, *James H. Charlesworth*¹⁰⁶ published the study "The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus (Mark 10.47)" in which he focused on the meaning of the Bartimaeus' cry $\nu\acute{\iota}\epsilon \Delta\alpha\upsilon\iota\delta \text{ } \text{'}\text{I}\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon, \acute{\epsilon}\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon\text{ } \mu\epsilon$ (Mark 10,47) in the light of the Solomon as exorcist tradition, as preserved in the Testament of Solomon and in Aramaic incantation bowls. He recognized the close connection between demons and illness in the Testament of Solomon and concluded:

"While Solomon is not hailed as a 'healer', it is unrepresentative of the language and world-view of the traditions in the Testament of Solomon to conclude that he was only an exorcist and not a healer. It is thus conceivable that Solomon was considered not only an exorcist but also a healer."¹⁰⁷

On the address of Matthew 12,22-23, Charlesworth noted:

¹⁰³ Jones, "Subverting the Textuality of Davidic Messianism," 256-272.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 271.

¹⁰⁵ Trunk, *Der messianische Heiler*, 63.

¹⁰⁶ Charlesworth, "The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus," 72-87.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 82.

“Matthew’s text will not allow us to conclude that the crowd thought Jesus was to be seen in terms of Solomon; but, it may indicate that ‘the Son of David’ as healer and one who could exorcize a blind man and enable him to see was a concept accepted as possible by first-century Palestinian Jews.”¹⁰⁸ And finally, after the analysis of Mark 10,47 Charlesworth concluded that “the most probable explanation of Bartimaeus’ *ὄψις Δαυὶδ* is some Solomonic denotation.”¹⁰⁹ Id est, “... Bartimaeus called to Jesus, hailing him as one who like Solomon possessed miraculous powers of healing.”¹¹⁰

Brent Kinman’s 1995 study “Jesus’ Entry into Jerusalem” singled out the importance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition for Luke’s Gospel.¹¹¹ Examining the pre-gospel traditions of the designation Son of David, Kinman concluded:

“Political expectations connected with a coming ‘son of David’ were dominant in the Old Testament and intertestamental period. There was, in addition, a developing tradition about the wisdom, healing and exorcistic prowess of one particular ‘son of David’ Solomon. This does not mean that the newer traditions replaced the older ones, but it may suggest that the implications of what it meant to be a ‘son of David’ were altered. These traditions formed part of the background to the third Gospel.”¹¹²

Kinman further claimed:

“There also existed a developing tradition of Solomon, the son of David, as wise man, healer and exorcist. Hence, while the dominance of political expectations in connection with the appellation ‘son of David’ must be acknowledged, it is possible that the Lukan application of the title ‘son of David’ to Jesus would have been comprehensible, in part, on the basis of the developing Solomon tradition. It is not intended to suggest that political

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 84.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 87.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 87.

¹¹¹ Kinman, *Jesus’ Entry into Jerusalem*, 70-73, 77, 79-80, 101-103, esp. 109-113, 121-122, 176.

¹¹² Ibid., 73.

connotations are absent in the developing traditions about Solomon. Rather, those connotations are less emphasized.”¹¹³

According to Kinman:

“Four elements in Lukan entry narrative (and its context) point to connection with Solomon. (The first two of these are also present in Mark.) First, Jesus accepts the title ‘son of David’ (18:35-36). Inasmuch as Solomon was the first and best-known of David’s sons and the title comes from the lips of a blind man who is subsequently healed (perhaps calling to mind the Solomon-as-healer traditions), links to Solomon may legitimately be seen. Secondly, Jesus’ entry (19:28-40) is seen to be orchestrated in much the same way as Solomon’s was. Thirdly, Luke’s use of the verb ἐπιβιβάζω (19:35) has its parallel in 1 Kings 1 where Solomon is seated upon his royal animal. Finally, the acclamation of the disciples (19:38) mentions the term ‘king’ specifically – another feature shared with the Solomon enthronement narrative.”¹¹⁴

Besides, Kinman sees further links between Jesus and Solomon in the motif of wisdom – present in the conscious echo of Luke 2,7.12 of Wis 7,4-5 and in Luke 11,31, in the peaceful nature of Solomon’s reign, etc.¹¹⁵ Kinman however warns:

“It would be wrong to claim that ‘Jesus, a king like Solomon’ is a central feature of the Lukan characterisation of Jesus or a dominant motif in the third Gospel; no such claim is made here. It is suggested however, that some hints of the characterisation of Jesus as like Solomon in the matter of the triumphal entry (1) *would* be consistent with the Lukan habit of using Old Testament figures as antitypes for Jesus and (2) *could* be convenient for Luke’s theological and political apologetics.”¹¹⁶

Contrary to Kinman, *Mark L. Strauss* claimed that on the background of Psalm 72:

¹¹³ Ibid., 77.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 110.

¹¹⁵ See *ibid.*, 111-113.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 113.

“The cry for mercy by Bartimaeus (*Mark 10,47*) hardly seems ‘strange’ when seen in this light. In addition, as we have seen, the king was expected to have extraordinary and supernatural powers and abilities by virtue of his Spirit-endowment. Finally, there appears to have been a general expectation for healing associated with the messianic period (cf. *Isa. 29.18-19; 35.5-6*). Together these arguments render the request for healing at least plausible in a Palestinian context. This also makes it unnecessary to appeal to traditions supposedly relating Jesus to a Solomon-like (= ‘son of David’) healer or exorcist. Though such traditions may indeed have exerted an influence on the Jesus-tradition, the blind man’s cry for mercy is not incompatible with expectations for the coming Davidic king; and *Pss. Sol. 17.21* confirms that ‘son of David’ was used for this figure in some Jewish circles.”¹¹⁷

Craig E. Evans in his study “Jesus and His Contemporaries” focused, amongst other matters, on the Solomon as exorcist tradition¹¹⁸ and claimed that “these healing and exorcism traditions may have an important bearing on Jesus’ ministry and self-understanding.”¹¹⁹ Evans demonstrated the relevance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition in a brief analysis of *Matt 12,22-45* concluding:

“When Jesus healed a demonized man the crowd thought of him as the son of David, i.e., one like Solomon. This is evidence of the close association of exorcism and Solomon. It may also indicate that a messianic figure should possess the powers of David’s famous son. The religious leaders, however, cast doubt on this inference by suggesting that Jesus is in league with Satan himself (Beelzebul). Jesus replies pointing out how this is illogical. His reference to the exorcisms of their ‘sons’ (as opposed to David’s ‘son’?) and the demons that could return may suggest that Jesus did not think that these exorcisms were entirely successful. In other words, they were not up to standards associated with Solomon, the son of David. Nor were they, by

¹¹⁷ Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts*, 69-70. *Italics mine.*

¹¹⁸ Evans, *Jesus and His Contemporaries*, 236-241.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 240

implication, up to the standards of Jesus who was one 'greater than Solomon.'"120

In 1996, *Stephen H. Smith* analyzed the function of the Son of David tradition in Mark's Gospel¹²¹ concluding:

"It appears that long before the time of Mark's Gospel a Solomon-as-exorcist tradition had already been absorbed into Christian theology. Mark 10,47-48 probably represents this tradition at an early stage of its development in the Church."¹²²

The tradition is far more extensive in Matthean circles "and could there be indicative of Palestinian community of c. AD 80-90."¹²³ According to Smith "... it is Mark who first attempts to relate the therapeutic to the purely messianic notion of Son of David as means of defusing the political impact of the term."¹²⁴

The same year *Jürgen Becker*, as Berger before him, pointed to the connection between Solomon's wisdom and his ability to exorcize¹²⁵ and *Celia M. Deutsch* interpreted in her study "Lady Wisdom, Jesus, and the Sages" the usage of the Solomon as exorcist tradition in Matthew's Gospel in the light of wisdom traditions. Deutsch postulated that "... in many circles in the Second Temple and tannaitic eras, prophecy, healing, and exorcism were considered to be related to the possession of wisdom and the function of teaching"¹²⁶ and that "some of the sages of the tannaitic era are described as wonder workers."¹²⁷ Deutsch believes that in Matthew's Gospel the wonder worker Jesus, who has been earlier identified with Wisdom¹²⁸ (Matt 11,19), is portrayed in similar way – i.e., as the Son of David, who "exorcises in his capacity as the sage

¹²⁰ Ibid., 241. Cf. *ibid.*, 308: "Accordingly, in healing the demonized, Jesus may have been understood as a Solomon-like figure and, as such, as a 'son of David.'"

¹²¹ Smith, "The Son of David Tradition in Mark's Gospel," 523-539.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 538.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 538.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 539.

¹²⁵ Becker, *Jesus von Nazaret*, 245.

¹²⁶ Deutsch, *Lady Wisdom, Jesus, and the Sages*, 84.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹²⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, 61-63, including the comparison between Jesus and Solomon.

greater than Solomon, himself known as healer and exorcist, and that activity calls people to repentance.”¹²⁹ He is “... the Coming One (11:4-6), Son of David (12:22-30), Wisdom (11:19), and Servant (12:15-21). And his words, his teaching, show him to be Son of Man (12:8) and sage (11:28-30; 12:1-8, 9-14; 13).”¹³⁰

In 1997, *Evert-Jan Vledder* in his commentary on Matt 9,27-31 followed Chilton and Davies and Allison and claimed that when Matthew lets the two blind men in Matt 9,27 address Jesus ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὸς Δαυίδ he “takes up an old tradition” in order to give legitimacy to Jesus’ position.¹³¹

“Not only was Jesus seen as a descendant of David (thus son of David; cf. Matt. 1.1), and therefore having the ascribed honour, he was also essentially the therapeutic son of David. Jesus heals as David’s son. Davies and Allison, drawing from the articles of Duling and Chilton, say that ben David is always used in the Old Testament with reference to Solomon, who was later renowned as a mighty healer, exorcist, and magician. Matthew knew the Jewish legends regarding Solomon’s power and probably intended to present Jesus in the same light. In this way Jesus was not only descended from David, he was, like Solomon, a skilled healer.”¹³²

In the same year, *Peter M. Head*¹³³ rejected the Solomon as exorcist tradition as unable to explain Jesus’ healing ministry in Matthew arguing:

“First, in the literature mentioned earlier Solomon is always identified by name, never solely as ‘Son of David’. Secondly, in the just mentioned passage in Matthew 12.42 it is Solomon’s wisdom rather than his healing or exorcistic reputation that is specified. Thirdly, as already noted, Matthew’s introduction clearly identifies ‘Son of David’ as a messianic title. Fourthly, it is likely that the connection between ‘Son of David’ and Jesus’ healing ministry can be explained along more straightforward lines.”¹³⁴

¹²⁹ Ibid., 85.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 47.

¹³¹ Vledder, *Conflict in the Miracle Stories*, 220.

¹³² Ibid., 219.

¹³³ Head, *Christology*, 180-186.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 183.

With the “more straightforward lines” Head means Isaiah’s servant and Ezekiel’s shepherd tradition.

In 1999, *Craig S. Keener* in his comment on Matthew 9,27-31 found the associations of Jesus with the Solomon as exorcist tradition “reasonable but probably not what Matthew’s audience would first assume,”¹³⁵ and *Kim Paffenroth*,¹³⁶ partially following Duling, concluded that Jesus’ activity in Matthew’s Gospel is primarily that of healing and teaching.¹³⁷ Rather than seeing the connection between the title Son of David and healing in the Solomon as exorcist tradition Paffenroth argued:

“The Son of David as healer is contrasted, not compared, with his father David: David was a powerful warrior who killed the figuratively blind and lame and excluded them from his ‘house’; his son Jesus is a powerful healer who cures the literally blind and lame within his ‘house’, the temple.”¹³⁸

According to Paffenroth, Jesus in his healings does not surpass Solomon, “but Davidic persons and institutions.”¹³⁹

“Jesus, the Son of David, can do what his father could not, save his dying children, both within and outside Israel... It is not that Matthew shows Jesus to be more than the Son of David, but instead that Matthew shows Jesus to be the Son of David who is more than David. Matthew depicts Jesus as the Christ, the uniquely anointed Son of David, who is uniquely capable of healing.”¹⁴⁰

Warren Carter was the first, and regrettably the last scholar, who in his commentary on Matthew, published in the year 2000, interpreted almost all relevant Matthean passages (Matt 1,1; 9,27; 12,22-24; 12,42; 15,22; 20,30-31;

¹³⁵ Keener, Matthew, 306.

¹³⁶ Paffenroth, “Jesus as Anointed and Healing Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew,” 547-554.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 547-551.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 553.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 553.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 553.

21,6-7; 21,9; 21,14-16; 22,41-45)¹⁴¹ in the light of the Solomon as exorcist and healer tradition. He did so also in his later work where he stressed:

“The second ‘son of David’ tradition evoked by 1.1 and elaborated in the gospel’s healing and exorcism scenes makes much sense. The Septuagint refers to a number of sons of David, but most commonly Solomon is identified as David’s son. Numerous traditions depict David’s son Solomon as a miracle-worker and exorcist with control over demonic activity. It is in the context of healing and exorcisms of disease-causing demons that Matthew’s Jesus is most often identified as ‘son of David’ by the poor and desperate (9.27; 12.23; 15.22; 20.30, 31). Jesus’ healings/exorcism are presented as demonstrations of God’s reign, the in-breaking of God’s rule over all that resists God’s purposes – in this instance Satan (12.22-32).”¹⁴²

Two years after (2002), *Eric Sorensen* in his study “Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament and Early Christianity” only briefly noted that “the two Matthean passages (12,22-24; 15,21-29) could well be a reference to Jesus’ activity in keeping with the tradition of Solomon as the exorcist par excellence rather than to messiahship,”¹⁴³ and *Glenna S. Jackson*¹⁴⁴ handled the Solomonic tradition with a single note, whereas *Pablo A. Torijano* published a detailed study “Solomon the Esoteric King” in which he examined various traditions about Solomon – including the Solomon as exorcist and healer tradition as preserved in Jewish, Christian and pagan writings, amulets, incantations and magical bowls.¹⁴⁵

Torijano demonstrated that “the traditions that contained information about Solomon and the demons were quite common as early as the second century BCE”¹⁴⁶ and that “such traditions enjoyed considerable popularity in a period extending from the first century CE to the eighth CE, when they undergo

¹⁴¹ Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 57; 227-228; 271-272; 277-278; 322; 408-409; 420-421; 446-448.

¹⁴² Cf. Carter, “Matthean Christology in Roman Imperial Key,” 162.

¹⁴³ Sorensen, *Possession and Exorcism*, 139, n. 127.

¹⁴⁴ Jackson, ‘Have Mercy on Me,’ 88, n. 120.

¹⁴⁵ Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 41-128.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 86.

further development with the addition of folkloristic elements that diverge from the source tradition about Solomon and the demons.”¹⁴⁷

The basis for the formation of the Solomonic tradition of exorcism was according to Torijano probably “the Hellenistic royal ideology, with its interest in the extraordinary abilities and power of the king, regarded as an individual and with a close relationship to the divine... combined with some attributes taken from the figure of the divine man (θεῖος ἄνθρωπος) who in virtue of his superior intellect could rule the spiritual world...”¹⁴⁸

Torijano further suggested that “in the New Testament the messianic figure of Jesus has power over demons and it is probable that this power is modelled on an exorcistic conception of Solomon, the esoteric ‘Son of David’.”¹⁴⁹ After a brief analysis of several NT texts he concluded:

“If the title ‘Son of David,’ with specific exorcistic characteristics, was transferred from Solomon to Jesus, then we could think that the portrayal of Solomon as a healer/exorcist occurred at least as early as the first century C.E. This would suppose the existence of a Jewish tradition in a Semitic garb and setting that portrayed Solomon as more than a healer, at least when characterized as the ‘Son of David.’ Such a tradition would not differentiate between the healing and exorcistic aspects of the character, because they had been completely merged.”¹⁵⁰

In the same year, *J. Robert C. Cousland* published his study “The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew” in which he briefly examined the Solomon as exorcist tradition,¹⁵¹ which he however rejected in favour of the Davidic shepherd/servant tradition as presented in Ezekiel 34,¹⁵² arguing that Matthew deliberately disassociates Jesus from manipulative healing techniques which, according to Cousland, were “so characteristic of Solomon.”¹⁵³

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 87.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 86.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 111.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 117.

¹⁵¹ Cousland, *Crowds in Matthew*, 184-191.

¹⁵² On the shepherd motif, see *ibid.*, 120-122, 169-172, 185-191.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 187.

In the year 2003, *Lidija Novakovic* published her study of Jesus as the Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew in which she provided not only a brief review of previous research, but also a solid overview of the development of the Solomon as exorcist tradition in Jewish literature.¹⁵⁴ Novakovic however rejected the relevance (or at least a positive one)¹⁵⁵ of the Solomon as exorcist tradition for Matthew's portrait of Jesus as the healing Davidic Messiah in favour of her Isaianic servant hypothesis.¹⁵⁶ She argued that:

"Matthew's presentation of Jesus as the Son of David is lacking all the elements that are constitutive for these (*Solomonic*) traditions. He never directly confronts a demon, he does not possess a secret knowledge of exorcism, he does not have a seal-ring, and he is addressed as the 'Son of David' in a titular sense."¹⁵⁷

According to Novakovic, "it seems that Matthew deliberately wished to dissociate Jesus' miraculous healings from the exorcistic connotations"¹⁵⁸ by turning Marks exorcisms into healings. Novakovic further questioned the usage of the term Son of David as a denotation to Solomon redivivus claiming:

"The ability to heal by exorcising demons with the help of certain techniques left over from Solomon does not qualify a person to bear the title 'Son of David.' Or the opposite, to call someone 'Son of David' does not necessarily imply that this person is able to exorcise demons in the manner of Solomon."¹⁵⁹

However even Novakovic admits:

"On the other hand, the Jewish texts demonstrate the connection between certain types of exorcisms and the traditions about Solomon's great wisdom,

¹⁵⁴ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 96-103.

¹⁵⁵ Novakovic writes: "Matthew, even if he might have been fairly familiar with such popular expectations, takes pains not to associate Jesus with but to dissociate him from these traditions." Novakovic, *Messiah*, 122-123.

¹⁵⁶ On the motif of the Suffering Servant in Matthew, see esp. *ibid.*, 118-190. Novakovic claims that Matthew quotes Isa 53,4; 35,4-6; 42,1-4; 61,1, which he understands messianically, in order to explain Jesus' healing ministry and to demonstrate a direct link between his healings and messiahship. For a brief summary of Novakovic's position and its critique, see Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 286-288.

¹⁵⁷ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 187, cf. 103-109. *Italics mine.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 104.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 106-107.

knowledge of nature, and authority over demons. It is thus quite possible that Jesus' massive exorcistic activity could have given rise to certain associations with Solomon, which, as Charlesworth has argued, might have been prominent even in some Christian circles. Matthew's addition of the title to the episode which directly leads into the Beelzebul controversy probably supports this conjecture."¹⁶⁰

Thus she concludes: "Matthew's 'Son of David' Christology could have functioned, as Duling suggests, as 'a way of neutralizing any popular Solomon-as-exorcist tradition, if Matthew knew about it.'"¹⁶¹

In 2004, *Roland Deines* in an excursus "Der Davidsson als Heiler und Exorzist,"¹⁶² interpreted the figure of Jesus as healing Son of David in Matthew's Gospel in the light of Solomon as exorcist, Davidic shepherd and Isaianic servant tradition.

In the same year, *Merrill P. Miller* in a single sentence refused the relevance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition for Matthew's Gospel¹⁶³ while *Clinton Wahlen* accepted it as possible explanation of "the musings of the crowd that perhaps Jesus is 'the Son of David' (Matt. 12.23)."¹⁶⁴

In the year 2006, *Young S. Chae* published his study "Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd" in which he interpreted Matthew's portrayal of Jesus as the healing Son of David, solely in the light of the Davidic shepherd tradition (which he traces from Ezek 34-37, Mic 2-5, Zech 9-14 through the Pseudepigrapha to Matthew); rejecting all other possible options such as the Solomon as exorcist tradition,¹⁶⁵ Isaianic servant tradition (as held by Novakovic),¹⁶⁶ or the Divine Man tradition.¹⁶⁷ Chae argued that "the name Solomon might be associated with wisdom but not with healing in Matthew's

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 107.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 109. Cf. Duling, "Therapeutic Son of David," 409.

¹⁶² Deines, *Die Gerechtigkeit der Tora im Reich des Messias*, 479-484.

¹⁶³ Miller, "The Problem of the Origins of a Messianic Conception of Jesus," 319.

¹⁶⁴ Wahlen, *Jesus and the Impurity of Spirits in the Synoptic Gospels*, 123.

¹⁶⁵ Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 288-291.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 286-288.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 291-292.

Gospel (12:42; cf. 1:6; 6:29)”¹⁶⁸ and that Solomon was known only “as an exorcist and not as a healer per se.”¹⁶⁹

Wayne Baxter in his article “Healing and the ‘Son of David’: Matthew’s Warrant,”¹⁷⁰ as *Head*,¹⁷¹ *Cousland*,¹⁷² and *Chae*¹⁷³ before him, interpreted Jesus’ healing activity in the light of the Davidic shepherd tradition (Ezekiel 34). As a result, he refused the Solomon as exorcist tradition¹⁷⁴ arguing that in Matthew’s Gospel Jesus, because of his miraculous powers, was identified by the Jews and by King Herod as “one of the prophets” (Matt 16,13-14; 14,1-2) and not as Solomon.

“Second, when Jesus does draw a comparison between Solomon and himself, it is not miraculous powers that are compared but wisdom (Matt. 12:42). Third, the tension in Psalm 110 between ‘Son of David’ and ‘Lord’ implies a unique relationship between the Son of David figure and God that would preclude Solomon. And fourth, when the crowds begin to wonder if Jesus is ‘the Son of David’ after he healed the blind and dumb demoniac, the Pharisees attempt to quell any enthusiasm by attributing his power to ‘Beelzebul the ruler of demons’ (12:22-24). If ‘Beelzebul’ is best understood as ‘master of the house’ then ‘Son of David,’ which parallels ‘Beelzebul,’ would best correspond to King David, the founder and head of the house of David rather than his son Solomon.”¹⁷⁵

In the same year, *Eve-Marie Becker* considered the influence of the Solomon as exorcist tradition on Mark’s Gospel (Mark 10,47-48 and 12,35-37), alluding to previous works on this issue,¹⁷⁶ similarly as *Peter*

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 289.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 289; cf. 319.

¹⁷⁰ *Baxter*, “Healing and the ‘Son of David,’” 36-50.

¹⁷¹ *Head*, *Christology*, 180-186.

¹⁷² *Cousland*, *Crowds in Matthew*, 120-122, 169-172, 185-191.

¹⁷³ *Chae*, *Davidic Shepherd*,

¹⁷⁴ *Baxter*, “Healing and the ‘Son of David,’” 47-48.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁷⁶ *Becker*, *Das Markus-Evangelium im Rahmen antiker Historiographie*, 275-280, 394.

Fiedler re-stressed the influence of the Solomonic tradition on Matt 9,27 in his commentary on Matthew's Gospel,¹⁷⁷ published in the same year.

Finally in year 2007, *Matthias Konradt* in the chapter "Jesus als davidisch-messianischer Hirte Israels"¹⁷⁸ (focusing primarily on the Davidic shepherd motif in Matthew's Gospel) in a single note provided a short overview of the history of the Solomon as exorcist tradition, including a short but precise review of previous research.¹⁷⁹ Konradt's own position is following:

"Im Blick auf die matthäische Vorstellung vom heilenden Davidssohn ist sodann anzumerken, dass jedes spezifische Kolorit salomonischer Heilungspraktik fehlt. Überhaupt hat Matthäus den Aspekt des Austreibens von Dämonen eher der allgemeineren Rede vom Heilen Jesu untergeordnet. Dass Matthäus sich also von der Vorstellung von Salomo als Exorzisten inspirieren ließ, muss als unwahrscheinlich gelten."¹⁸⁰

As it can be seen, the lively quadragenarian discussion regarding the Solomon as exorcist tradition has divided scholars into two camps. Fisher, Lövestam, Berger, Chilton, Charlesworth, Davies and Allison, etc., support the relevance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition and have argued that in the first century C.E. Solomon, son of David was known as a mighty exorcist (and healer), whose powers could be used by other exorcists, and that Jesus' portrayal in the Synoptics may have been (at least partly) influenced by this tradition.

Their main argument lay in the similarity of the context in which Mark and Matthew use the designation Son of David (referring in the Old Testament to Solomon) – namely almost exclusively within the context of pleas for exorcism/healing. Their further argument was that the question μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς Δαυίδ; placed on the lips of the crowds (Matt 12,23) who witnessed Jesus' exorcism, makes more sense on the background of tradition about David's son Solomon, the mighty exorcist, as does the juxtaposition of

¹⁷⁷ Fiedler, *Matthäusevangelium*, 222.

¹⁷⁸ Konradt, *Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium*, 18-52.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 43, n. 145.

Jesus' and Solomon's wisdom, which according to the Solomonic tradition included the ability to exorcize demons, in Matt 12,42. Some scholars even argued, that the cry of mercy connected with the designation Son of David was originally "a cry of help, a cry for a great miracle worker such as Solomon"¹⁸¹ and that such an usage of the address υἱὸς Δαυίδ provides a strong claim to the historicity of Jesus' "miraculous feasts of exorcism and healing"¹⁸² and may thus go back to Jesus' lifetime (Meier).

The opponents repeatedly argued that Solomon was only later known as an exorcist, but not as a healer, and thus the Solomon as exorcist tradition is not relevant for interpretation of Matthew's Gospel (e.g., Luz, Chae, Broer). It has also often been argued that Matthew's healing Son of David is simply a concept taken over by Matthew from Mark 10,46-52, which has no (or little) connection to contemporary Jewish traditions (Luz, Burger, Broer).

Other common prevalent objections were that Matthew deliberately disassociates Jesus from manipulative healing techniques (Chae, Duling, Cousland, Novakovic) which, according to Cousland, were "so characteristic of Solomon;"¹⁸³ that the designation Son of David is in Matthew's Gospel used (solely) as a messianic title in an absolute sense (unlike the designation Solomon, son of David in the Solomon as exorcist tradition). Further, when in Matt 12,42 "Jesus does draw a comparison between Solomon and himself, it is not miraculous powers that are compared but wisdom;"¹⁸⁴ and that *T. Sol.* 20,1 does not represent an independent tradition on the New Testament (Duling).

1.3. The Thesis

Influenced by Duling¹⁸⁵ and Luz,¹⁸⁶ I agree with their observation that the Son of David in Matthew's Gospel is portrayed primarily as a healer (in six of nine

¹⁸¹ Fisher, "Can This Be the Son of David?," 90.

¹⁸² Aune, D.E. "Magic in Early Christianity," *ANRW* II.23.2:1526.

¹⁸³ Cousland, *Crowds in Matthew*, 187.

¹⁸⁴ Baxter, "Healing and the 'Son of David'," 47. Cf. Head, *Christology*, 183.

¹⁸⁵ Duling, "Therapeutic Son of David," 392-410.

¹⁸⁶ Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 83-88.

occurrences the designation Son of David is used in miracle healing stories) who acts on behalf of his people. Contrary to Luz,¹⁸⁷ I do not consider the Son of David healer tradition as simply derived from Mark 10,46-52, so that Matthew only would have enhanced the one reference, which he found in Mark, and inserted the address ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὸς Δαυίδ or only the title υἱὸς Δαυίδ into other healing or controversy stories (Matt 9,27-31; 12,22-24; 15,21-28; 20,29-34; 21,9.14-16), without any linking to already existing Jewish traditions. Even if one would accept Luz's suggestion that Matthew's healing Son of David is simply taken from Mark, the question of why Mark's Bartimaeus calls υἱὲ Δαυίδ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με when asking for healing remains unanswered. Why should Matthew use the concept of the healing Son of David if there was not a close Jewish tradition which already linked the healing and exorcism with son of David and which he could have used?

Since it is Matthew's obvious tendency to present Jesus, the messianic Son of David, as the true fulfiller of Israel's Scriptures and traditions, I find it problematic to assume that his resulting portrayal of Jesus as the healing Son of David represents a distinctive Christian development that is far removed from any contemporary Jewish traditions and that "Matthew's portrait of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah obtained nothing from Palestinian traditions but drew entirely from Mark's presentation and a few Hellenistic-Jewish traditions," as argued by Burger.¹⁸⁸

To the contrary – it appears likely to me that Matthew was well aware of Jewish messianic as well as non messianic traditions concerning the Son of David and that he reinterpreted them, put them into a new theological context and incorporated them into his work. His purpose was to show that Jesus was the true Messiah of Israel, the Son of David, who – like David's son Solomon, possessed healing and exorcistic powers and was mercifully ready to use them on behalf of his people. In order to accomplish this goal, Matthew had to use existing ideas and traditions, not uncritically, as I will demonstrate, but he

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 86; Luz, Matthew, 2:47-49.

¹⁸⁸ Burger, Jesus als Davidssohn, 106. The quotation is Strauss' summary of Burger's position. Cf. Strauss, The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts, 17. For Strauss' critique of Burger, see *ibid.*, 18-20.

could not create these traditions ad hoc ex nihilo or formulate them as brand new ones with no connection to contemporary Jewish expectations and traditions. If he would have done this, he could never have been convincing or understandable to his Jewish readers. This does not mean that Matthew was not a creative author and theologian developing his own theological concepts, nevertheless, these concepts can not be separated from their Jewish background. I am aware of the fact that Matthew's direct literary dependence on other sources (except Q and Mark) can not be proven; however, this does not deny a possibility of ideological dependence. For this reason it is important to reconstruct the Son of David traditions as they existed in Matthew's time.

I do not believe either that Matthew "has introduced a new idea into Jewish thinking" by identifying "Messiah as the source through which persons were healed."¹⁸⁹ Richard E. Menninger is correct in pointing out that there existed some expectations connecting the healing and messianic age (Isa 35,5-7). But the question (aimed at Luz¹⁹⁰) is, why would Matthew let the blind men (Matt 9,27; 20,31) and the Canaanite woman (15,22) ask Jesus for help with a cry *ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὸς Δαυίδ* and why would he let the crowds wonder whether Jesus may be the Son of David after healing the blind and deaf-mute man (12,22-24) and letting the children in the temple praise him after healing the blind and the lame (21,15) if there did not exist a tradition that already directly connected Son of David with healing and exorcism? (The Isaianic tradition fails to provide a direct link since, first, the Isaianic prophecies of Suffering Servant were originally interpreted as referring to Israel and not to the Messiah, and secondly, they were not connected with the Son of David.)

In the following chapters, I will substantiate, as others have done before me, that the tradition we are dealing with and which Matthew knew and incorporated in his Gospel (not without changes) is the Solomon as exorcist tradition. It has often been argued that the literary records of this tradition are hard to trace before the year 70 C.E., however, this does not mean that the Solomon as exorcist tradition could not have existed prior to this date and

¹⁸⁹ Menninger, *Israel and the Church in the Gospel of Matthew*, 91.

¹⁹⁰ Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 86.

could not have influenced the Son of David associations of common people in the beginning of the first century C.E. Therefore I will try to demonstrate in the second chapter of my thesis that the Solomon as exorcist tradition is not as late as Luz thinks, but that it was very much alive already in the first century C.E. among various groups inside (and later also outside) Palestine and that it coexisted alongside the “classical” messianic expectations of the eschatological Son of David. In the same chapter I shall also consider the common objection that Solomon was known only as exorcist but not as healer. In chapter three, I intend to interpret all the relevant Son of David passages of Matthew’s Gospel in the light of these two traditions, with particular interest in the Solomon as exorcist tradition.

The purpose of this study is therefore, first of all, to add a missing monograph to the academic discussion¹⁹¹ concerning the relevance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition for the interpretation of Matthew’s Gospel and to provide a conscious interpretation of the relevant Matthean passages¹⁹² in its light. For this reason other motifs (apart from the Solomon as exorcist and royal Davidic dynasty tradition), such as the motif of the Isaianic servant¹⁹³ and Davidic shepherd¹⁹⁴, which may have influenced Matthew’s final portrayal of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah, will not be examined in this study. I do not consider these traditions less important, nor do I think, as for example Chae, that the final portrait of the Son of David in Matthew’s Gospel is the result of the influence of a single stream of tradition (in Chae’s case the Davidic shepherd tradition). On the contrary, similarly as Roland Deines,¹⁹⁵ I see Matthew’s resulting picture of Jesus as the Son of David rather as a critical

¹⁹¹ As one could notice from the review of research, apart from several articles, there is not a single monograph which would systematically examine the usage of the Solomon as exorcist tradition in Matthew’s Gospel and which at the same time would systematically interpret all Matthean Son of David passages. (In the theological literature written in Czech language, the Solomon as exorcist theme has no or only marginal interest – cf. Mareček, *Ježíš Kristus v Matoušově evangeliu*, 27-50.)

¹⁹² The only one who provided consequent interpretation of almost all relevant texts in Matthew on the background of the Solomon as exorcist tradition was W. Carter in his commentary “Matthew and the Margins.”

¹⁹³ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 124-190.

¹⁹⁴ Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 173-395.

¹⁹⁵ Deines, *Die Gerechtigkeit der Tora im Reich des Messias*, 479-484.

synthesis of various traditions. Similarly, I am not convinced that the Solomon as exorcist tradition is necessarily the central feature of the Matthean characterization of Jesus or a dominant motif in the first Gospel; no such claim is made. I want to demonstrate that even the Solomon as exorcist tradition may have influenced Matthew in his portrayal of Jesus and that therefore it should not be overlooked in the discussion and is worthy of a longer elaboration than only a few lines, pages or articles – as was the case in previous forty years of research. At the same time, I would like to add my own point of view to the discussion and to provide a few counterarguments to some of the most frequent objections against the Solomon as exorcist hypothesis.

1.4. The Methodology

Since the core of my dissertation is based primarily on the exegesis of various sources (Old Testament, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran scrolls, rabbinic sources, Gnostic writings, magical bowls, amulets, incantations, etc., and Matthew's Gospel), I shall use synchronic as well as diachronic exegetical methods.

I shall first use the tradition-history approach in order to trace the history of particular traditions and to demonstrate how these traditions have been adapted and reformulated within a new historical situation and set into a new context. Specifically, I am going to examine first the development of the Solomon as exorcist and the Davidic messianic traditions. Then I will examine the way in which Matthew used these two existing traditions, originally separated, in order to present Jesus as the messianic Son of David,¹⁹⁶ who heals and exorcizes.

Secondly, in order to understand Matthew's tendencies, which characterize him not only as a creative author but also as an interpreter of received tradition, I shall use the redaction-critical approach. Using this method will help me to determine, in which way Matthew modified and adapted his written sources – namely Q and Mark.¹⁹⁷ Only changes relevant to the subject of my study will be taken into consideration.

¹⁹⁶ In this work the designation "Son of David" is used as referring to Jesus or to Davidic Messiah, "son of David" as referring to Solomon (or Solomon-like figure), or to a figure of Davidic descent (e.g., Joseph). In the quotations the original spelling is preserved.

¹⁹⁷ This study is therefore based on the Two-Document hypothesis.

Last but not least, my interest applies to the way in which Matthew portrays Jesus as the Son of David within his narrative as a whole, how the crowds, the Gentiles, the Pharisees, the sick react on Jesus' healing/exorcistic activity and how their recognition of Jesus as the healing Son of David develops within the plot of the Gospel. This requires the application of narrative criticism.¹⁹⁸

Although the theoretical model of the narrative criticism differentiates between real and implied author and reader,¹⁹⁹ in this study it is assumed that the real author of the Gospel is identical with the implied one and for simplification is called Matthew. Since it is evident that Matthew had his fellow believers in mind when he was writing his Gospel, it can be assumed that the real and implied reader is, although not quite identical, very close to each other. Therefore the term Matthew's reader/hearer shall be used in this study as designation of both.

1.5. Premises: Setting of Matthew's Gospel

When speaking about the author of Matthew's Gospel, my own position concerning the time, origin and setting of Matthew's Gospel has to be clarified. Similarly as C.S. Keener and G.N. Stanton and other scholars, I presuppose that Matthew's Gospel was written outside Palestine (most probably in some big city in Syria²⁰⁰) not long after the destruction of the second temple.²⁰¹ The author of Matthew's Gospel, as agreed by a majority of the scholars,²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ On the advantages of the usage of the narrative criticism in the interpretation of Matthew's Gospel, see Luz, *Theology*, 1-10.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 267.

²⁰⁰ Luz, *Matthew*, 1:58.

²⁰¹ Stanton, *Gospel*, 113-168; Keener, *Matthew*, 44. For a spectrum of scholars' opinions concerning dating, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:127-138. For local origin of Matthew, see *ibid.*, 138-147. From newer literature for example Luz dates Matthew's Gospel to the beginning of the 80's (Luz, *Matthew*, 1:58-59; Luz, *Theology*, 11-21.) while Hagner and Nolland defend the pre 70 C.E. dating. Cf. Hagner, *Matthew* 1:lxxiii-lxxv; Nolland, *Matthew*, 12-17.

²⁰² For the comprehensive argumentation for the Jewish origin of the Matthew's Gospel, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:7-58. For the further literature, see *ibid.* The Jewish authorship is held also, among others, by Luz, *Matthew*, 1:45-47; Keener, *Matthew*, 38-41; Nolland, *Matthew*, 18; and Hagner, *Matthew* 1:lxxv-lxxvii. Opposite position – i.e., the Gentile origin of the Gospel – is held by Nepper-Christensen, Strecker, Frankemölle and Meier: Nepper-Christensen, *Matthäusevangelium*, 202-208; Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*,

was an anonymous²⁰³ synagogically educated Jewish believer in Jesus with a solid knowledge of the Old Testament and contemporary Judaism who, as I will try to demonstrate, used contemporary Jewish ideas and traditions in order to present Jesus as the true Messiah of Israel – the merciful and meek king, the Son of David who heals and exorcizes in a manner reminiscent of (comparable with) Solomon.

Concerning the situation of Matthew's community I think, unlike Luz,²⁰⁴ that Matthew's community was still part of Synagogue and its conflict with the Pharisees was a conflict within Judaism (intra muros).²⁰⁵ I also disagree with Luz's opinion that for Matthew and his community the mission to Israel has come to an end²⁰⁶ and that "Matthew does not expect non-Christian Jews to read his Gospel."²⁰⁷ Although I do not think that the non-Christian Jews were Matthew's primary addressees, I do think that his intention was not only to defend the position of his own community of believers in Jesus as the Messiah in their struggle with the Pharisees and their successors, but also to try to convince, through the usage of various Jewish traditions, his Jewish contemporaries, that Jesus truly is the Messiah of Israel, the Son of David who fulfills the Old Testament prophecies.

1.6. Plan of the Dissertation

The dissertation consists of four main parts. After the introduction (chapter 1), the history and development of the Solomon as exorcist and the Davidic royal messianic traditions, which create background of Matthew's Gospel, will be

15-35; Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 200; Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel*, 18-21. For overview of both positions, see Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 13-28.

²⁰³ For simplicity I am going to call the author of the Gospel Matthew, although I do not consider him to be identical with the disciple Mathew named in Matt 9,9; 10,3; Mark 3,18; Luke 6,15; Acts 1,13.

²⁰⁴ Luz, *Matthew*, 1:54-55.

²⁰⁵ Similarly esp. Saldarini, *Christian-Jewish Community*, 27-67. Cf. Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 346; Overman, *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism*, 147; Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and Church in Matthew," 15-51. On overview of others positions, see Stanton, *Gospel*, 113-142; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:52-54; Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 20-28.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Saldarini, *Christian-Jewish Community*, 27-43.

²⁰⁷ Luz, *Matthew*, 1:54.

examined (chapter 2). Chapter 3 then focuses on the way in which Matthew incorporated these two traditions into his final portrait of Jesus. It is based on the exegesis of all the relevant passages of Matthew's narrative, where the designation Son of David is used or the Solomon as exorcist tradition is alluded to. Chapter 4 represents then the summary of the results and draws out my own position, dealing additionally with some aspects of possible opposing critique.

2. The Jewish Background of the Designation Son of David (υἱὸς Δαυίδ)

Ulrich Luz begins his section “The Son of David” with following words:

“Tradition history is not the key to understanding the meaning of ‘son of David’ in Matthew’s Gospel. However, tradition history considerations can indicate the starting point at which Matthew meets and engages his Jewish Christian readers.”²⁰⁸

Although I can not identify myself quite with Luz’s formulation, and I would rather say that the meaning of the Son of David title in Matthew’s Gospel can not be understood only (solely) from the tradition history, I join him in the conviction, that it is necessary to examine the “starting point” which Matthew shared with his contemporary Jewish and Jewish Christian readers.

For this reason, we shall start with the reconstruction of the history of the Son of David tradition, as it existed in Matthew’s time, in order to determine which associations were evoked by the designation Son of David in the first century Jewish (Christian) readers/hearers. As it has been noted in the overview of previous research, the designation son of David in the Old Testament originally referred to Solomon. Therefore we shall start our reconstruction with this tradition, which portrayed David’s famous son as healer and exorcist. Afterwards, we shall approach to the examination of the “classical” royal messianic expectations of the eschatological Son of David.

2.1. Solomon, Son of David as Exorcist and Healer

As already mentioned in the review of the research, it has been argued by various scholars (Fisher, Lövestam, Berger, Chilton, Duling, Charlesworth, Davies, Allison, Torijano) who traced the development of the Solomonic tradition,²⁰⁹ that in the first century C.E., Solomon, son of David, was known

²⁰⁸ Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 85.

²⁰⁹ Fisher, “Can This Be the Son of David?,” 82-88; Lövestam, “Jésus fils de David chez les Synoptiques,” 100-103; Berger, “Die königlichen Messiastraditionen des Neuen Testaments,” 3-9; Chilton, “Jesus ben David,” 92, 95-96; Duling, “Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David,” 237-249; idem, “The Eleazar Miracle and Solomon’s Magical Wisdom,” 14-23; idem,

as a mighty exorcist (and healer) whose healing and exorcistic abilities were understood as a part of his great wisdom (esp. Lövestam, Berger, Chilton, Duling). The opponents of this hypothesis argued that Solomon “was known only in parts of Judaism (the Testament of Solomon) and only late as an exorcist but not as a miracle healer.”²¹⁰ Let us now examine the validity of Luz’s contra argument by examining those relevant texts in which David’s son Solomon is portrayed as someone who possesses exorcistic powers, eventually such texts in which his knowledge of/dominion over demons and spirits is presupposed or in which his name occurs in connection with demons.

2.1.1. Solomon as Exorcist in Early Jewish Writings

2.1.1.1. Solomon in 1 Kings 5,9-14

The fundamental text which served as a basis for the development of the Solomon as exorcist tradition lies in a deuteronomical report about Solomon’s wisdom in 1 Kgs 5,9-14 (NRSV 1 Kgs 4,29-34) where it is written:

⁹ God gave Solomon very great wisdom, discernment, and breadth of understanding as vast as the sand on the seashore,

¹⁰ so that Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt.

¹¹ He was wiser than anyone else, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, children of Mahol; his fame spread throughout all the surrounding nations.

¹² He composed three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered a thousand and five.

¹³ He would speak of trees, from the cedar that is in the Lebanon to the hyssop that grows in the wall; he would speak of animals, and birds, and reptiles, and fish.

“Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:944-951; Charlesworth, “The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus,” 79-83; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:157; 2:136; Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 41-128.

²¹⁰ Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 86. Cf. Broer, “Versuch zur Christologie,” 1261. Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 289, 319.

¹⁴ People came from all the nations to hear the wisdom of Solomon; they came from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

The text describes the greatness of Solomon's wisdom and his universalistic knowledge, for which he was honored even by foreigners. In the later period it was just that wisdom of Solomon which had become a centre of interest.

First of all, Solomon's literal productivity was rapidly expanded.²¹¹ He was believed to be the author of various biblical, apocryphal and pseudepigraphical books such as Proverbs (Prov 1,1), Song of Songs (Song 1,1), Ecclesiastes (Ecl 1,1.12.16-18), Wisdom of Solomon (Wis 8,10-11; 9,7-8.12),²¹² Psalms of Solomon, Odes of Solomon or Testament of Solomon. Solomon's literal activity was not only largely expanded but the biblical report itself was also modified. Thus, the Septuagint translator of 1 Kgs 5,12 changed ca. in the second century B.C.E the amount of 3000 proverbs (משׁל) and 1005 songs (שיר) composed by Solomon into 3000 parables (παραβολή) and 5000 odes (ὕδῃ). Duling thinks that "this may be the source of later view that Solomon wrote 'incantations' (Gk. epodai; cf. Josephus, *Ant* 8.2.5)."²¹³

The development of the Solomonic wisdom tradition however did not stop on increasing the amount of Solomon's odes and on attributing the authorship of various books to Solomon, but it continued in expanding of Solomon's wisdom and knowledge itself, turning Solomon into the prototype of sage. An example of this development can be found in Wisdom of Solomon.

2.1.1.2. Wisdom of Solomon 7,15-21

The Wisdom of Solomon is a Hellenistic Jewish book written in Egypt (most probably in Alexandria) and, dated by P.A. Torijano,²¹⁴ circa from second

²¹¹ Cf. Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 237-234; idem, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:945-947; Novakovic, *Messiah*, 98-99.

²¹² Solomon is not specifically named in Wisdom, but is surely implied. Cf. Bissfeldt, *The Old Testament*, 601.

²¹³ Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:945.

²¹⁴ Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 90.

quarter of the first century C.E.²¹⁵ In Wis 7,15-21, Solomon's wisdom includes not only knowledge of plants and animals as in 1 Kgs 5,13, but also knowledge of astronomy (Wis 7,19), and, most importantly, even knowledge of spirits (7,20). We read in Wis 7,15-22 NRSV:

¹⁵ May God grant me to speak with judgment, and to have thoughts worthy of what I have received; for he is the guide even of wisdom and the corrector of the wise.

¹⁶ For both we and our words are in his hand, as are all understanding and skill in crafts.

¹⁷ For it is he who gave me unerring knowledge of what exists, to know the structure of the world and the activity of the elements;

¹⁸ the beginning and end and middle of times, the alternations of the solstices and the changes of the seasons,

¹⁹ the cycles of the year and the constellations of the stars,

²⁰ the natures of animals and the tempers of wild animals, the powers of spirits (πνευμάτων βίας) and the thoughts of human beings, the varieties of plants (διαφορὰς φυτῶν) and the virtues of roots (δυνάμεις ῥιζῶν);

²¹ I learned both what is secret and what is manifest, for wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me.

As in 1 Kgs 5,9-14, even in Wis 7,15-21 Solomon's wisdom is presented as a gift from God. In comparison to 1 Kgs 5,9-14 the depth of wisdom is greatly expanded. It includes not only "the encyclopedic knowledge of the universe,"²¹⁶ but also "the knowledge of healing arts: the violent force of spirits (πνευμάτων βίας), the species of plants (διαφορὰς φυτῶν), and the powers of roots (δυνάμεις ῥιζῶν)."²¹⁷ It is believed that the knowledge of the powers of spirits refers to "Solomon's knowledge of magic and demons,"²¹⁸ and that it

²¹⁵ Duling dates Wisdom of Solomon to the second century B.C.E. If correct, then the tradition is even older than Torijano presupposes. See Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:945. Cf. McCown, *Testament of Solomon*, 91, who dates Wis to first century B.C.E.

²¹⁶ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 98.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 98.

²¹⁸ Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 238. Cf. McCown, *Testament of Solomon*, 91.

“provides the background for Josephus’ description of Solomon’s power over evil spirits.”²¹⁹ That this is the case seems to be confirmed by the reference to Solomon’s knowledge of the virtues of roots (δυνάμεις ῥιζῶν) which strongly reminds of Josephus’ description of exorcistic techniques used by Eleazar (ῥίζαν ἐξ ὧν ὑπέδειξε Σολόμων) in *Ant.* 8,47 and also his note concerning Essen in Jewish War. According to *J.W.* 2,136 Essenes “made investigations into medical roots (θεραπείαν παθῶν ῥίζαι) and the properties of stones.” There is another similarity which the author of Wisdom of Solomon and Josephus share; both interpret Solomon’s knowledge of healing/exorcistic arts as God’s gift, which justifies their use.²²⁰

Thus the Wisdom of Solomon represents the first indirect evidence of the existence of a tradition which ascribed to Solomon, a God given power over spirits/demons,²²¹ as well as the knowledge of plants and roots which, according to a similar tradition found in Josephus (*Ant.* 8,47; *J.W.* 2,136), can be used for healing/exorcism. Wis 7,15-21 also demonstrates, how the biblical tradition of Solomon’s wisdom became a center around which the Solomon as exorcist tradition could have crystallized, and how “... Solomon’s fame grew in Egypt at a very early period.”²²²

2.1.1.3. A Liturgy for Healing the Stricken (11QApPs^a)

The first text that originates in Palestine around the turn of era, and which, unlike Wis 7,15-21, contains a direct link between Solomon and demons is the text found in Qumran cave 11, called a liturgy for healing the stricken.

It has been attested by various sources that Qumran community was also interested in exorcisms and healing. Evidence can be found not only in

²¹⁹ Novakovic, Messiah, 98-99.

²²⁰ Cf. *1 En.* 7-9 which presents the knowledge of plants, roots, and astronomy as forbidden knowledge revealed not by God, but by fallen angels.

²²¹ Knowing the powers of spirits gives one, according to ancient belief, the ability to control them. This is supported by Targum Sheni to Esther, which some scholars date to fourth century C.E., where it is written: “Solomon ruled over the wild beasts, over the birds of the heaven, and over the creeping beasts of the earth, as well as over the devils, the spirits of the night; and he understood the language of all these according as it is written, ‘and he talked with the trees.’” In: Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:947.

²²² Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:945.

Josephus' Jewish War (*J.W.* 2,136) but also in the own writings of the Qumran community. For example, Abraham is presented as an exorcist in *Genesis Apocryphon* 1Qap Gen XX, 16-21, 28-29, performing the exorcism through the laying on of hands and a prayer.²²³ Also in the *Prayer of Nabonidus* (4Q242/4QPrNab ar) a Jewish exorcist, perhaps Daniel,²²⁴ is mentioned. But the most important text for us remains the scroll 11QApPs^a,²²⁵ called a liturgy for healing the stricken.²²⁶

This scroll contains remnants of four psalms. The last one is Psalm 91, known already before the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls as an exorcistic psalm. In rabbinic literature, Psalm 91 was known under various names: in *y. Šabb.* 6,8b it is called "song for the stricken"; in *b. Šeb.* 15b "song referring to evil demons" and in *y. Erub* 10,26c as "song for the demons". According to the original editor J.P.M. van der Ploeg,²²⁷ these four exorcistic psalms of 11QApPs^a correspond to four songs composed by David "for making music over the stricken", as they are mentioned in 11QPs^a XXVII, 9-10,²²⁸ and they were designated to be recited in a liturgy for healing "the stricken", i.e., demon-possessed or mentally ill. In the second psalm of 11QApPs^a we read in col. 2.²²⁹

²²³ For details, see Flusser, "Healing Through the Laying-on of Hands," 107.

²²⁴ Cf. Hogan, *Healing in the Second Temple Period*, 52.

²²⁵ The importance of 11Q11 for the Solomon as exorcist tradition was first recognized by Lövestam, "Jésus fils de David chez les Synoptiques," 101.

²²⁶ For text, translation, and bibliography, see Sanders, "A Liturgy for Healing the Stricken (11QPsAp^a)," 216-233; García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 2:1200-1204.

²²⁷ Ploeg, "Le Psaume XCI dans une recension de Qumran," 210-217; idem, "Un petit rouleau de psaumes apocryphes (11QPsAp^a)," 128-139.

²²⁸ For whole text and translation, see Sanders, "David's Composition (11Q5 27.2-11)," 214-215.

²²⁹ Text and translation follow Sanders, "A Liturgy for Healing the Stricken (11QPsAp^a)," 220-221. For the suggested reconstruction, see *ibid.* Cf. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 376-377; García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 2:1200-1203; idem, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XXIII*, 181-205. I follow the columns division as presented by García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 2:1200-1203.

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| | בשֵׁם] | 1 |
| | מעשה־ה שלומה ויקרֵא בשֵׁם יהוה | 2 |
| | הַרְחֹחַת וְהַשְׁדִּים] | 3 |
| | [אלה [השָׁדִים וְשֵׁן הַמַּשְׁטָמָה | 4 |
| | הוואה בליעל אֲשֶׁר] מושל [על תהוֹנִם חושֶׁךְ | 5 |
| | לְהַגְדִּיל אֱלֹהֵי | 6 |
| | לש] | 6 |
| | עֲמֹו תִמְו רפואה | 7 |
| | על שֶׁמֶךְ נשען וקרֵא | 8 |
| | ישֵׁרֵאל החזק | 9 |
| | את השמים | 10 |
| | אֲשֶׁר הַבְדִּיל | 11 |
| | [עוֹ] | 12 |

- 1 [...] in the name of [...]
- 2 [... the ac]t of Solomon when he invok[ed the name of Yahweh ...]
- 3 [... the sp]irits and the demons [...]
- 4 [...]these (are) [the de]mons. And the pr[ince of hostility,
- 5 [he (is) Belial w]ho [rules] over the dept[hs of dark]ness
- 6 [...]Iš[... to] magni[fy the Go]ld of
- 7 [...] his people accomplish healing
- 8 [... upon]your name finds support. And invok[e]
- 9 [... Is]rael. Take strength
- 10 [...] the heavens
- 11 [... w]ho separated [...]
- 12 ...]°ed [...]

Although the second column is very fragmented, some observations can still be made. It is evident that Solomon's name occurs in the second line of the psalm

which was part of a composition ascribed to David (11QPs^a XXVII, 9-10; 11QApPs^a V, 4) and designated for exorcism/healing.

The exorcistic setting and usage of the whole composition of 11QApPs^a is underlined by the references to Yahweh, who will smite and destroy the demon – sending against him a mighty angel, and imprisoning him in a great abyss (11QApPs^a V, 4-9). In the 11QApPs^a V, 6 the identifying question “Who are you?”, often used in exorcism²³⁰ and playing important role in Testament of Solomon, is raised, with highest probability on the address of a demon.²³¹

In line three, after the line which mentions Solomon’s name, reference to demons is made (11QApPs^a II, 3). This close connection between Solomon, demons and exorcism indicates as highly likely that Solomon was known in the Qumran as an exorcist, whose name could be used in exorcism (or more precisely in psalms designated for exorcisms).

The scroll is dated to the Herodian period i.e., to early decades of the first century C.E.²³² James A. Sanders, in his editorial preface concerning the dating of the text, briefly summarized Puech’s suggestion that “11Q11 constituted a discreet ritual of exorcism which went back to pre-Qumranic Judaism, maybe even the ‘hassidéen’ movement which gave rise to the Essenes.”²³³ If Puech’s dating is correct then the tradition of Solomon’s exorcistic powers could be traced back to the second century B.C.E. But even if we refuse Puech’s dating and do not assume that 11QApPs^a is a copy of an older manuscript, as Torijano does,²³⁴ we can still claim that already in the early decades of the first century C.E. (i.e., before the year 70 C.E.) Solomon’s name occurred in a psalm designated for exorcism in sectarian writings and that it is improbable that this

²³⁰ Behind this question lies the old Semitic idea that knowledge of the name gives one power over the thing or person named.

²³¹ Admittedly, the text is incomplete and suggested reconstructions are uncertain, however, from the context it becomes quite unambiguous that it is the demon who is questioned. For suggested reconstructions of 11Q11 V, 5-6, see Sanders, “A Liturgy for Healing the Stricken (11QPsAp^a),” 226-227. Cf. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 377; García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 2:1202-1203.

²³² Sanders, “A Liturgy for Healing the Stricken (11QPsAp^a),” 216.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 216. Cf. Puech, “Les deux derniers Psaumes davidiques du rituel d’exorcisme, 11QPsAp^a IV 4-V 14,” 81-89.

²³⁴ Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 46.

connection between Solomon, demons and exorcism would be affected by rising Christianity, i.e., that this tradition would have Christian origin.

The question is, whether the tradition originated in the sect itself or not. If we consider that Psalm 91, which is part of the manuscript, was also known as an exorcistic Psalm to rabbis, and that even from other sources from that period it is attested that Solomon's name was used in exorcisms (as it will become obvious from the analysis of *Ant.* 8,42-49), we can conclude that the tradition which linked Solomon with the exorcism of demons, i.e., the Solomon as exorcist tradition, did not originate in the Qumran community itself in the time when 11QApPs^a was written, but was taken over by the Essenes. This implies that the Solomon as exorcist tradition was known and already widely dispersed in the first century C.E. and that it belonged to the common heritage of early Judaism.

Torijano, who accepts Pluech's suggestion that 11QApPs^a can be dated to the second century B.C.E., ends his comment on 11QApPs^a with statement:

“These apocryphal psalms provide us with the oldest available background concerning the traditions about Solomon and the demons; in them, the name of Solomon appears in an evidently exorcistic setting that includes the usage of formula (‘who are you?’) for the identification of the demon to be chased away, a formula that appears in another text related to Solomon (Testament of Solomon).”²³⁵

Even though we support the dating of 11QApPs^a to the Herodian period, we agree with Torijano's conclusion that 11QApPs^a is one of the oldest documents which attests that Solomon's name was connected with demons and was used in exorcisms before 70 C.E.

2.1.1.4. Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo) 60,3

Another important document for the existence of the Solomon as exorcist tradition can be found in the Liber antiquitatum biblicarum, also known as Pseudo-Philo.

²³⁵ Ibid., 53; see also *ibid.*, 43-53.

Pseudo-Philo is a pseudepigraphic book, originally written in Hebrew, in the first century C.E. ca. around the time of Jesus in Palestine.²³⁶ Later it was translated into Greek and from Greek to Latin, and was known as the *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum*. The book retells history from Adam to Saul merging biblical and halakhic material, and combining speeches and prayers with genealogies and short narratives.

In the 60th chapter of Pseudo-Philo, a psalm can be found which David played on his lyre in front of Saul (cf. 1 Sam 16,14-23) in order to exorcise the evil spirit from him. This exorcistic psalm contains a prophecy in which David says to the evil spirit:²³⁷

Arguet autem te metra nova unde natus sum, de qua nascetur post tempus de lateribus meis qui vos domabit.

But let the new womb from which I was born rebuke you from which after a time one born from my loins will rule over you.

Interpreter's opinions differ regarding who is supposed to be the ruler over the demons. Three answers have been suggested: Jesus,²³⁸ the Jewish Messiah,²³⁹ (who will according to *T. Levi* 18,12 bind Belial and "give power to His children to tread upon the evil spirits"²⁴⁰) and finally Solomon. In favour of the second hypothesis speak similarities in wording with 2 Sam 7,12; Ps 132,11 and *T. Levi* 18,12. The problem is, however, that there is little messianic interest in Pseudo-Philo and that in *T. Levi* 18,2-13 the priestly and not the royal Messiah is described. Although, I do not want to exclude absolutely any

²³⁶ For introduction and translation, see Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," *OTP* 2:297-377. See also Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo and Jacobson, A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.

²³⁷ For the Latin text of *L.A.B.* 60,3, see *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*. For translation, see Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," *OTP* 2:373.

²³⁸ Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, 367, n. 7.

²³⁹ Berger, "Die königlichen Messiastraditionen des Neuen Testaments," 8.

²⁴⁰ Charles, *APOT* 2:315.

possible messianic meaning, it seems more probable that *L.A.B.* 60,3 refers (primarily?) to Solomon.²⁴¹

If correct, then Pseudo-Philo represents another important document supporting the thesis that Solomon was seen as an exorcist par excellence already at an early date. Importantly, the exorcistic powers are ascribed to Solomon and David as well.²⁴² According to the psalm found in *L.A.B.* 60, which David played on his lyre by night in order that the evil spirit might depart from Saul, David possessed the knowledge of the origin of the evil spirit (*L.A.B.* 60,2-3) and thus, according to contemporary ideas, he was able to exorcise him.

Note that also among the Essenes it was believed that not only Solomon, but also David possessed exorcistic powers, and that he composed psalms which were used, at least by the Essenes, as the liturgy for healing/exorcism (11QPs^a XXVII, 9-10; 11QApPs^a). Surely, this tradition is a later development of 1 Sam 16,23. But for the purpose of our study, it presents important evidence that in the first century C.E. exorcistic powers were ascribed to David and also to his son Solomon, and that this view can be found in Qumran writings as well as in Pseudo-Philo and, as I will try to prove later, also in Matthew's Gospel.

Thus it is certain, attested by two (*Wis* 7,15-21; 11QApPs^a) or three independent witnesses (*Ant.* 8,42-49 – see further) written in almost the same period in different milieu, that the traditions about David's and Solomon's exorcistic powers were widespread in the first century C.E. amongst various Jewish groups.

A further important and obvious facet is that according to *L.A.B.* 60,3 the one, who will receive the domination over demons, will be a descendant of David – i.e., the son of David. Although the expression itself is not used in the text there is no doubt that it is implicitly present. And from the text itself, it is

²⁴¹ Cf. Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 240-241; idem, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:945; Novaković, Messiah, 101; Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," *OTP* 2:373, n. e.; McCown, Testament of Solomon, 91; Preisendanz, "Salomo," *PWSup* 8:663.

²⁴² Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 6,166-169.

also apparent that this descendant (son) of David will have greater power than David had.

We can conclude that the author of Pseudo-Philo knew traditions which ascribed to the descendant of David exorcistic powers greater than David possessed and that these powers included dominion over demons. Or, in different words told, according to *L.A.B.* 60,3 the dominion over demons is the principal attribute of the future descendant born from the loins of David. This is not without significance since:

“If we date the text around the first century CE, we can link it directly with the dates of the traditions at work in the shaping of the Synoptic Gospels. In the New Testament the messianic figure of Jesus has power over demons and it is probable that this power is modelled on an exorcistic conception of Solomon, the esoteric ‘Son of David.’”²⁴³

2.1.1.5. Josephus Flavius: *Antiquitates Judaicae* 8,42-49

The most important text for the Solomon as exorcist hypothesis can be found in Josephus’ *Antiquitates Judaicae* 8,42-49. In his extensive work, written between years 79-94 C.E., the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius (* 37 C.E. † 100 C.E.) details the history of the Jewish people from their beginning to the destruction of the second temple, addressing both Gentiles as well as Hellenized Jews. Led by apologetic interests, Josephus carefully reworked his sources to present the main Jewish figures, religious groups, etc., within the light of Greek ideals.

In his portrayal of Solomon, Josephus focuses on the construction of the temple and intentionally stresses Solomon’s understanding and wisdom. In order to demonstrate Solomon’s wisdom, Josephus narrates the following miracle story which probably took place in Palestine during the Jewish war²⁴⁴ between the years 66-70 C.E. Josephus’ *Ant.* 8,42-44²⁴⁵ read:

⁴² The intelligence and wisdom that God bestowed on Solomon was so great that he surpassed the ancients, and even the Egyptians, who are said to be

²⁴³ Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 111.

²⁴⁴ This setting is proposed by Preisendanz, “Salomo,” *PWSup* 8:667.

²⁴⁵ Josephus, *Ant.* 8,42-49 (Begg, 5:13-15).

superior to all in prudence, when compared with him proved to be not only merely a little deficient, but completely unequal to the king's intelligence.

⁴³ He likewise exceeded and was superior in wisdom to those of his own time who had a reputation for cleverness among the Hebrews, whose names I shall not pass over. They were Athan, and Haiman, Chalke and Dardan, the sons of Hemaon.

⁴⁴ He also composed 1,005 books of odes and songs, as well as 3,000 books of parables and allegories. For he spoke a parable about each kind of tree, from the hyssop to the cedar. In the same way he spoke of all the animals, those on the earth, those that swim, and those in the air. For there was nothing in nature of which he was ignorant or which he left unexamined. Rather, he investigated everything methodically and evidenced a remarkable knowledge of the peculiarities of things.

⁴⁵ God also enabled him to learn the technique against demons for the benefit and healing of humans. He composed incantations by which illnesses are relieved, and left behind exorcistic practices with which those binding demons expel them so that they return no more.

⁴⁶ And this same form of healing remains quite strong among us until today. For I became acquainted with a certain Eleazar of my own people, who, in the presence of Vespasian and his sons, along with their tribunes and a crowd of soldiers, delivered those possessed by demons. The method of healing is as follows:

⁴⁷ Bringing up to the nose of the demonized person a ring that had under its seal a root from among those prescribed by Solomon, he [Eleazar] would then draw out the demonic [presence] through the nostrils, as the man sniffed. Upon the man's immediately falling down, he adjured the demonic [presence] not to return to him again, making mention of Solomon and likewise reciting the incantations he had composed.

⁴⁸ Eleazar, wishing to persuade and convince those present that he had this power, first placed a cup or foot-basin filled with water a short distance away and ordered the demonic [presence], which was now outside the

person, to knock these over, and so cause the spectators to realize that it had left the person.

⁴⁹ When this happened, the sagacity and wisdom of Solomon became evident through this. We felt bound to speak of these matters so that all might know the greatness of his nature and his closeness to God, and so that the king's preeminence in every sort of virtue should not be hidden from any of those beneath the sun.

In a brief introduction (*Ant.* 8,42-44), based on 1 Kgs 5,9-14, Josephus informs the reader of Solomon's encyclopedic knowledge and literary activity, which as in Wis 7,15-21 rapidly increased from 1,005 songs and 3000 proverbs (1 Kgs 5,12) to 1005 *books* of odes and songs (βιβλία περὶ ᾠδῶν) and 3,000 *books* of parables and allegories (παραβολῶν καὶ εἰκόνων βίβλους).

Then Josephus deviates from biblical to contemporary (Solomonic) tradition (*Ant.* 8,45) and narrates a story (*Ant.* 8,46-49), which he witnessed (*Ant.* 8,46: ἱστορέω), of a certain Eleazar, who in the presence of Vespasian, his sons, tribunes and soldiers (*Ant.* 8,46) performed an exorcism, using Solomon's name, incantations and "a ring that had under its seal a root from among those prescribed by Solomon" (*Ant.* 8,47).²⁴⁶

In this story/report, Josephus, as the author of Wis 7,15-21, presents Solomon's ability to exorcize demons as part of his God-given wisdom (*Ant.* 8,42: ὁ θεὸς παρέσχε Σολόμωνι φρόνησιν καὶ σοφίαν). This part of Solomon's wisdom is seen as a special skill (τέχνη) which Solomon was allowed to learn (παρέσχε δ' αὐτῷ μαθεῖν ὁ θεός). Its purpose is unique: as it is to be used against demons for the benefit and healing of humans (καὶ τὴν κατὰ τῶν δαιμόνων τέχνην εἰς ὠφέλειαν καὶ θεραπείαν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις – *Ant.* 8,45).

We have already demonstrated in our analysis of Wis 7,15-21; 11QApPs^a; and *L.A.B.* 60,3 that at the turn of the era there existed a popular tradition in

²⁴⁶ For a detailed commentary and further bibliography, see esp. Duling, "The Eleazar Miracle and Solomon's Magical Wisdom," 1-25; Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 95-105. Cf. Denies, "Josephus, Salomo und die von Gott verliehene τέχνη gegen Dämonen," 365-394.

Judaism that ascribed to Solomon exorcistic knowledge and powers, and Josephus' report seems to be in one line with this tradition.

But what is even more significant is Josephus' note (*Ant.* 8,45) that Solomon "composed incantations by which illnesses are relieved, and left behind exorcistic practices with which those binding demons expel them so that they return no more."²⁴⁷ It is clearly evident, that in the time of Josephus, not only exorcistic powers but also the authorship of incantations (ἐπωδή) and exorcistic practices (τρόπους ἐξορκώσεων) were ascribed to Solomon.

Important is the observation that Josephus presents Solomon's exorcistic ability as a "technique against demons" which is designated for *healing* (θεραπεία), as are the incantations composed by Solomon (*Ant.* 8,45). In *Ant.* 8,45-46 Josephus explicitly calls Solomon's technique against demons, incantations and exorcistic practices used in his own days as kind of healing (θεραπεία)²⁴⁸ and as an example of such a healing, which uses these Solomonic techniques, he introduces Eleazar's miracle (of exorcism) in *Ant.* 8,46-49.

This observation attests firstly that there was a close correlation between illness and its cause – demon in the antiquity and that exorcism could have been understood as a kind of cure/healing.²⁴⁹ It is therefore not appropriate to distinguish strictly between exorcisms and healing in order to claim that Solomon was never designated as a healer, but only as an exorcist and that therefore he could not have been associated with healings.²⁵⁰

Secondly, the Eleazar miracle story, which is purposed to attest Solomon's great wisdom (*Ant.* 8,49), which included exorcistic/healing knowledge, proves not only that Solomon himself was known as an exorcist and healer in Josephus' time, but that his powers, knowledge and techniques which he left

²⁴⁷ Josephus, *Ant.* 8,45: ἐπωδάς τε συνταξάμενος αἷς παρηγορεῖται τὰ νοσήματα καὶ τρόπους ἐξορκώσεων κατέλιπεν οἷς οἱ ἐνδούμενοι τὰ δαιμόνια ὡς μηκέτ' ἐπανελθεῖν ἐκδιώξουσι.

²⁴⁸ On the usage of words *θεραπεία* and *θεραπεύειν* by Josephus, see Denies, "Josephus, Salomo und die von Gott verliehene τέχνη gegen Dämonen," 375-376. According to Denies "Beide sind bei Josephus relativ häufig für die Beschreibung medizinischer oder pflegerischer Tätigkeiten benutzt." *Ibid.*, 375. *Italics mine.*

²⁴⁹ Therefore, according to my opinion, also Matthew could have subordinated exorcisms to healings without reducing the final portrait of Jesus.

²⁵⁰ Contra Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 86.

behind (including incantations) were transmittable and could have been and were used even by the first century exorcists.

Thanks to Josephus' report we are also informed of a certain Jewish exorcist named Eleazar who performed the exorcism in the presence of the Emperor and a number of other witnesses using a ring²⁵¹ with root prescribed by Solomon (cf. Wis 7,20 which ascribes to Solomon knowledge of δυνάμεις ῥιζῶν – the virtues/powers of roots),²⁵² repeating Solomon's name and reciting incantations which Solomon composed (*Ant.* 8,47). Although Josephus probably incorporated this short account in his work only to attest Solomon's great wisdom and exorcistic/healing powers, he provided us with a valuable example of the exorcistic techniques connected with Solomon, including the belief, that even Solomon's name alone had exorcistic power. A belief, which is shared by the author of 11QApPs^a and which can be found also in later magical amulets and incantation bowls.

Josephus' account is also important for chronological reasons. It supports the argument for an early date of the Solomon as exorcist tradition – namely the years 66-70 C.E. However, if one admits the possibility, that Eleazar's miracle indeed took place in Palestine, it can be logically assumed, that Eleazar about whom Josephus writes), had to be trained in the usage of Solomonic

²⁵¹ The tradition about Solomon's seal ring is expanded in *Sepher Ha-Razim* and plays an important role in the Testament of Solomon (1,6-7; 7,3; 7,8; 8,12; 10,6-8; 12,4; 15,7-8; 22,10) and can be found in Rabbinic literature too (cf. *b. Git.* 68ab). Solomon's seal is also found on Aramaic incantation bowls, in Greek Magical papyri and in amulets – for examples, see further. Cf. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 4:149-172; 6:299-302. Fisher, "Can This Be the Son of David?," 83-86. Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 244-247; idem, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:947-948. For the references to all relevant texts on the magical papyri and incantation bowls, see idem, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 247, n. 50.; Denies, "Josephus, Salomo und die von Gott verliehene τέχνη gegen Dämonen," 387, n. 62. Cf. Preisendanz, "Salomo," *PWSup* 8:670-684. For overview of the tradition, see Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 76-87.

²⁵² Cf. Denies, "Josephus, Salomo und die von Gott verliehene τέχνη gegen Dämonen," 387-388 who claims: "Es ist in diesem Text weder vom Ring des Salomo noch vom Siegel Salomos die Rede, sondern lediglich das Wissen um die Heilkraft der unter das Siegel gelegten Wurzel wird auf Salomo zurückgeführt (in 8,44 waren die vollkommenen naturkundlichen Kenntnisse Salomos schon erwähnt worden, vgl. außerdem SapSal 7,20: Salomo kennt die δυνάμεις ῥιζῶν. Zwar scheint es auch hier denkbar, dass Josephus um einen magischen Ring Salomos weiß, aber gerade dann ist beachtlich, dass er ihn nicht als solchen bezeichnet. Es sind statt dessen die Salomo von Gott verliehen Fähigkeiten, die Josephus hervorhebt: die Heilkraft von Pflanzen und das Verfassen von ‚Beschwichtigungsliedern‘."

techniques. This fact would imply that Solomon's fame and reputation as an exorcist and healer, as well as his incantations and exorcistic techniques had to be known and popular with exorcists and ordinary people in Palestine in the first century C.E.²⁵³ This would suggest that the dating for the origins of the Solomon as exorcist tradition can be without reservations set at least several decades prior to the years 66-70 C.E., assuming that the tradition needed some time to develop and to become widely known.

The last significant detail of Josephus' account can be found in Josephus' endeavor to prevent a mistaken association of Solomon with magic or magical techniques. Although Josephus speaks of Solomon's skill (τέχνη) in dealing with demons, he stresses that this skill was given to him by God, who allowed Solomon to learn it (*Ant.* 8,45, cf. 8,42.49). This skill was not for Solomon's benefit, neither his personal desires nor interests²⁵⁴ but "for the benefit and healing of humans" (*Ant.* 8,45).

Torijano, like Denies,²⁵⁵ rightly observed that Josephus "tries to reduce any suspicious traits which could provoke accusations of sorcery"²⁵⁶ on the Jewish or Gentile side²⁵⁷ and therefore it can not be claimed that Josephus describes Solomon as "Zaubermeister."²⁵⁸ Contrary, Josephus "... minimiert und in gewisser Weise auch 'rationalisiert das magische Element.'²⁵⁹ The same tendency can be found also in Matthew's Gospel.

²⁵³ Torijano even suggests that Solomon's exorcistic powers were known among Josephus' Gentile readers! See Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 104-105.

²⁵⁴ "One of the clearest identifying marks of the figure of the magician is the desire for power and dominion over the world either on his own behalf or on behalf of a client." *Ibid.*, 101, n. 38.

²⁵⁵ Denies, "Josephus, Salomo und die von Gott verliehene τέχνη gegen Dämonen," 376-388.

²⁵⁶ Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 101.

²⁵⁷ The presence of the Emperor eliminates all doubts. Cf. Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 102-103.

²⁵⁸ Preisendanz, "Salomo," *PWSup* 8:663. See critique in Denies, "Josephus, Salomo und die von Gott verliehene τέχνη gegen Dämonen," 376.

²⁵⁹ Denies, "Josephus, Salomo und die von Gott verliehene τέχνη gegen Dämonen," 378.

2.1.1.6. Conclusion: The Picture of Solomon in Early Jewish Writings

Our analysis of the early Jewish writings (Wis 7,15-21; 11QApPs^a, *L.A.B.* 60,3 and *Ant.* 8,42-49) have shown that at least at the beginning of the first century C.E., or even sooner, Solomon's wisdom included not only knowledge of the powers of roots, but also the knowledge of spirits/demons and thus knowledge of exorcism (Wis 7,15-21; *Ant.* 8,42-49).

Solomon's name was connected with demons in an exorcistic psalm from the Herodian period, which was part of a composition ascribed to David and used within a liturgy for healing the stricken (11QApPs^a). The analysis of *L.A.B.* 60,3 demonstrated that the author of Pseudo-Philo knew traditions which ascribed to a descendant (son) of David exorcistic powers greater than those of David and that these powers included dominion over demons.

The analysis of Josephus' report further demonstrated that in the time of Josephus, or perhaps few decades earlier, not only exorcistic powers but also the authorship of incantations (ἐπωδή) and exorcistic practices (τρόπους ἐξορκώσεων) were ascribed to Solomon, and that these practices (repeating of Solomon's name, usage of his incantations and usage of a ring with a root prescribed by Solomon) could have been used by contemporary Jewish exorcists for healing and exorcism.

We have also suggested that on the basis of *Ant.* 8,42-49 it is not appropriate to distinguish strictly between healing and exorcism and to argue that Solomon was known only late and solely as an exorcist. The argument that Solomon was only an exorcist within a later tradition is thus wrong. It is apparent from the surviving evidence that there was an early tradition whereby Solomon was well-known as an exorcist and healer. In the following subsections we shall try to strengthen these conclusions.

2.1.2. The Nag Hammadi Texts

Solomon's name is also connected to demons in the Gnostic texts found in Nag Hammadi. The significant texts are: The Apocalypse of Adam (NHC V,5: 78,27-79,19), The Testimony of Truth (NHC IX,3: 69,31-70,30) and The Second Treatise of the Great Seth (NHC VII,2: 63,12-18). It should

also be noted that the tractate *On the Origin of the World* mentions the Book of Solomon (NHC II,5: 107,3).

2.1.2.1. The Apocalypse of Adam

The Apocalypse of Adam²⁶⁰ is a Coptic Gnostic text originally written probably in Greek,²⁶¹ which was found in 1946 in Nag Hammadi. Its dating is uncertain²⁶² as well as the place of origin (possibly Palestine). It seems that the tractate *Apoc. Adam* was not affected by Christian tradition but was strongly influenced by Jewish apocalypticism.

Solomon's name is mentioned in the section which lists 13 false interpretations of the origin of the great Illuminator. The text of Adam's Apocalypse (*Apoc. Adam* V,5: 78,27-79,19) reads:²⁶³

[The fourth kingdom says [of him]:

[that] He came [from a virgin. ... Solomon 79 sought] her, he and Phersalo and Sael and his armies which had been sent out. Solomon himself sent his army of demons to seek out the virgin. And they did not find the one whom they sought, but the virgin who was given to them. It was she whom they fetched. Solomon took her. The Virgin became pregnant and gave birth to the child there. She nourished him on a border of the desert. When he had been nourished, he received glory and power from the seed from which he had been begotten. And thus he came to the water.

Although the text is not easy to date, (Duling²⁶⁴ accepts Hedrick's hypothesis that the Apocalypse of Adam originated in the first or second century C.E. in a Syrian-Palestinian baptismal sect); it is evident that its author was aware of the tradition which ascribed to Solomon power over demons, in fact, even an

²⁶⁰ For translation, comment and bibliography, see MacRae, "Apocalypse of Adam," *OTP* 1:707-719; idem, "The Apocalypse of Adam (V,5)," *NHL*, 277-286.

²⁶¹ MacRae, "Apocalypse of Adam," *OTP* 1:707-708.

²⁶² Cf. MacRae, "The Apocalypse of Adam (V,5)," *NHL*, 277. MacRae, "Apocalypse of Adam," *OTP* 1:708.

²⁶³ MacRae, "The Apocalypse of Adam (V,5)," *NHL*, 283.

²⁶⁴ Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:946, see also *ibid.*, n. 70. Cf. MacRae, "The Apocalypse of Adam (V,5)," *NHL*, 277.

army of demons.²⁶⁵ But contrary to dominant tradition and material preserved elsewhere, and expanded later in Jewish and Arabic legends about Solomon, in the Apocalypse of Adam, and also in other Gnostic texts from Nag Hammadi as S. Giversen pointed out,²⁶⁶ Solomon is portrayed as a negative figure.

It is unlikely that the Gnostic author did not know about the existing traditions about Solomon, which saw him in a positive light as someone who was gifted with power over demons. On the contrary, it seems that the Gnostic author intentionally reversed the Solomon as exorcist tradition – as was quite typical in Gnostic texts.²⁶⁷ His presentation of Solomon as “lord of the demons” is thus not just a speculative creation but an intentional adaptation – in fact, it is a distortion of an already existing tradition about Solomon. As a result, the evidence from the Apocalypse of Adam supports the argument for the existence of an early tradition which ascribed to Solomon dominion over demons, or more precisely command of demon army. And although in *Apoc. Adam* Solomon is not glorified, as in Josephus’ *Ant.* 8,42-49, but rather condemned for his powers, the relevant detail for our study remains the same – consciousness that Solomon was gifted by power over demons.

2.1.2.2. The Testimony of Truth

The Testimony of Truth²⁶⁸ is another Gnostic text which contains references to Solomon. It was written by a Christian Gnostic polemist, who opposed orthodox Christianity and was also in conflict with other Gnostics whose lifestyle and ritual practice differed from his own, at the end of the second century C.E. or at the beginning of the third; most probably in Alexandria.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁵ For the army of demons, see also Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 4:149 where Solomon in the letter to Queen Sheba writes: “But if thou wilt not pay homage to me, I shall send out kings, legions, and riders against thee. Thou askest, who are these kings, legions, and riders of King Solomon? The beasts of the field are my kings, the birds my riders, the demons, spirits, and shades of the night my legions.” The tradition of Solomon’s control over demons is further elaborated in the Testament of Solomon.

²⁶⁶ Giversen, “Solomon und die Dämonen,” 16-21.

²⁶⁷ Observe for example Gnostic negative portraying of God as creator of the world.

²⁶⁸ For a translation and introduction, see Giversen and Pearson, “The Testimony of Truth (IX, 3),” *NHL*, 448-459.

²⁶⁹ Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:950. Cf. Giversen and Pearson, “The Testimony of Truth (IX, 3),” *NHL*, 448-449.

The writing consists of two parts: the homily on truth and falsehood and various additions, in which some of the themes of the first part are elaborated.

In the *Testim. Truth* IX,3: 69,31-70,30 in the part referring to hypocrites who say they renounce the world but do not, it is said:²⁷⁰

They are wicked in their behavior! Some of them fall away 70 [to the worship of] idols. [Others] have [demons] dwelling with them [as did] David the king. He is the one who laid the foundation of Jerusalem; and his son Solomon, whom he begat in [adultery], is the one who built Jerusalem by means of the demons, because he received [power]. When he [had finished building, he imprisoned] the demons [in the temple]. He [placed them] into seven [waterpots. They remained] a long [time in] the [waterpots], abandoned [there]. When the Romans [went] up to [Jerusalem] they discovered [the] waterpots, [and immediately] the [demons] ran out of the waterpots as those who escape from prison. And the waterpots [remained] pure (thereafter). [And] since those days, [they dwell] with men who are [in] ignorance, and [they have remained upon] the earth. Who, then, is [David]? And who is Solomon? [And] what is the foundation? And what is the wall which surrounds Jerusalem? And who are the demons? And what are the waterpots? And who are the Romans? But these [are mysteries ...]

The text speaks about Solomon as “the one who built Jerusalem by means of the demons.” Although *Testim. Truth* is a Christian text, it is significant because the same tradition, in which Solomon builds a temple with the aid of demons, is presented in a more elaborated form in the Testament of Solomon. The Testament of Solomon also contains a tradition concerning demons imprisoned in vessels in the temple (cf. *T. Sol.* 15,8-11; 16,7; 18,41-42).²⁷¹ It is possible that both texts build on older Jewish sources – whether written or oral.

The difference is that in The Testimony of Truth, similarly as in *Apoc. Adam* V,5: 78-79 and unlike in *T. Sol.*, Solomon is viewed quite negatively. However, this does not diminish the importance of this text. It can

²⁷⁰ Trans. Giversen and Pearson, “The Testimony of Truth (IX, 3),” *NHL*, 458.

²⁷¹ On the tradition of seven waterpots, see also Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:950, n. 94.

be assumed that Solomon's building of the temple with the aid of demons was not originally seen as a negative act but rather as a positive one. It is hard to imagine the contrary could be the case. If it would be so why was the Testament of Solomon written? The shift from the positive portrayal of Solomon to a negative can be more easily and plausibly explained than the reverse. Thus once again, the Gnostic author is responsible for the reverse of an already existing, i.e., older, tradition, and for the negative portrayal of Solomon.

2.1.2.3. The Second Treatise of the Great Seth

The third text from the Nag Hammadi library, which also contains Solomon's name, comes from a Gnostic Christian hand as well. In *Treat. Seth* VII,2: 63,12-18 it is said:²⁷²

Solomon was a laughingstock, since he thought that he was Christ, having become vain through the Hebdomad, as if he had become stronger than I and my brothers. But we are innocent with respect to him. I have not sinned.

Similarly as in *Apoc. Adam* V,5: 78-79 and in *Testim. Truth* IX,3: 69,31-70,30 also in this text Solomon is presented as a negative figure. Unfortunately it is not said why Solomon, according to the Gnostic author, thought that he was Christ. However, "one wonders whether Solomon's 'strength' in thinking he had become Christ was related to stories of his miracle working."²⁷³ Given the evidence that a later Christian tradition became critical of Solomon when messianic passages were attributed to him, and not to Jesus, or when Solomon's exorcistic/healing powers or status were declared superior to those of Jesus,²⁷⁴ Duling's suggestion seems to be quite probable.

²⁷² For an introduction and translation, see Bullard and Gibbons, "The Second Treatise of the Great Seth (VII,2)," *NHL*, 362-371, text on p. 368.

²⁷³ Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:950.

²⁷⁴ Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Ecl.* 53,2-3; Leontios of Byzance, PG 86, 1980; Justin, *Dial.* 36,2-6. See Torijano, Solomon the Esoteric King, 113-115, 118, n. 37.38; McCown, "Magical Wisdom of Solomon," 1-24, esp. 14-16; Hanig, "Christus als 'wahrer Salomo' in der frühen Kirche," 111-134.

2.1.2.4. On the Origin of the World

The last text also found in the Nag Hammadi comes from the third century C.E. There is no specific mention of Solomon's control of demons in the text but it does refer to the book of Solomon. The text of *Orig. World* II,5: 106,28-107,3 reads:²⁷⁵

Then Death, being androgynous, mingled with his (own) nature and begot seven androgynous offspring. These are the names of the male ones: Jealousy, Wrath, Tears, Sighing, Suffering, Lamentation, Bitter Weeping. And these are the names of the female ones: Wrath, Pain, Lust, Sighing, Curse, Bitterness, Quarrelsomeness. They had intercourse with one another, and each one begot seven, so that they amount to forty-nine androgynous demons.

Their names and their effects you will find in the Book of Solomon.

The last line is significant as it mentions the Book of Solomon in which names and effects of 49 demons can be found.²⁷⁶ Various attempts have been made to identify this Book of Solomon amongst extant magical books – none of them was wholly successful.²⁷⁷ Without going into further details, we can certainly claim on the basis of this text that there existed at least one book ascribed to Solomon in the third century C.E., which described names and effects of various demons. In fact we know that there existed not one, but several magical books ascribed to Solomon such as the *Sepher Ha-Razim* or *Testament of Solomon*. This means that magical knowledge and powers were commonly ascribed to Solomon in the third century C.E.

The tractate *On the Origin of the World* also proves, at least indirectly, that the tradition which ascribed to Solomon knowledge and power over demons

²⁷⁵ For an introduction and translation, see Bethge and Layton, "On the Origin of the World (II, 5 and XIII, 2)," *NHL*, 170-189, text on p. 177.

²⁷⁶ *Orig. World* II,5:107,3.

²⁷⁷ See Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:942.

was continuous and popular amongst various groups (Jewish, Christian²⁷⁸ and even Gnostic) in the third century C.E.

2.1.2.5. Conclusion: Solomon in the Gnostic Texts from Nag Hammadi

The analysis of the texts from Nag Hammadi has shown that also amongst Gnostic groups – both Jewish and Christian ones, Solomon was known as an author of book containing names of forty-nine demons (*Orig. World*), and as lord of the demons (*Apoc. Adam*) who built Jerusalem (temple) with their aid (*Testim. Truth*).

The negative image of Solomon in these Gnostic texts was a result of the theological work of the Gnostic authors who reversed already existing Solomonic traditions rejecting the traditional characterization of Solomon's control over demons as a positive influence. Thus, the Jewish and Christian Gnostic texts from Nag Hammadi serve as supporting arguments for our claim that on an earlier date there existed a continuous and widespread tradition which ascribed to Solomon knowledge and power over demons.

2.1.3. The Testament of Solomon

The tradition about Solomon's exorcistic knowledge and powers over demons is mostly elaborated in the Testament of Solomon, which is a syncretistic Jewish Christian book, written originally probably in Greek,²⁷⁹ which underwent a number of recensions.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁸ As it is attested not only by Christian amulets but also by Origen, who writes in his commentary on Matt 26,63: "It is customary to adjure demons with adjurations written by Solomon. But they themselves who use these adjurations sometimes use books not properly constituted; indeed they even adjure daemons with some books taken from Hebrew." Origen, *Comm. ser. Matt.* 33,110 (PG 13, col. 1757).

²⁷⁹ Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:939; McCown, Testament of Solomon, 43.

²⁸⁰ For introduction, text and comment, see McCown, Testament of Solomon; Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:935-987. Busch, *Das Testament Salomos*. For the description of manuscripts, textual history, suggested recensions and their date as well as authorship and provenience, see McCown, Testament of Solomon, 10-28, 30-38, 105-111; Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:937-944.

The dating and origin of *T. Sol.* was and still is a matter of lively discussion.²⁸¹ For example while F.C. Conybeare,²⁸² followed by K. Kohler and G. Salzberger,²⁸³ proposed that the Testament of Solomon is a Christian revision of a Jewish document from ca. 100 C.E., McCown claimed that the Testament of Solomon is a Christian work from the early third century C.E. containing, however, traditions about Solomon which may originate from the first century Judaism.²⁸⁴ K. Preisendanz²⁸⁵ suggested that the original of *T. Sol.* comes from the first or second century C.E. Denis C. Duling dated Testament of Solomon to late third century C.E.,²⁸⁶ J.H. Charlesworth²⁸⁷ to the third one and Davies and Allison to the second one.²⁸⁸ Finally, recently Peter Busch dated the “Grundschrift” of *T. Sol.* to the beginning of the fourth century C.E., considering it to be a Christian writing.

The dating is quite problematic as it includes dates from the end of the first to the end of the fourth century C.E. It is also difficult to determine unambiguously the Jewish or Christian origin of the Testament of Solomon, yet “there is a general agreement that much of Testament reflects the first-century Judaism in Palestine”²⁸⁹ and that it preserves material which is much older than the text of the Testament itself.²⁹⁰

The book contains haggadic story narrated in first person and describing how Solomon, whose building of Jerusalem temple was hindered by a demon, prayed to God for help and received from the archangel Michael a seal ring, which allowed him to rule over demons and to build the temple with their aid.

²⁸¹ See Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:940-943.

²⁸² Conybeare, “The Testament of Solomon,” 12.

²⁸³ Kohler, “Demonology,” *JE* 4:518; Salzberger, *Die Salomosage in der semitischen Literatur*, 10.

²⁸⁴ McCown, *Testament of Solomon*, 88-89, 108.

²⁸⁵ Preisendanz, “Salomo,” *PWSup* 8:689.

²⁸⁶ Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:943.

²⁸⁷ Charlesworth, “The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus,” 82.

²⁸⁸ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:136.

²⁸⁹ Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:942.

²⁹⁰ Cf. e.g., McCown, *Testament of Solomon*, 108; Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 55; Lövestam, “Jésus fils de David chez les Synoptiques,” 101-102; Charlesworth, “The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus,” 82. Conybeare even suggested that an earlier recension of Testament of Solomon could be the collection of Solomon’s incantations referred to by Josephus. Conybeare, “The Testament of Solomon,” 10, 13-14.

Into this narrative framework a complex demonology is inserted: Solomon is given authority over demons, he asks after their names, activities and thwarting angels. The Testament of Solomon thus combines various themes from astrology, demonology, cosmology, and medicine with the haggadic story.²⁹¹ Although the book's title claims it is a Testament, in reality the book is more an encyclopedia of demons or an exorcistic manual.

That this text is meant to be an exorcistic manual is obvious not only from the structure of the whole book which is influenced by the repeated usage of exorcistic formula "Who are you" as demonstrated by Torijano,²⁹² but also from the text of the Testament itself. In *T. Sol.* 15,14-15 Solomon says:²⁹³

... ἔγραψα τήν διαθήκην ταυτήν πρὸς τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραήλ καὶ ἔδωκα αὐτοῖς ὥστε εἰδέναι τὰς δυνάμεις τῶν δαιμόνων καὶ τὰς μορφὰς αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτῶν τῶν ἀγγέλων ἐν οἷς καταργοῦνται οἱ δαίμονες.

I wrote this testament to the sons of Israel and I gave (it) to them so that (they) might know the powers of the demons and their forms, as well as the names of the angels by which they are thwarted.

Within the Testament, Solomon, who is portrayed as exorcist par excellence, is designated as son of David in various places.

First he is called son of David in the Greek title of MS(S) PQ:²⁹⁴

Διαθήκη Σολομῶντος υἱοῦ Δαυεῖδ, ὃς ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ καὶ ἐκράτησεν καὶ ὑπέταξεν πάντων ἀερίων, ἐπιγείων, καὶ καταχθονίων πνευμάτων· δι' ὧν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔργα τοῦ ναοῦ τὰ ὑπερβάλλοντα πεποίηκεν· καὶ τίνες αἱ ἐξουσίαι αὐτῶν κατὰ ἀνθρώπων, καὶ παρὰ ποιῶν ἀγγέλων οὗτοι οἱ δαίμονες καταργοῦνται.

²⁹¹ On rabbinic parallels of the Solomon's legend, see Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 4:149-157; 6:291-296.

²⁹² Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 55-68.

²⁹³ For the Greek text, see McCown, *Testament of Solomon*, *47-48. For translation, see Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:976.

²⁹⁴ For the Greek text, see McCown, *Testament of Solomon*, *98. For translation, see Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:960.

Testament of Solomon, Son of David, who reigned in Jerusalem, and subdued all the spirits of the air, of the earth, and under the earth; through (them) he also accomplished all the magnificent works of the Temple; (this tells) what their authorities are against men, and by what angels these demons are thwarted.

The title itself not only summarizes the content of the whole book, but also introduces Solomon as son of David²⁹⁵ who possesses authority over demons and who is able to control them. At this point Testament of Solomon incorporates the older Solomonic tradition, as presented in Wis 7,15-21; 11QApPs^a, *L.A.B.* 60,3, *Ant.* 8,42-49 and in *Apoc. Adam* V,5: 78,27-79,19, *Orig. World* II,5: 106,28-107,3 and expands it even further. The Testament of Solomon shares the motif of the building of temple with the aid of demons with *Testim. Truth* IX,3: 69,31-70,30.

How Solomon subdued demons is described in *T. Sol.* 1,5-7:²⁹⁶

Καὶ ταῦτα ἀκούσας ἐγὼ ὁ βασιλεὺς Σολομῶν εἰςῆλθον εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐδεήθην ἐξ ὅλης μου τῆς ψυχῆς ἐξομολογούμενος αὐτῷ νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν ὅπως παραδοθῆ ὁ δαίμων εἰς τὰς χεῖράς μου καὶ ἐξουσιάσω αὐτόν. Καὶ ἐγενέτο ἐν τῷ προσεύχεσθαί με πρὸς τὸν θεὸν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς ἐδόθη μοι παρὰ κυρίου Σαβαώθ διὰ Μιχαὴλ τοῦ ἀρχαγγέλου δακτυλίδιον ἔχον σφραγίδα γλυφῆς λίθου τιμίου· καὶ εἶπέ μοι· λάβε, Σολομῶν υἱὸς Δαυεὶδ, δῶρον ὃ ἀπεστείλέ σοι κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ ὕψιστος Σαβαώθ, καὶ συγχλείσεις πάντα τὰ δαιμόνια τὰ τε θηλυκὰ καὶ ἀρσενικὰ καὶ δι' αὐτῶν οἰκοδομήσεις τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐν τῷ τῆν σφραγίδα ταύτην σε φέρειν τοῦ θεοῦ.

²⁹⁵ “Solomon is called Son of David in Gk. titles of MSS P Q I; MS L and rec. C; Prologue 1:1; rec. C 12:1; 13:12; MS D 1:1; MS E 11:1; MS H 26:9; and in McCown, *TSol* 1:7; 20:1. He is called ‘son of the prophet David’ in MS E 1:1; 2:1. The address ‘Son of David’ could be a link between the magical tradition about Solomon and the activity of Jesus as exorcist and healer.” Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:960, n. d.

²⁹⁶ For the Greek text, see McCown, *Testament of Solomon*, *9-10. For translation, see Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:962.

When I, King Solomon, heard these things,²⁹⁷ I went into the Temple of God and, praising him day and night, begged with all my soul that the demon might be delivered into my hands and that I might have authority over him. Then it happened that while I was praying to the God of heaven and earth, there was granted me from the Lord Sabaoth through the archangel Michael a ring which had a seal engraved on precious stone. He said to me, "Solomon, Son of David, take the gift which the Lord God, the highest Sabaoth, has sent to you; (with it) you shall imprison all the demons, both female and male, and with their help you shall build Jerusalem when you bear this seal of God."

This text explains the origin of Solomon's exorcistic powers. Torijano²⁹⁸ correctly recognized that while in 1 Kgs 3,7-15 Solomon asks in prayer for wisdom, in Testament of Solomon he asks for power over demons. This however does not mean that Solomon's authority over demons would be understood separate from his wisdom. Contrary: "Weisheit, der Titel 'Sohn Davids' und Herrschaft über Dämonen und Krankheit gehören daher im Salomo-Bild eng zusammen."²⁹⁹

As a result of his prayer, Solomon obtains the seal ring by which he can imprison all the demons. Testament of Solomon thus on this place elaborates a tradition of Solomon's seal ring, known already in the first century C.E. (cf. *Ant.* 8,42-49).³⁰⁰ It should not be overlooked that Solomon is addressed by the Archangel Michael as son of David. Whether the address Σολομῶν υἱὸς Δαυεΐδ is used in this instance in an absolute, or only in a genealogical sense (similarly as in Matt 1,20), can not be unambiguously determined. Since

²⁹⁷ I.e., a story about demon Ornias who tormented little boy who helped built the temple.

²⁹⁸ Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 57.

²⁹⁹ Berger, "Die königlichen Messias-traditionen des Neuen Testaments," 8.

³⁰⁰ As we have already noted in the analysis of *Ant.* 8,42-49 (see above), the tradition of Solomon's seal ring played an important role not only in the Testament of Solomon, but also in magical texts from 3rd to 6th century C.E. For specific examples of Jewish amulets or magical bowls where the seal of Solomon appears, see further. Cf. also Naveh and Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae*, 91 (Amulet 27), 126-127 (Bowl 20); Isbell, *Corpus of the Aramaic Incantation Bowls*, 32-33 (text 7), 58 (text 18), 108-109 (text 47), 110-111 (text 48), 114-115 (text 50); Yamauchi, *Mandaic Incantation Texts*, 232 (text 21).

“Solomon’s physical descent is nowhere stressed in the document”³⁰¹ the absolute usage of the designation appears to be more likely.

In following chapters, Solomon uses his ring to trap and interrogate demons and to force them to fulfill his will. The interrogations of demons usually follow a set pattern starting with the question “Who are you?”, a question which is also found in 11QApPs^a V, 6 and which was used in exorcisms. The question of the demon’s identity is then followed by questions about the astrological setting of the demon, the demon’s activity against men, and question of thwarting angel.³⁰²

The Testament of Solomon makes it very clear that “sickness and illness is caused by demons; and the demons are controlled by Solomon.”³⁰³ In *T. Sol.* various demons are responsible for various diseases and afflictions. Thus e.g., Ornias causes a boy to grow thin and causes great pain to men (*T. Sol.* 1,4; 2,3); a demon called Murder “inflames the limbs, inflicts the feet, and produces festering sores” (*T. Sol.* 9,6-7); the Lion-Shaped demon prevents the ill from recovering from their illness (*T. Sol.* 11,2); the three-headed dragon spirit blinds children in the wombs of women and causes their deafness and dumbness (*T. Sol.* 12,2); and the demon Obyzouth kills newborn infants, injures eyes, and destroys minds and makes bodies feel pain (*T. Sol.* 13,4).

In chapter 18 of the Testament of Solomon, there is a list of the various demons and the sicknesses they cause, and all these demons are controlled by Solomon. “The purpose of listing and describing the demons and the sicknesses is to clarify that Solomon controls what ails humanity (18.1-42).”³⁰⁴ Charlesworth rightly recognized the significance of this list:

“In twentieth-century language that seems to mean that the author of this pseudepigraphon wants his readers to know that the origins of sicknesses is known by the wise Solomon, and he knows the means for healing each sickness. While Solomon is not hailed as a ‘healer’, it is unrepresentative of

³⁰¹ Chilton, “Jesus ben David,” 95. Cf. *ibid.*, 109, n. 32.

³⁰² For detail analysis of the structure, see Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 55-68.

³⁰³ Charlesworth, “The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus,” 80.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 82.

the language and world-view of the traditions in the Testament of Solomon to conclude that he was only an exorcist and not a healer. It is thus conceivable that Solomon was considered not only an exorcist but also a healer.”³⁰⁵

Thus the Testament of Solomon further supports the thesis that Solomon was not only known as an exorcist par excellence, but also as a healer.

The further passage, in which the address Σολομῶν υἱὸς Δαυεῖδ occurs, can be found in MS H of *T. Sol.* 20,1.³⁰⁶ There it is placed on the lips of an old man who cries βασιλεῦ Σολομῶν υἱὸς Δαυεῖδ, ἐλέησόν με τὸ γέρας. (King Solomon, son of David, have mercy on me, an elderly man.)

This cry for help strongly recalls the cry of Bartimaeus in Mark 10,47 but contrary to Mark, in *T. Sol.* 20,1 it is a plea for justice, not for healing. Whether the address υἱὸς Δαυεῖδ is used in titular (absolute) sense or not is a matter of discussion. While Berger³⁰⁷ presupposed titular use and claimed that the tradition behind Testament of Solomon is independent of the New Testament, Duling³⁰⁸ opted for non titular use and oral dependence.

However, there is no reason to assume that the author of the Testament of Solomon would like to present Solomon as David’s son in the light of the Synoptic tradition.³⁰⁹ Especially when the history of tradition shows the opposite (i.e., that Jesus was at least partly portrayed in the light of Solomon, and in the first Church was even seen as the true Solomon).³¹⁰ Therefore Berger’s view seems to be more accurate.

The third occurrence of the designation son of David in the Testament of Solomon is the most interesting. In *T. Sol.* 5,10 Solomon asks the demon

³⁰⁵ Charlesworth, “The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus,” 82.

³⁰⁶ For the Greek text, see, McCown, Testament of Solomon, *60. For translation, see Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:982.

³⁰⁷ Berger, “Die königlichen Messiastraditionen des Neuen Testaments,” 6-8. See also Torijano, Solomon the Esoteric King, 126-127.

³⁰⁸ Duling, “Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David,” 243. See also Novakovic, Messiah, 101-102.

³⁰⁹ Cf. Chilton, “Jesus ben David,” 95, 109, n. 32.

³¹⁰ Cf. Hanig, “Christus als ‘wahrer Salomo’ in der frühen Kirche,” 111-134.

Asmodeus to tell him the name of the fish which the demon fears. The text of *T. Sol.* 5,10³¹¹ reads:

ἐπηρώτησα πάλιν αὐτὸν λέγων· μὴ κρυψῆς ἀπ' ἐμοῦ ῥῆμα, ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι Σολομῶν υἱὸς Δαυεὶδ, καὶ εἶπέ μοι τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ ἰχθύος οὗ σὺ σέ σέβῃ. ὁ δὲ λέγει· τὸ ὄνομα κέκληται γλάνις· ἐν τοῖς ποταμοῖς τῶν Ἀσσυρίων εὐρίσκεται· μόνος γὰρ ἐκεῖ γεννᾶται, ὅτι καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν τοῖς μέρεσιν ἐκείνοις εὐρίσκομαι.

I asked him again, saying, “Do not hide anything from me, for I am Solomon, Son of David. Tell me the name of the fish you fear.” He replied, “It is called the sheatfish. It is found in the rivers of Assyria and it is hatched only there; I am also found in those parts.”

The designation son of David is used in this text clearly as a self-identification. Solomon demands answer from the demon and stresses his demand with the self-reference as son of David (ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι Σολομῶν υἱὸς Δαυεὶδ). Truly, Solomon was David’s descendant but this is not the point of this text. The reference to son of David in this context does not make sense with regard to the genealogical affinity, but in the light of an older tradition which ascribed to the son of David power and authority over demons and which connected him to exorcisms and healings. Therefore it seems likely that “the tradition about Solomon, ‘Son of David,’ master of demons is at work here; in these lines there is no mention of either the seal or the divine name and, therefore, the formula works as an authoritative and powerful title by itself.”³¹²

Therefore we conclude, together with Chilton:

“Solomon, precisely in connection with his wonderful knowledge (including his exorcistic skill), was identified as David’s son at an early stage in the development of the Testament. The diversity of the usage within the Testament suggests that it is not imitative of the New Testament and not the idiom of a single stream of tradition or redaction; given the evidence of

³¹¹ For the Greek text, see McCown, *Testament of Solomon*, *23-24. For translation, see Duling, “Testament of Solomon,” *OTP* 1:966.

³¹² Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 126.

Josephus and Qumran Cave 11, the possibility that 'David's son' was known as an identification and address of Solomon in the context of exorcism cannot be excluded."³¹³

If we add, that according to *L.A.B.* 60,3 the main characteristic of the descendant (son) of David is dominion over demons, Chilton's thesis, as well as the absolute (titular) usage of the designation son of David within the exorcistic/healing context, as suggested by Berger³¹⁴ and Torijano³¹⁵ is plausible.

This will become more evident with the analysis of the Aramaic magical bowls, incantations, and amulets originating from the 3rd to 6th century C.E. in which Solomon's name occurs together with the designation son of David in an unquestionably exorcistic/magical setting.

2.1.4. Solomon, Son of David in Aramaic Magical Texts

Aramaic magical texts represent a collection of magical papyri and incantation bowls from Nippur. Although quite late, dating to 400-600 C.E., these texts preserve older traditions (including the Solomon as exorcist tradition), which might go back to the first century C.E., as Loren Fisher plausibly demonstrated.³¹⁶

Many of these incantations were found on bowls in corners of houses, turned upside down in order to entrap or overturn demons. They belong "in the category of 'white magic', that is they are meant to protect homes, families, and possession from all sort of witchcraft, diseases, and demons."³¹⁷ At least eighteen of these Aramaic magical bowls contain the phrase "King Solomon, son of David," and twelve mention Solomon's seal-ring,³¹⁸ known

³¹³ Chilton, "Jesus ben David," 96.

³¹⁴ Berger, "Die königlichen Messiastraditionen des Neuen Testaments," 7-8; Cf. also Charlesworth, "The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus," 80.

³¹⁵ Torijano, Solomon the Esoteric King, 125-128.

³¹⁶ Fisher, "Can This Be the Son of David?," 82-88.

³¹⁷ Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:948.

³¹⁸ For the references to all relevant texts in the magical papyri and incantation bowls, see Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 247, n. 50.

from *Ant.* 8,42-49 and *T. Sol.* Following are several representative examples from the bowls.

As a first example, we can present a sample of protective magic which mentions Solomon, son of David and his seal ring:³¹⁹

The demon NTY, TTY QLY, BTY, Nuriel, Holy Rock. (2) Sealed and counter and fortified are Ahât, the daughter of Immâ; Rabbî, Malkî and Dipshî, the sons of Ahât; and Yanâi (3) the daughter of Ahât, and Ahât the daughter of Immâ and Atyônâ the son of Qarqôî, and Qarqôî the daughter of Shîltâ, and Shîltâ the daughter of Immî (4)—they and their houses and their children and their property are sealed with the seal-ring of El Shaddai, blessed be He, and with the seal ring of King (5) Solomon, the son of David, who worked spells on male demons and female liliths. Sealed, countersealed and fortified against the male demon (6) and female lilith and spell and curse and incantation and knocking and evil eye and evil black-arts, against the black-arts of mother (7) and daughter, and against those of daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, and against those of the presumptuous woman, who darkens the eyes and blows away the soul (i.e., causes despair), and against the evil black-arts, that are wrought by (8) men, and against everything bad. In the name of the Lord. Lord, Hosts is His name, Amen, amen, selah. This charm is to thwart the demon Tîfînos. Sealed are the bodies(?) of ^CŠ QL, the bodies(?) of ^CŠ QL MYLY MYLY TYGL.

The importance of this incantation lies in the conviction, that Solomon, the son of David was an exorcist (magician) who not only worked spells on demons, but who is still able to protect the houses, children and property from demonic attacks. The further importance of this incantation lies in its resemblance with the Targum Sheni to Esther, which some scholars date to fourth century C.E., and where it is told:

“Solomon ruled over the wild beasts, over the birds of the heaven, and over the creeping beasts of the earth, as well as over the devils, the spirits of the

³¹⁹ Gordon, “Aramaic Magical Bowls,” 324-326 (text B).

night; and he understood the language of all these according as it is written, 'and he talked with the trees.'"³²⁰

And finally in this incantation Solomon is designated as the son of David. The designation is used similarly as in the Testament of Solomon, i.e., not simply a genealogical reference but rather a powerful title purposed to allude to Solomon's exorcistic powers and abilities. Besides, Solomon's name as well as the title son of David plays an important role in the spell.

Similar beliefs can be found in incantation no. 34.:³²¹

Charmed and sealed is all evil that is in the body of Mihrhormizd b. M. (8) and in his house (and) his wife and his sons and his daughters and his cattle and his property and in all his dwelling, by the signet of Ariôn son of Zand and by the seal of King Solomon son of David, (9) by which were sealed the Oppressors and the Latbe.

Also the incantations inscribed on this bowl led one to believe that Solomon can prevent, or perhaps even cure, as Charlesworth suggests,³²² all evil³²³ that is in the body. Similarly as the previous one, the incantation on this bowl is intended as an appeal to Solomon to heal or protect one from any sickness caused by demons. And finally in this incantation Solomon is addressed as the son of David. Such usage strengthens the hypothesis that the designation son of David was used in an exorcistic setting in order to recall Solomon's (Solomon's like) ability to exorcize demons and to heal. The fact that the Solomon as exorcist tradition is also preserved on Babylonian incantation bowls from 6th century C.E. supports the theory for widespread popularity and vitality of this tradition, as it was able to survive without major changes more than five centuries.

³²⁰ Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:947.

³²¹ Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur*, 231-232.

³²² Charlesworth, "The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus," 80.

³²³ Charlesworth translates "all sickness". Charlesworth, "The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus," 79.

That a great power was ascribed to King Solomon, the son of David, is apparent when one examines the incantation from another bowl.³²⁴

This charm is designated for the salvation, guarding and sealing of the house of Farruk, the son of Araznish, (and) all his dwelling. This is the seal-ring of King Solomon, the son (2) of David, to which no one can go, and before which nobody stands. Every demon and Bo (?), and Nebo, demons, and roof spirits and howlers (??), lilis, and monsters, and all Satans, and idols, and curses, and excommunications, and bans (3) and pebble charms ... all of them are bound and sealed for Farruk ... (4) and for all his house and all his dwelling, from this day and forever. Amen, Amen, Selah.

The seal of Solomon, the son of David, mentioned in the three previous bowls, is also mentioned in a Mandaic incantation text from the fifth century C.E.³²⁵ There are also a few Jewish amulets which mention Solomon and bear similarities to the Aramaic incantation bowls from Nippur. One metal amulet from Palestine, dating circa the 2nd or the 3rd century C.E. which was purposed to expel a demon from the body of Marian, contains an incantation saying:³²⁶

And now with the wand of Moses and the shining-plate of Aaron the high priest, and with the seal of Solomon, and with [the Shield] of David, and with the mitre of the chief priest have I pronounced(?) [the wo]rd . . .

There are also Christian amulets, based on the older Jewish amulets, in which Jesus and King Solomon are mentioned or depicted as beside each other.³²⁷

It can be concluded, from the variety of surviving material, that the Solomon as exorcist and healer tradition was known amongst Palestinian and Babylonian Jewish communities from the second or third century C.E. onwards. A part of this tradition included the belief that Solomon's

³²⁴ Gordon, "Aramaic Magical Bowls," 322 = Isbell, *Corpus of the Aramaic Incantation Bowls*, 108-109 (text 47).

³²⁵ Yamauchi, *Mandaic Incantation Texts*, 230-233 (text 21).

³²⁶ Montgomery, "Some Early Amulets from Palestine," 274. For other Solomonian amulets, see Perdrizet, "Sphragis Solomonos," 42-61; Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 1:68, 2:226-238, 7:198-200, 9:1044-1067.

³²⁷ For examples of Christian amulets, see Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 122-124.

exorcistic/healing abilities, his powers, and dominion over demons was closely connected not only with his wisdom, as it was stressed in the earlier sources, but also with his status as David's son.

The designation son of David is used in the incantations not as a genealogical reference, but rather an authoritative title referring (similarly as in the Testament of Solomon) to Solomon's special exorcistic powers rather than to his lineage. Solomon's status of David's son, Solomon's name, and Solomon's seal ring are essential characteristics of the Solomon as exorcist tradition as preserved in the incantations, as is a belief that Solomon himself was a powerful exorcist, and that his name,³²⁸ ring and powers could be used to cure illnesses, to prevent or repulse demonic attacks on men's life, health, family and possession.

2.1.5. Greek Magical Papyri

That the tradition regarding Solomon's exorcistic powers was popular not only amongst Jewish communities but also among Gentile ones is attested by the surviving Greek Magical Papyri.³²⁹ One such surviving papyrus, *PGM* IV. 850-929, dates from the 4th century C.E., and contains a charm attributed to Solomon.³³⁰ Another papyrus, *PGM* IV. 3007-3086, dating from the 3rd or 4th century C.E., mentions the seal of Solomon.³³¹

I conjure you, every daimonic spirit, to tell whatever sort you may be, because I conjure you by the seal which Solomon placed on the tongue of Jeremiah, and he told.

The papyrus is a syncretistic magical text which combines older³³² Jewish, Christian and pagan materials together and was probably used for exorcism.

³²⁸ The same belief can also be found in *Ant.* 8,42-49 and in 11QApPs^a.

³²⁹ Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*. For English translation, see Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*.

³³⁰ For a short commentary on the spell, see Kippenberg and Stroumsa, *Secrecy and Concealment*, 154. For translation, see Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 55.

³³¹ For the whole text, see Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 96-97.

³³² McCown, *Testament of Solomon*, 64, n. 2, states: "In any case this papyrus, written in the III or IV cent, A.D., but embodying much older material, stands beside Josephus as a witness to the prominence of Solomon and his ring in magic during the earliest centuries of the Christian era."

Jeremiah's inability to speak is a clear reference to Jer 1,6, while the placing of Solomon's seal on his tongue appears to be unknown haggadic tradition.³³³ The seal of Solomon is obviously identical with Solomon's seal ring, known from *Ant.* 8,42-49, *T. Sol.* and Aramaic incantation bowls and amulets.

The Greek Magical Papyri are thus further evidence that the Solomon as exorcist tradition was alive not only in Jewish and Christian circles but also, due to syncretism, amongst Gentiles in the 3rd and 4th century C.E. Besides the papyri indirectly prove antiquity of the Solomon as exorcist tradition because it can be assumed that it took some time till the Solomonic tradition developed in Judaism and entered the heathen world. The syncretistic development is obvious among others right in the amulet PGM IV. 3007-3086 where Solomon and Jesus stand side by side – as is quite typical also for Christian amulets.

2.1.6. Conclusion: Solomon, Son of David as Exorcist and Healer

The analysis of this divergent material has proven that it was believed already in the first century C.E. as *Wis* 7,15-21; 11QApPs^a, *L.A.B.* 60,3 and *Ant.* 8,42-49 directly, and *T. Sol.*, Aramaic incantation bowls and Gnostic texts indirectly attest, among various Jewish, Christian, Gnostic, and even Gentile communities that Solomon was endowed with exorcistic knowledge and power over demons, and that these exorcistic powers were seen as part of Solomon's great wisdom (cf. *Wis* 7,15-21; *Ant.* 42-44,49, *T. Sol.* prologue).

We have further clearly demonstrated that exorcistic powers, the authorship of incantations/exorcistic books (*T. Sol.*; *Orig. World* II,5: 106,28-107,3; *PGM* IV. 850-929) and exorcistic practices (*Ant.* 8,45; *T. Sol.* 15,14-15) were ascribed to Solomon not only during Josephus' time, resp. few decades earlier, but even later, and that the Solomon as exorcist tradition was still further developing in the sixth century C.E.

Our analysis has also demonstrated that Solomonic practices (techniques), such as repeating/reciting of Solomon's name (11QApPs^a; *Ant.* 8,47; Aramaic

³³³ See Preisendanz, "Salomo," PWSup 8:660-704. For haggadic sources, see Sperber, "Some Rabbinic Themes in Magical Papyri," 93-103.

incantations), usage of his incantations (*Ant.* 8,47;) and usage of/reference to a ring with a root prescribed by Solomon (*Ant.* 8,47; *T. Sol.* 1,6-7; 7,3; 7,8; 8,12; 10,6-8; 12,4; 15,7-8; 22,10; Aramaic incantation bowls; *PGM* IV. 3007-3086) were used by contemporary Jewish exorcists and subsequently by non-Jewish exorcists and magicians for exorcisms and healing (11QApPs^a; *Ant.* 8,42-49; *T. Sol.* 15,14-15), and to cure illnesses, to prevent or repulse demonic attacks on men's life, health, family and possession (especially Aramaic incantation bowls and amulets).

On the basis of our analysis of *Ant.* 8,42-49, where Josephus explicitly presents Solomon's incantations, exorcistic practices and technique against demons as a kind of healing (θεραπεία), we have argued that it is unacceptable to distinguish strictly between healing and exorcism and to claim that Solomon was only known as an exorcist and not a healer. Our argument is further strengthened by the Testament of Solomon (esp. *T. Sol.* 18), where, as already noted by Charlesworth,³³⁴ there is a close connection between illness and its cause (demons, who are, however, controlled by Solomon). The surviving Aramaic incantation bowls and amulets, which were purposed to cure illnesses, and to prevent or repulse demonic attacks also support our position.

Therefore the common contra argument that Solomon "was known only in parts of Judaism (the Testament of Solomon) and only late as an exorcist but not as a miracle healer"³³⁵ can be on the base of our analysis refused as erroneous. We have seen not only that the Solomon as exorcist/ healer tradition was popular and widespread in the first century C.E., but it also expanded during the first centuries C.E. and grew in popularity not only amongst Jews, but also amongst Christians³³⁶ within Palestine and beyond its' borders, as well as in the Hellenistic world.

³³⁴ Charlesworth, "The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus," 82.

³³⁵ Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 86. Cf. Broer, "Versuch zur Christologie," 1261; Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 289, 319.

³³⁶ For examples of reports of Christian pilgrims of the 4th century C.E. which mention Solomon's ring or chamber where he examined demons, see Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 85 n. 69.

One difficulty remains to be solved. All the texts, amulets and magical papyri which we examined agree that Solomon was endowed with exorcistic knowledge and power over demons.³³⁷ Except for the Gnostic texts, all the other material we examined share the conviction that Solomon's name, and eventually his seal ring or incantations can be used in exorcisms or can at least serve as apothropic magic. However, in only one text, the Testament of Solomon, Solomon does perform the exorcism himself! How can we argue that Solomon was seen as exorcist endowed with exorcistic powers, who even controlled armies of demons (indirectly *L.A.B.* 60,3; directly *Apoc. Adam* V,5: 78,27-79,19); and with this demonic aid achieved many things including the building of Jerusalem's temple (*T. Sol.*; *Testim. Truth* IX,3: 69,31-70,30); and yet there are almost no examples of Solomon actually performing an exorcism.

One possible answer is that Solomon was not considered an exorcist. However, the surviving evidence sustains the argument that there was a powerful, widespread and continuous tradition which ascribed to Solomon power over demons, and used his name, incantations, exorcisms or seal ring for performing exorcisms and in protective magic.

Another potential answer is found in the nature and purpose of the analyzed texts where author/s stressed the usage of Solomon's powers rather than narrating stories about Solomon. Such haggadic stories can be found in rabbinic literature (for example in *b. Git.* 68a) and also in the Testament of Solomon. Although it should be noted that the Testament of Solomon was intended to function as a kind of exorcistic manual (functional side) rather than a collection of tales glorifying Solomon for his dominion over demons.

One could conclude that the communal conviction about Solomon's exorcistic powers had to be very strong when it was able to be preserved, developed and expanded in the course of six centuries C.E. among various groups within and even outside the Judaism without need to create supporting narratives which would fortify belief in Solomon's exorcistic/healing powers.

³³⁷ Although not all the texts explicitly mention Solomon's knowledge of demons, we may not forget that in the ancient Jewish way of thinking, knowledge (in the case exorcistic knowledge of the demon's name) gives one the power over things, people and even demons.

It should also be noted that Solomon's exorcistic knowledge was understood as part of his great wisdom, as is evident not only from the Wisdom of Solomon, but above all from Josephus who intentionally narrates the Eleazar miracle story to reveal to all the understanding and wisdom of Solomon, and it is mainly this wisdom motif which was elaborated in later haggadic stories.

Finally in our analysis of the Testament of Solomon we have suggested that the designation son of David, in the Old Testament referring to Solomon, was used within the Testament of Solomon (dated from 2nd to 4th century C.E.) similarly as in the Aramaic incantation bowls (dated from 400-600 C.E., preserving, however, similarly as *T. Sol.* a much older traditions – possibly from the first century Judaism) "... as an authoritative and powerful title by itself"³³⁸ purposed to allude to Solomon's exorcistic (Solomon's like) powers and knowledge.

We have further argued, like Chilton, that such absolute usage of the title son of David in the Testament of Solomon "... is not imitative of the New Testament and not the idiom of a single stream of tradition or redaction...",³³⁹ but that it represents an independent tradition, paralleled in Pseudo-Philo 60,3 where dominion over demons is a main characteristic of the descendant of David. Although the title, (the) son of David, is not used explicitly in *L.A.B.* 60,3, it can be presupposed because of the context. When the text states that one born from David's loins will rule over demons, it seems appropriate to call him (the) son of David.

If we consider that in Matthew's and Mark's Gospels, as we will see in detailed exegesis later, Jesus is addressed as the Son of David in the context of a plea for healing or exorcism and that "... 'David's son' was the address applied to Jesus at the level of tradition when he was to heal or exorcize in a manner reminiscent of Solomon,"³⁴⁰ then "... the possibility that 'David's

³³⁸ Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 126.

³³⁹ Chilton, "Jesus ben David," 96.

³⁴⁰ Chilton, "Jesus ben David," 97.

son' was known as an identification and address of Solomon in the context of exorcism cannot be excluded."³⁴¹

If Geza Vermes and G.F. Moore are correct in their thesis that certain rabbis, notably Hanina ben Dosa, were noted for the healing efficacy of their prayers,³⁴² and Jacob Neusner in his claim that Davidic descent, generally independent of any messianic claim, is ascribed in Rabbinica to Hillel, Judah the Prince, Hiyya and Huna,³⁴³ then it would be plausible "that a Jewish teacher of Jesus' period should be called *ben David*, and that this address should have associations with the wisdom of Solomon when that rabbi was possessed of healing powers..."³⁴⁴ In other words, the address on Jesus as Son of David in the context of healing could be fully understandable to his contemporaries in the light of the non-messianic tradition which ascribed to son of David exorcistic and healing powers and authority/dominion over demons.

The last told supports our thesis that Matthew, in order to portray Jesus as the true Messiah of Israel, could have creatively used already existing ideas and traditions without need to create, *ex nihilo ad hoc*, entirely new ones.

But Solomon and Solomon's (like) exorcistic powers were not the only associations linked to the Son of David. Son of David was associated also with an eschatological messianic figure, and to these associations we shall turn our attention now.

³⁴¹ Ibid., 96.

³⁴² Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 72-78; Moore, *Judaism*, 377-378.

³⁴³ Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, 1:35-36, 101-104; 175-176.

³⁴⁴ Chilton, "Jesus ben David," 99.

2.2. Son of David as Expected Eschatological Messiah

It has already been noted by numerous scholars³⁴⁵ that in the first century C.E. the designation Son of David could have referred to the eschatological Davidic messianic figure who would fulfill the promises given to David in 2 Sam 7,12-16. In the following subchapter, we shall focus on the messianic expectations associated with this figure. Our sources (pseudepigrapha, Qumran writings and marginally rabbinic literature) date approximately from the first century B.C.E. to the end of the first century C.E.

Our research will not be limited only to the tracing of messianic traits linked to the descendant of David or specific roles and tasks ascribed to him, but we shall also explore the titular and non-titular usage of the designation (the) Son of David. It should be noted that our research will not be limited to the specific phrase (ὁ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ / בֶּן-דָּוִד but we will also examine other metaphorical expressions like “branch from the stump of Jesse” (חֹטֵר מִגִּזְע יֵשׁוּעַ), the “seed” (זֶרַע), the “ruler’s staff” (מַחְקֵק), the sprout (נֹצֵר) or the “Shoot of David” (צֶמַח דָּוִד), which were used as references to this messianic figure.³⁴⁶

2.2.1. Psalms of Solomon

The oldest post-biblical tradition which explicitly links the expectation of the Messiah with the fulfillment of God’s promise to David (2 Sam 7,12-16) can

³⁴⁵ On the development of Jewish messianic ideas, see e.g., Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*; Oegema, *The Anointed and His People*; Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*; Charlesworth, *The Messiah*. For further literature, see *ibid.* On the brief overview of the development of the Davidic Messianism and application of promises to David in early Judaism and Christianity, see e.g., Novakovic, *Messiah*, 12-34; Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts*, 35-74; Duling, “The Promises to David,” 55-77.

³⁴⁶ The importance of the metaphorical expressions for the Davidic dynasty tradition was already noted by Duling in his article Duling, “The Promises to David,” 55-77. Duling, however, erred in his claim that the titular use of the designation Son of David was a deviation from the non titular, metaphorical evolution of the promise tradition (*ibid.*, 68-69). Novakovic, in my opinion, has a stronger argument when she claims that “the hope for a Davidic Messiah called the Son of David was a direct result of the application of Davidic promises to the changed political situation under the Hasmonean rulers and the Roman occupation of Palestine.” Novakovic, *Messiah*, 12. Also Charlesworth stresses the importance of the influence of historical circumstances on the formation of messianic thoughts (Charlesworth, “From Messianology to Christology,” 24).

be found in a collection of 18 psalms from the first century B.C.E.,³⁴⁷ written originally in Hebrew and soon translated into Greek and Syriac,³⁴⁸ which were later ascribed (probably by their editor)³⁴⁹ to Solomon.

The Psalms of Solomon reflect the theology of a group close to the Pharisaic movement.³⁵⁰ The messianic expectations of a future messianic king, Son of David, are preserved in two of these psalms, namely in *Pss. Sol.* 17 and 18, which we will discuss in detail below.

2.2.1.1. Psalm of Solomon 17

As most scholars agree “Psalm of Solomon 17 is perhaps the most important text within the corpus of Psalms of Solomon for it contains the most detailed pre-Christian description of the Davidic messiah.”³⁵¹ The Psalm³⁵² was written after the year 63 B.C.E. as critique of non-Davidic Hasmonean rulers, who have claimed for themselves not only the High-Priest office but also the royalty, and their supporters; and as a reaction to Pompey’s conquest of Judea, the loss of political independence, the desecration of the temple and the annexation of Israel into the Roman Empire.³⁵³

The structure of *Pss. Sol.* 17 is according to Pomykala³⁵⁴ the following: opening confession (vv. 1-3), complaint (vv. 4-20), plea (vv. 21-43), closing benediction, prayer, and confession (vv.44-46).

The Psalm begins with the author’s confession “Lord, you yourself are our king forever and ever” (κύριε σὺ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς ἡμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι

³⁴⁷ Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” *OTP* 2:640-641; Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 50-51; Oegema, *The Anointed and His People*, 103; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 159; Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 106.

³⁴⁸ Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” *OTP* 2:640.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 641.

³⁵⁰ Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 160.

³⁵¹ Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 129.

³⁵² For comment, see Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 129-144, 175-179; Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 49-56; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 159-170; Oegema, *The Anointed and His People*, 103-108; Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King*, 106-109. For English translations, see Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” *OTP* 2:665-669; Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 129-133. The following translation is mine, unless noted.

³⁵³ On the historical setting and background of *Pss. Sol.* 17, see Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 135-144; Oegema, *The Anointed and His People*, 103-104; Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 49-53.

³⁵⁴ Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 160.

– *Pss. Sol.* 17,1a), which is repeated with similar words at the end of the Psalm (*Pss. Sol.* 17,46), and creates the framework of the whole plea. From the author’s point of view, God is truly the only one king, above all and everything. But at the same time God’s kingship is supposed to be executed by his Anointed One. Therefore in *Pss. Sol.* 17,4 God’s promise to David, from 2 Sam 7,12-16, is intentionally recalled and serves as a basis for author’s plea:

σύ κύριε ἠρετίσω τὸν Δαυιδ βασιλέα ἐπὶ Ἰσραηλ
καὶ σὺ ὥμοσας αὐτῷ περὶ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα
τοῦ μὴ ἐκλείπειν ἀπέναντί σου βασιλείου αὐτοῦ

Lord, you chose David *to be* king over Israel,
and you swore to him about his descendants forever,
that his king should not fail before you.

The wording betrays its dependence not only on 2 Sam 7,12-16, but also on Ps 89,4-5 and Jer 33,17 which are all the key texts of the Davidic dynasty tradition. Note especially the Greek ὥμοσας which corresponds to the Hebrew עָשָׂה in Ps 89,4 (יְהַבְּשֵׁ / ὥμοσα); σπέρματος to עַרְוִי in 2 Sam 7,12 (עָרְוִי / σπέρμα σου) and Ps 89,5; εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα to מְלִוְעַד / εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα in 2 Sam 7,13.16; and βασιλείου corresponding to מַלְכוּת in 2 Sam 7,12 (יְהַלְכֶנּוּ / τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ) and 2 Sam 7,16 (אֲהַלְכֶנּוּ / καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ). Note also that only two parts of Nathan’s prophecy are recalled – the dynasty promise and the promise of the eternal reign, while the father-son relationship between the descendant of David and God is omitted.

In what follows the author, pursuing the deuteronomical schema of guilt and punishment, confesses that the promise to David was not fulfilled “because of our sins” (*Pss. Sol.* 17,5) and describes the consequences these sins have led to: usurpation of the throne of David by illegitimate rulers (*Pss. Sol.* 17,5-6); their overthrow by aliens and following occupation (*Pss. Sol.* 17,7-14) which led to desecration of Jerusalem and the corruption of the Israelites, the flight of the pious into the wilderness (*Pss. Sol.* 17,16-18); and to the expansion of

sinfulness, lawlessness and injustice as it is strongly expressed in *Pss. Sol.* 17,19b-20:

For there was no one among them who practiced righteousness and justice. From their ruler to the smallest of the people *they were* in every kind of sin: the king *was* in the transgression of the law, and the judge in disobedience, and the people in sin.

The rise of the Hasmonean dynasty, Pompey's occupation of Jerusalem in the year 63 B.C.E, the deportation of Aristobulos II., and the reign of Hyrcanus II. as High priest are the events which lie behind these complaints and create the historical background of the Psalm.

In this situation, full of misery and injustice, the author prays to God (*Pss. Sol.* 17,21-43) for the coming of the eschatological King, Son of David, the Messiah who would restore the Davidic monarchy and fulfill the promise given to David. His prayer/plea begins with following words (*Pss. Sol.* 17,21):

ἰδέ κύριε καὶ ἀνάστησον αὐτοῖς τὸν βασιλέα αὐτῶν υἱὸν Δαυιδ

εἰς τὸν καιρὸν ὃν εἴλου σύ ὁ θεὸς τοῦ βασιλεῦσαι ἐπὶ Ἰσραηλ παῖδά σου

R. B. Wright³⁵⁵ translates this verse as "See, Lord, and raise up for them their king, the son of David, to rule over your servant Israel in the time known to you, O God." And according to Eduard Lohse in this verse "the title Son of David occurs for the first time."³⁵⁶ However, detailed analysis of the text shows that this statement is not completely accurate and needs to be slightly modified.

The verbal translation of *Pss. Sol.* 17,21 would be:

See Lord and rise up for them their King, son of David,

in the time which you chose, o God, to rule over Israel, your servant.

If we closely examine the prayer, we see the author asking the Lord to raise up the King, who would rule over Israel. The wording of *Pss. Sol.* 17,21 once again recalls 2 Sam 7,12 and due to the usage of the word ἀνίστημι, which corresponds to the Hebrew verb נָשָׂא in hiphil, is *Pss. Sol.* 17,21 linked not only

³⁵⁵ Wright, "Psalms of Solomon," *OTP* 2:667.

³⁵⁶ Lohse, "υἱὸς Δαυιδ," *TDNT* 8:480.

with 2 Sam 7,12 but within the structure of *Pss. Sol.* 17 also logically with *Pss. Sol.* 17,4.

It is important to note the way that the definitive articles are used. The definitive article is used with the word king – τὸν βασιλέα, followed by a possessive pronoun αὐτῶν, stressing thus the word king. So we can translate the plea: See, Lord, and raise up for them their King³⁵⁷, – i.e., the One, eschatological king, whose task is described in the following verses. This King could also be called the “last One,” as he is the eschatological King, son of David. The Greek term υἱὸς Δαυίδ is in this case used without the definitive article, – i.e., grammatically not in a titular sense, but rather in attributive one. If we agree with Nolan that “a clear distinction should be maintained between a son of David and the Son of David” when “the first is any David, the second is the Messiah who would restore the shalom of yore, the pax Davidica,”³⁵⁸ then (to be grammatically correct) we would have to insist on the translation “their King, son of David”

However the significance of this passage is not limited to grammatical issues. We have already mentioned the historical affairs which influenced the author of *Pss. Sol.* 17. We claimed that the illegitimate rule of Hasmoneans and the Roman occupation led the author to express hope for the eschatological kingly Messiah who would fulfill the Nathan’s prophecy of 2 Sam 7,12-16 – i.e., who would be the descendant of David – the Son of David. It is without doubts that it is exactly the Davidic sonship of the King, which was of a great importance for the author of *Pss. Sol.* 17 and what mattered. In my opinion there is a negligible difference in calling the eschatological Messiah, whose task, role and character is so vividly described in *Pss. Sol.* 17 “the King, son of David” or “the Son of David” in clear titular (absolute) sense. I admit that the author of *Pss. Sol.* 17 did not use the designation the Son of David in grammatically titular sense, although this statement can not be definitive if we assume that the original text of the Psalms of Solomon was written in Hebrew and we are dealing with the Greek translation. However it can be claimed that

³⁵⁷ I intentionally present King with a capital K to draw attention to the emphasis placed on this word by the definitive article.

³⁵⁸ Nolan, *The Royal Son of God*, 149.

although the designation υἱὸς Δαυίδ is used in *Pss. Sol.* 17,21 grammatically in an attributive sense, rather than in titular one, the content of the title – i.e., what we understand to be the titular (absolute) usage of this designation, is evidently present in *Pss. Sol.* 17.

Thus Lohse's claim must be corrected: grammatically taken, the title the Son of David does not occur for the first time in the Psalm of Solomon 17, however what occurs is messianic hope connected with the eschatological King, Son of David, the Messiah. In *Pss. Sol.* 17, υἱὸς Δαυίδ is not used grammatically with definite article, however it is clearly used in titular sense. The Psalm of Solomon 17 provided thus a solid basis for the possibility to address the eschatological royal Davidic Messiah by the title “(the) Son of David”; leaving behind clearly defined ideas concerning the character and the role of this future deliverer of Israel. Moreover, the example of *Pss. Sol.* 17 demonstrates that the absence of a definite article can be relatively insignificant with regards to the importance and titular force of the designation υἱὸς Δαυίδ. Therefore the line can be translated as: “See Lord and rise up for them their King, (the) Son of David, in the time which you chose, o God, to rule over Israel, your servant.”

In contrast to the Hasmonean rulers, who usurped power for themselves, the messianic King, Son of David, whom the author of *Pss. Sol.* 17 asked for, will be raised by God himself – according to his will in the chosen time, which is known only to the Lord. Thus even in this plea, the superiority of God which was expressed already in *Pss. Sol.* 17,1, is stressed once more and at the same time the legitimacy of the eschatological Davidic ruler is secured, as Pomykala³⁵⁹ noted. The King, Son of David does not usurp the royal office but he is God's agent raised up by God who himself chooses the time for fulfilling of the Davidic dynastic promise.

The task of the King, Son of David is uniquely determined – he is destined to “rule over Israel”, God's servant (*Pss. Sol.* 17,21b). In the following verses, the role and character of this royal messianic Son of David, as well as the

³⁵⁹ Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 162.

nature of his reign are described. His task is according to *Pss. Sol.* 17,22-25 following:

²² Undergird him with the strength to break in peaces unrighteous rulers,
to cleanse Jerusalem from Gentiles who trample her in destruction.

²³ In wisdom of righteousness to drive out sinners from the inheritance,
to smash the arrogance of sinners like a potter's jar.

²⁴ To shatter all their substance with an iron rod,
to destroy lawless nations with the word of his mouth.

²⁵ To make the nations flee from his presence at his threat,
to reprove sinners with the thought of their heart.

Many scholars recognize³⁶⁰ that this prayer's primary influence was Isa 11,2-4 and Psalm 2. The primary task of the Messiah, Son of David, is to rule over his people. In order to accomplish this task, he will have to destroy the unrighteous rulers – i.e., Hasmoneans, the non-Davidic rulers who claimed for themselves the Davidic throne; expel the Gentile invaders – the Romans, who in the year 63 B.C.E. conquered Jerusalem, and to purify the desecrated holy city.

It is unclear how this purification would occur but it seems that it will not be accomplished by the sword. *Pss. Sol.* 17,24a says that the Messiah, Son of David will "... destroy lawless nations with the word of his mouth." In the next verse it is told that just the threat of the Messiah will force nations to flee from his presence. *Pss. Sol.* 17,35a repeats the phrase, "he shall strike the earth with the word of his mouth forever," which is an allusion to Isa 11,4. Similarly as the words about smashing the arrogance of sinners as a potter's jar (*Pss. Sol.* 17,23) are allusion to an old biblical picture used in Psalm 2,9, however slightly modified by the author of *Pss. Sol.* 17.

Thus while in Ps 2,9 the nations are broken by the iron rod, in *Pss. Sol.* 17,23-24 the sinners, their very substance, are the matter of destruction. The author's aim is directed against Jewish opponents, whose

³⁶⁰ Cf. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 162-164, 168-169; Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 141-142; Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 54-56.

fate will be worse than that of the Gentiles. The Gentiles will still play a, though subordinated, role in the future messianic kingdom (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17,31), and the attitude of the Davidic king can be even positive towards them, as expressed in *Pss. Sol.* 17,34b. The sinners will be destroyed and there is no place for them in the future kingdom. This demonstrates that the Psalm of Solomon 17 is directed not only against the Romans, but also against the Jews – strictly speaking against Hasmoneans and their supporters. Pomykala concludes: “Accordingly this deep division between pious Jews and sinners indicates an ideology in which the author and his community no longer look for reform of the current social and political landscape, but envision a completely new configuration.”³⁶¹

Thus although *Pss. Sol.* 17 undoubtedly discusses the destruction of the sinners and the Gentile overlords, the destruction-language which is used in *Pss. Sol.* 17 is heavily dependent on Isa 11,4 with its picture of the future Davidid. A common refrain in the Psalm states that the king’s power will be implemented by his word. However, it is never stated in the text that the destruction of the sinners would be accomplished by a military force. As well, according to *Pss. Sol.* 17,33, the eschatological Messiah, Son of David, will not repeat the sins of David’s son Solomon:

For he shall not rely on horse and rider and bow,
nor shall he multiply for himself gold and silver for war.
Nor shall he gather hopes in a multitude of people in a day of war.

This verse states that the Messianic King will not rely on the military force like his ancestors but rather exclusively on the Lord, as it is claimed in *Pss. Sol.* 17,34a. However, it must be noted that the last part of the verse 33 theoretically admits the possibility of war. Neither Collins’ claim that “the initial role of this king is undeniably violent”³⁶² or Klausner’s that “there is no suggestion of wars and bloodiness in his time...”³⁶³ is completely correct.

³⁶¹ Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 163.

³⁶² Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 54

³⁶³ Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, 323.

The Psalm primarily stresses the peaceful reign of the Davidic Messiah over Israel and all the nations, rather than stressing violence or military actions of the future King. In fact, this King is portrayed mainly in political terms – as a ruler and judge, but not as a warrior. If the author really intended to depict an apocalyptic war unleashed by the warlike Messiah, he could have used clearer imagery with more detail. Charlesworth³⁶⁴ correctly suggested that the Messiah of *Pss. Sol.* 17 is not portrayed as a bloody warrior such as the one found in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Genesis 49,11, dating circa to 200 C.E.:

“How noble is the king, Messiah, who is going to rise from the house of Judah. He has girded his lions and come down, setting in order the order of battle with his enemies and killing kings with their rulers (and there is not a king or ruler who shall stand before him), reddening the mountains with the blood of their slain. With his garments dipped in blood, he is like one who treads grapes in the press.”³⁶⁵

We can conclude that although the purification of Jerusalem and the expulsion of alien rulers are included in the portrayal of the Messiah in *Pss. Sol.* 17, there is only limited evidence to suggest that this is to be accomplished by military force or angelic destruction. As we have already noted the texts of Ps 2 and Isa 11,1-4 had a decisive influence on the author of *Pss. Sol.* 17, as a result also influenced his elaborate depiction of the future Son of David. This depiction also included a traditional motif that the branch from the stump of Jesse, the sprout of David “shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked” (Isa 11,4b).

I think that the meaning of the purification’s picture should not be overestimated. It is more appropriate to claim that the Lord himself, as it is obvious from the first verse of *Pss. Sol.* 17, it is God who is in charge, will purify Israel through his Anointed One with the word of his mouth. Without this purification the eschatological Davidic king could hardly fulfill his task to exercise the royal office over Israel. The purification is only an inevitable prerequisite, *condicio sine qua non* – and in this sense it also should be

³⁶⁴ Charlesworth, “The Concept of the Messiah in the Pseudepigrapha,” *ANRW* II.19.1: 198-199.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 199 quoting Bowker, *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature*, 278.

understood. The Messiah, who rises from text of the *Pss. Sol. 17*, bears the traits of the wise and righteous king and judge rather than the traits of the warrior.

As stated above the overthrow of the illegitimate rulers (*Pss. Sol. 17,22*), the exiling of the Gentile occupiers and the ejection of all aliens and sinners (*Pss. Sol. 17,22-25*) are not the only tasks of the Messiah – in fact these actions are just the beginning, foreshadowing of events to come. After these tasks are accomplished, the Messiah “shall gather a holy people whom he shall lead in righteousness. And he shall judge the tribes of the people that have been made holy by the Lord his God” (*Pss. Sol. 17,26*). Thus, the Messiah’s task is not just to rule, but also to judge (cf. *Pss. Sol. 17,29*) and finally to gather the exiles – probably from all twelve tribes as can be understood from *Pss. Sol. 17,28*: “And he shall distribute them according to their tribes upon the land, and alien and foreigner shall no longer live among them.” By accomplishing these tasks the Messiah will fulfill God’s original intentions, which could not be achieved before his coming because of Israel’s sin.

However, the Messiah’s role and tasks are not only judicial and royal, or limited to Israel (*Pss. Sol. 17,30-32*):

³⁰ And he shall have the people of the nations to serve him under his yoke,

and he shall glorify the Lord in the sight of the whole earth.

And he shall cleanse Jerusalem in holiness as it was at the beginning.

³¹ So that nations shall come from the ends of the earth to see his glory, bringing as gifts her sons who had become quite weak,

and to see the glory of the Lord with which God has glorified her.

³² And he shall be a righteous king over them, taught by God.

And there shall be no unrighteousness among them in his days,

for all shall be holy, and their king shall be the Lord Messiah.

It is apparent in *Pss. Sol. 17,30-32*, that the eschatological King plays more than a marginal role in the world’s stage – in fact his role is an universal one.

He is not only the King of Israel, but de facto he is the supreme ruler of the whole world. The words “and he shall be a righteous king over them” are supposed to be understood in an universal sense – i.e., they refer not only to Jewish nation (Israel) but also to the Gentile nations, who are also included in the Messiah’s area of influence, as already suggested by Davenport.³⁶⁶ The Gentile nations will not only glorify the Lord, thus fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy (cf. Isa 11,10; 60,1-18; 66,18), but they will also pay homage to the Davidic King.

There is a small difference between *Pss. Sol.* 17 and Isa 66,18. In Isa 66 the nations serve the Lord himself while in *Pss. Sol.* 17,30 they serve the King, Son of David. The difference is slight when one realizes that the Davidic King, the Messiah, is the Lord’s representative on earth. This close link between God and his Anointed One meant that it was possible to transfer the deeds, such as gathering of the exiles (cf. Jer 30,3), originally expected to be fulfilled by the Lord himself, to his agent – the Messiah.

Not only the tasks and roles³⁶⁷ of the Messiah, Son of David, are described in *Pss. Sol.* 17, but his character as well. He is God’s appointed righteous king, the one whom God has chosen, “taught by God” (*Pss. Sol.* 17,32) who does not rely on weapons (*Pss. Sol.* 17,33) but only on the Lord: “The Lord himself is his king, the hope of the one who is strong through hope in God” (*Pss. Sol.* 17,34a; cf. 17,39). He is endowed with power, wisdom and righteousness, filled with the spirit of holiness and without sin, as is claimed in *Pss. Sol.* 17,36-39:

³⁶ And he himself (shall be) pure from sin, (in order) to rule a great people,
to reprove rulers and to drive away sinners by the strength of his word.

³⁷ And he shall not weaken in his days, (relying) upon his God,

³⁶⁶ Davenport, “The Anointed of the Lord in Psalms of Solomon 17,” 75.

³⁶⁷ I am following Jan Heller’s thought that the designation Messiah is not only a title but also a commission and task to be God’s ambassador, God’s instrument, and fulfiller of his will. Heller, *Bůh sestupující*, 23-24. The roles, or offices, in which the son of David enters, are in the categories, according to *Pss. Sol.* 17, following: the king, the judge and the teacher.

for God made him powerful in the Holy Spirit
and wise in the counsel of understanding, with strength and righteousness.

³⁸ And the blessing of the Lord shall be with him in strength,
and he shall not weaken.

³⁹ His hope (shall be) in the Lord.

And who can prevail against him?

He shall be “mighty in his actions and strong in the fear of God, shepherding the Lord’s flock faithfully and in righteousness, and he shall not let any of them fall sick in their pasture” (*Pss. Sol.* 17,40). His compassion and care will not be limited to Israel, but will extend to all nations (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17,34b). His actions will not only affect the socio-political conditions, so that there will be peace around the world as all the nations will submit to him (*Pss. Sol.* 17,30-32), but also the nature of humanity itself, as expressed in *Pss. Sol.* 17,32:

καὶ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς δίκαιος διδασκτὸς ὑπὸ θεοῦ ἐπ’ αὐτοῦς
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀδικία ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν
ὅτι πάντες ἅγιοι καὶ βασιλεὺς αὐτῶν χριστὸς κυρίως

And he shall be a righteous king over them, taught by God.

And there shall be no unrighteousness among them in his days,
for all shall be holy, and their king shall be the Lord Messiah.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁸ There is an important theological problem at this point in the text. Although all the Greek manuscripts read χριστὸς κύριος – a phrase which should be translated as “the Lord Messiah”, various scholars believe that this reading is a translation error of the Hebrew construct משיח יהוה, possibly inserted by a Christian scribe (so e.g., Jonge. “The Expectation of the Future in the Psalms of Solomon,” 14-15.) Other scholars suggest that the proper reading is χριστὸς κυρίου – the Lord’s Messiah. (Cf. Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 131-132, n. 2. For further literature on this problem, see *ibid.*) R.R. Hann and R.B. Wright however correctly argued that there is no textual evidence for reading “the Lord’s Messiah” (χριστὸς κυρίου) and that this reading is based on the assumption, that the phrase משיח אדוני could have meant only “the Lord’s Messiah” in Palestinian Judentum. See Hann, “Christos Kyrios in PsSol 17.32,” 620-627; Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” *OTP* 2:667-668, n. z. I am following Wright’s translation and translate the phrase as “the Lord Messiah.”

Not only that there will not be unrighteousness, but also arrogance and oppression shall be absent (*Pss. Sol.* 17,41). Another words expressed the Messiah will inaugurate the age of righteousness, holiness, happiness and blessing.

As it is evident from the text of *Pss. Sol.* 17, the eschatological Son of David as well as his reign is characterized in idealized way. He is all what David was and his descendants not – in fact he is further more. He possesses the positive characteristics ascribed to David, whose picture was idealized in during the time, and of Solomon, but in opposite to them he does not bear any trait of their errors. However it must be added that despite of this idealized portraying, the Messiah of *Pss. Sol.* 17 remains a human figure from flesh and bones, a legitimate descendant of David anointed by God, the King who fulfills Nathan's prophecy. His main characteristic, scathed on the background of Isa 11,1-4, are: full reliance on God, power in Holy Spirit and wisdom. He is presented mainly as a king and judge and partly as a teacher but, as we have concluded, not as a warrior.

When we read *Pss. Sol.* 17 in the light of 2 Sam 7,12-16 we observe that the first and third from God's promises to David are stressed – the Davidic descent of the Messiah, in contrast to the Hasmoneans, and the perpetuity of his reign. Although there is no explicit reference to suggest that Son of David will be the son of God, it is indirectly expressed in the second promise of God in Nathan's prophecy³⁶⁹ and is attested by inauguration psalms like Psalm 2. The close relationship between God and his Messiah, Son of David, is however presupposed. In *Pss. Sol.* 17 the Lord Messiah is risen and taught by God (*Pss. Sol.* 17,32), gifted by the Holy Spirit with power and wisdom, and putting his trust solely and entirely in his God.

In his short commentary on *Pss. Sol.* 17, Torijano claimed that “the future Son of David described in the Psalm is depicted according to the principal positive traits that characterized Solomon in 1 Kings”³⁷⁰ noting common

³⁶⁹ 2 Sam 7,14a: “I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.”

³⁷⁰ Torijano, Solomon the Esoteric King, 107.

motives such as wisdom, justice and peaceful character of his reign. Torijano concluded that in the first century B.C.E. there existed “a clear link between the title ‘Son of David’ and Solomon and Psalm of Solomon 17 was composed with that link in mind...”³⁷¹ and that “the author of Psalm of Solomon 17 was asking for a ‘Son of David’ who would be a Salomo redivivus without the taint of his errors.”³⁷²

Torijano is partially correct in his claim that there are links between Solomon and the expected Son of David in *Pss. Sol. 17*. Both Davidic figures have similar qualities – Solomon, as well as the eschatological messianic King, is called Son of David. It should be noted that Solomon was the physical son of David. Aside from that fact, both figures extended (or were expected to) the borders of Israel, improved Jerusalem and received tribute from foreign nations, both exercised justice and both were endowed with wisdom.

However, it should be noted that the character of the Davidic figure in *Pss. Sol. 17* is modeled on the figure in Isa 11,2, which sees wisdom as one of the most important characteristics of the idealized eschatological Davidic king, and that this passage had a formative influence on the portraying of Son of David in the 17th Psalm of Solomon. It is certainly true that the positive aspects of David and Solomon as well, were used, and expanded, in portrayals of the eschatological Son of David who was to fulfill Nathan’s prophecy, while their negative aspects were rejected. The neglect of these negative attributes can be examined in *Pss. Sol. 17,33-34*, where the text states that the future Son of David will not rely on horses, riders, bows and will not multiply gold and silver – i.e., he will not repeat the sins of Solomon who gathered wealth, horses and chariots (cf. 1 Kgs 10,26-27).

However, it is one thing to see the similarities between the figure of Solomon, son of David, and the expected Davidic King, and the other to claim that the author of *Pss. Sol. 17* had to have Salomo redivivus in mind. All the similarities mentioned above, together with the close relationship between *Pss. Sol. 17* and canonical Psalm 72, also known as Psalm of Solomon,

³⁷¹ Ibid., 109.

³⁷² Ibid., 109.

probably led the later redactor to the attribution of the collection of 18 psalms to Solomon, but Torijano's claim that "Solomon, then, as the 'Son of David' was taken as the prototype of the messiah at least in some Jewish currents of thought"³⁷³ seems a bit exaggerated.

Torijano is certainly correct regarding two matters. First, the figure of the eschatological Son of David of *Pss. Sol.* 17 is, at least partially modelled after the figure of Solomon, son of David. Secondly, there existed a clear link between the title (the) Son of David and Solomon. However this link is found in the exorcistic rather than the messianic categories. As we have seen in subchapter 2.1., the originally genealogical designation son of David, was by the first century C.E. known as an identification and address of Solomon in the context of exorcism.

The Psalm of Solomon 17 represents the oldest expression of the hope for the coming of the Davidic Messiah, whose person, role and character, although influenced by the figure of Solomon, son of David, are modeled above all on the pattern of Isa 11,1-4.

2.2.1.2. Psalm of Solomon 18

The later Eighteenth Psalm of Solomon, which was most likely composed as a conclusion to the collection of psalms ascribed to Solomon,³⁷⁴ looks forward to the coming of the Messiah. Although the Psalm never directly states that the Messiah will be the Son of David, it can be, regarding the context, assumed. In *Pss. Sol.* 18,5 the author prays:

καθαρίσαι ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ εἰς ἡμέραν ἐλέους ἐν εὐλογίᾳ
εἰς ἡμέραν ἐκλογῆς ἐν ἀνάξει χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ.

Wright³⁷⁵ translated this verse as "May God cleanse Israel for the day of mercy in blessing, for the appointed day when his messiah will reign" and Charlesworth³⁷⁶ as "May God cleanse Israel in the day of mercy in blessing, in

³⁷³ Ibid., 109.

³⁷⁴ Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 209. For English translation and short commentary, see Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 206-209; Wright, "Psalms of Solomon," *OTP* 2:669-670.

³⁷⁵ Wright, "Psalms of Solomon," *OTP* 2:669.

³⁷⁶ Charlesworth, "The Concept of the Messiah in the Pseudepigrapha," *ANRW* II.19.1:199.

the day of election when he brings back His Messiah.” None of these translations are completely accurate.

The Greek word, ἀνάγω can according to the BDAG be translated as “to bring back,” but is typically translated as to bring up, in substantive form then bringing up, raising up.³⁷⁷ Therefore, the correct translation is:

May God cleanse Israel for the day of mercy in blessing,
for the day of election when He raises up his Messiah.

In the fifth verse of *Pss. Sol.* 18, the psalmist prays for the purification of Israel on the day when the Messiah will rise up. Although Charlesworth’s translation, which led him to the question whether the author of *Pss. Sol.* 18 had in mind an idea of a pre-existing Messiah, question which he however answers negatively, is wrong, his understanding of the fifth verse is accurate:

“The passage... seems to refer back to the memory that the Davidic kings were anointed ones (that is messiahs), and forward to the dream that God will bring back (*raise up*) a king like David, who will embody all the aspirations and hopes that Israel had for David and his descendant.”³⁷⁸

What the author is presenting us with is the idea of the re-raising of the Davidic dynasty in the person of the Messiah, an idea based on the promise given to David in 2 Sam 7,12-16.

In the following verses (*Pss. Sol.* 18,6-9) the character of this Davidic Messiah as well as the nature of his reign are described:

⁶ Blessed are those born in those days,
to see the good things of the Lord which he will do for the coming generation.

⁷ Under the rod of discipline of the Messiah of the Lord, in the fear of his God,

in wisdom of spirit, and of righteousness and of strength,

⁸ to direct man in works of righteousness, in the fear of God
to establish them all before the Lord.

³⁷⁷ Cf. “ἀνάγω,” BDAG, 61-62.

³⁷⁸ Charlesworth, “The Concept of the Messiah in the Pseudepigrapha,” *ANRW* II.19.1:199. *Italics mine.*

⁹ A good generation in the fear of God in the days of mercy.

Selah.

The figure, character, and role of the Messiah in *Pss. Sol.* 18 is similar to the one described in *Pss. Sol.* 17 and Isa 11,1-4. This Messiah fears God, is endowed with wisdom, righteousness, strength and is subordinated to God himself. However, there are slight differences when this text is compared to Psalm of Solomon 17. In *Pss. Sol.* 18, the emphasis is shifted from the figure of the Messiah to the ideal times of his reign. This Messiah does not act like a judge and there is no trace of annihilation of his enemies. Also his role as educator is emphasized more than in *Pss. Sol.* 17. These small differences do not mean that the Messiah from *Pss. Sol.* 18 is different from the one pictured in *Pss. Sol.* 17. He is not, maybe just some other accents are stressed.

We can conclude that *Pss. Sol.* 18 also contains a portrayal of the Davidic Messiah, although the designation Son of David is not present in the Psalm and that this portrayal is complementary to the one preserved in *Pss. Sol.* 17.

2.2.1.3. Conclusion: The Messianic Son of David in Psalms of Solomon

Our analysis of Psalms of Solomon 17 and 18 has shown that in the first century B.C.E., royal messianic expectations were connected with the Son of David (although used without the definitive article, the designation υἱὸς Δαυίδ has a titular force/meaning in *Pss. Sol.* 17,21), who was expected to liberate and purify Jerusalem (*Pss. Sol.* 17,22), to destroy the illegitimate rulers; to eject foreign oppressors (*Pss. Sol.* 17,22-25), to gather the exiles (*Pss. Sol.* 17,26), to renew the original tribal settlement (*Pss. Sol.* 17,28), to judge rightly Israel and all nations (*Pss. Sol.* 17,29), to rule in purity and righteousness over all the nations (*Pss. Sol.* 17,30-32), exercising the office of king (*Pss. Sol.* 17,32,42); as well as being a judge (*Pss. Sol.* 17,43) and teacher (*Pss. Sol.* 18,8).

It has been demonstrated that this messianic Son of David was expected to destroy the sinners and lawless nations (*Pss. Sol.* 17,23-24), but he was not portrayed as a bloody warrior (*Pss. Sol.* 17,33) and can not be labeled as a war-like Messiah. It is his reign, characterized by peace, righteousness, holiness

(*Pss. Sol.* 17,32), and mercy (*Pss. Sol.* 18,9) rather than destruction which is stressed.

The Messiah himself is taught by God and he wholly relies on the Lord (*Pss. Sol.* 17,32). He is without sin, filled with the Holy Spirit endowed with wisdom, strength and righteousness (*Pss. Sol.* 17,36-39; *Pss. Sol.* 18,7). Although idealized, without the traits of Solomon's or David's errors, the Davidic Messiah does not cease to be a human figure, modeled on the pattern of Isa 11,1-4.

2.2.2. Qumran Scrolls

Within the various messianic ideas and concepts preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls³⁷⁹ the expectation of Davidic Messiah³⁸⁰ can be found in Commentary on Genesis A (4QCommGen A = 4Q252), formerly known as Patriarchal Blessings or Peshar Genesis; 4QFlorilegium (4QFlor = 4Q174), known also as Midrash on Eschatology^a; Peshar on Isaiah (4QpIsa^a = 4Q161) or Sefer Hamilhamah (4Q285). A closer examination of each text follows.

2.2.2.1. The Patriarchal Blessing 4QCommGen A (4Q252 = 4QP Bless)

The first of the relevant documents comes from the fourth Qumran cave and contains an extended reference to God's covenant with David and hope for coming of a Davidic Messiah. The scroll of 4Q252, also known as Patriarchal Blessings or the Commentary on Genesis A (4QCommGen A), can be paleographically dated to the second half of the first century B.C.E.³⁸¹

³⁷⁹ The extensive bibliography on the problem of the messianic concepts in Qumran can be found in Oegema, *The Anointed and His People*, 86, n. 51 (sorted in chronological order, with further references).

³⁸⁰ On Davidic Messiah in Qumran, see e.g., Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 151-175. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 56-63; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 171-216. For further literature, see *ibid.*

³⁸¹ Trafton, "Commentary on Genesis A (4Q252 = 4QCommGen A = 4QP Bless)," 204. For detail commentary and further literature, see Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 180-191. Cf. Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 160-162; Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 61-63. Pomykala dates the scroll to the period from 30 B.C.E. to 70 C.E. (Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 181).

It is a matter of discussion whether the designation “pesher” is appropriate or not.³⁸² The word פֶּשֶׁר אשר itself is present in 4Q252 5 IV, 5 and the text bears traits of pesharim, such as the citation of the biblical text followed by identification and explanation. In contrast to the continuous or thematic pesharim the scroll only comments on several passages from the book of Genesis.

For our purposes the passage from fragment six, column five, lines 1-7 which contains messianic comment on Gen 49,10 is significant. For clarity, let us first quote the Hebrew text of Gen 49,10 which reads:

לֹא יִסּוּר שֵׁבֶט מִיְהוּדָה וּמַחְקֵק מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו עַד כִּי־יָבֹא (שִׁילֹה) וְלֹא יִקָּח עִמּוֹ:

The verse can be translated: “The scepter (שֵׁבֶט) shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff (וּמַחְקֵק) from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs (or until Shiloh comes); and the obedience of the peoples is his.”

The text³⁸³ of the pesher 4Q252 6 V, 1-7 is following:

¹] -- לֹא יִסּוּר יִסּוּר שְׁבֵט מִשִּׁבְט יְהוּדָה בְּהִיּוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל מִמֶּשֶׁל
²] לֹא יִקָּח עִמּוֹ יוֹשֵׁב כִּסֵּא לְדָוִד כִּי הַמַּחְקֵק הִיא בְרִית הַמַּלְכוּת
³] וְאֵלֶּי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַמָּה הַדְּנָגִים עַד בּוֹא מְשִׁיחַ הַצֶּדֶק צִמָּח
⁴ דָּוִד כִּי לֹא יִלְוֶרְעוּ נִתְּנָה בְרִית מַלְכוּת עִמּוֹ עַד דְּרוֹת עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר
⁵ שְׁמֵר] הַתּוֹרָה עִם אֲנָשִׁי הַיְחָד . כִּי
⁶] הִיא כִּנְסַח אֲנָשִׁי
⁷] הַנֶּחֱן

Translation:

¹ A scepter/ruler shall [not] depart from the tribe of Judah when there is dominion for Israel;

² [there will not] be cut off one sitting (on) the throne for David. For “the staff” is the covenant of kingship;

³⁸² See Lim, “The Chronology of the Flood Story in a Qumran Text (4Q252),” 295; Brooke, “Qumran Pesher,” 483-503. Cf. Dimat, “Pesharim, Qumran,” ABD 5:249-250.

³⁸³ I am following the text and its division as found in Trafton, “Commentary on Genesis A (4Q252 = 4QCommGen A = 4QP Bless),” 216-217. Translation mine. For different translations, see García Martínez and Tigchelaar, Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition, 1:504-505; Collins, The Scepter and the Star, 62; Pomykala, The Davidic Dynasty Tradition, 183; Atkinson, I Cried to the Lord, 160.

³ [and the thous]ands of Israel are “the standards” (vacat) until the Messiah of righteousness comes, the Shoot of
⁴ David. For to him and to his seed has been given the covenant of kingship (over) his people for everlasting generations, who
⁵ kept °[...] the Torah with the men of the Community, for
⁶ [...]° it is the assembly of the men of
⁷ [...]° he gave

The Qumran text begins with an abbreviated quotation from Gen 49,10, which is supplemented by the conditional cause “when there is dominion for Israel” which attempts to explain, why the prophecy of Gen 49,10, here understood as referring to the Davidic Messiah, was not yet fulfilled and why there is not Davidic king sitting on the throne in the present time, although promised.³⁸⁴ At the same time, the addition sets a condition under which this will happen, namely when Israel gains dominion, which will be, according to the War Scroll (1QM I, 5; 1QM XVII, 7-8) at the time of the annihilation of the enemies of Israel in the eschatological battle between the Sons of the Light and the Sons of the Darkness.

With the help of the quotation of Jer 33,17 the author of the pesher then alludes to the Davidic dynasty promise (on the Davidic covenant, in 4Q252 6 V, 2 identified with ruler’s staff (המחקק) from Gen 49,10, see 2 Sam 23,5; Ps 89,4) and expresses a hope for the coming of “the Messiah of righteousness” (משיח הצדק), interpreting the difficult phrase עַד כִּי־יָבֹא (שִׁלּוֹה) [שִׁלּוֹה] from Gen 49,10 as reference to Messiah’s coming (עַד בּוֹא מֹשִׁיחַ הַצֶּדֶק צְמַח דָּוִד).

The word Shiloh (שִׁלּוֹה) from the text of Gen 49,10, usually translated as “to whom it belongs” is thus unambiguously understood by the author of the pesher as the name or designation for the Messiah. This is significant as a similar interpretation is attested to not only in the Targums (Targum Onqelos to Gen 49,10, Targum Neofiti, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Fragmentary

³⁸⁴ It was Pomykala, who stressed the importance of this question for the understanding of the whole pesher. Cf. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 184.

Targum) but also in the rabbinic literature,³⁸⁵ especially in the midrashic texts *Gen. Rab.* 98,8;³⁸⁶ *Gen. Rab.* 97³⁸⁷ and *b. Sanh.* 98b.³⁸⁸

The fact that “Shiloh,” was interpreted in the same way in Qumran as well as in rabbinic literature supports Collin’s thesis that “the Peshier, then, is not giving a peculiarly sectarian interpretation but it is drawing on tradition that was (or eventually became) widely known.”³⁸⁹ If Collin’s thesis is correct it proves that messianic expectations were connected with the descendant of David (no matter whether he was called the Son of David, the Shoot of David or by another metaphorical designation derived from biblical language) and that they were widespread amongst various Jewish groups (namely the Essenes, the group which later stood at the head of formative Judaism and also the community from which centre Psalm of Solomon 17 came) from the second half of the first century B.C.E and that these ideas, expectations were continuously developed in the first century Judaism. Therefore it is probable that the author of Matthew’s Gospel could have been aware of these messianic expectations and could have, at least partly, incorporated them into his portrayal of Jesus.

This Messiah of righteousness (משיח הצדק) is unambiguously identified as the Shoot of David – צמח דוד at the end of line 3 and at the beginning of line 4 (4Q252 6 V, 3-4). This identification is not casual but was ingeniously chosen because of its association with the concept of righteousness connected with the Davidic figure in Jer 23,5-6 and 33,15-17. The text of Jer 23,5 contains following promise:

³⁸⁵ See Levey, *The Messiah*, 7-11.

³⁸⁶ *Gen. Rab.* 98,8 reads: “Until Shiloh cometh: this alludes to the royal Messiah. And unto him shall the obedience (yikhath) of the people be: he [the Messiah] will come and set on edge (makheh) the teeth of the nations of the world.”

³⁸⁷ *Gen. Rab.* 97 reads: “Until Shiloh come. This indicates that all the nations of the world will bring a gift to Messiah the son of David, as it says, In that time shall a present be brought (yubal shay) unto the Lord of hosts (Isa. XVIII, 7). Transpose ‘yubal shay’ and expound it, and you find that it reads Shiloh.”

³⁸⁸ *b. Sanh.* 98b reads: “R. Johanan said: For the sake of the Messiah. What is his [the Messiah’s] name? – The School of R. Shila said: His name is Shiloh, for it is written, until Shiloh come.”

³⁸⁹ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 62.

Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David (לְדָוִד) a righteous Shoot (צִמְחָה צְדִיקָה), and he shall reign as king wisely, and he shall execute justice and righteousness (וְצִדְקָה) in the land.

In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness' (יְהוָה צְדִיקֵנוּ).

The same promise is repeated in a similar fashion in Jer 33,15-16 with the addition "For thus says the Lord: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne (יָשֵׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא) of the house of Israel" in Jer 33,17.

The Davidic origin of the Messiah is however stressed not only by his identification with the Shoot of David but also by the author's recalling of God's promise to David (as expressed e.g., in 2 Sam 7,12-16 or Ps 89,4-5.20-38) in 4Q252 6 V, 4: "For to him and to his seed (וּלְזַרְעוֹ) has been given the covenant of kingship (בְּרִית מַלְכוּת) (over) his people for everlasting generations..."

The emphasis is on the first words – to him and to his seed – and a possible translation is "only to him and to his seed," – i.e., no one else was given the covenant of kingship. Although, we can not accurately date the creation of the peshar on Gen 49,10, we can assume, that like in *Pss. Sol.* 17, there may be a hidden polemical interest behind these words. It is apparent that the eschatological Davidic Messiah, in whom the God's promise to David is supposed to be fulfilled, presents an inexplicit challenge to any reigning king, questioning the legitimacy of his claim to the royal office, which, in the eyes of the author and readers of 4Q252, in this case members of the Qumran community, lacks any basis in the biblical tradition of Israel. Whether this hidden edge was intended for the opposition of the Hasmonean priest kings,³⁹⁰ Herodian kings – namely Herod the Great³⁹¹ or the Kittim – i.e., the Romans³⁹² is a matter of discussion but not significant for the object of this study.

³⁹⁰ Woude, *Die messianischen Vorstellungen in Qumran*, 171; Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 162.

³⁹¹ Stegemann, "Weitere Stücke von 4QpPsalm 37, 4QPatriarchal Blessing," 214-217.

Summary:

If we summarize the results provided by the exegesis of 4Q252 6 V, 1-7 we can conclude that although the Peshar on Gen 49,10 is a short text and does not provide many details regarding the person of the Messiah, it does provide significant details regarding the link between the term Messiah (משיח – used in the absolute sense³⁹³) and the expected Davidic king.

It also proves that Davidic messianic expectations were also alive in the Qumran community and they drew on biblical texts, in this case from Gen 49,10, Jer 23,5-6, 33,15-17 and indirectly from 2 Sam 7,12-16, using metaphorical expression (צמח דוד) and identifications to formulate the expression of hope for the Davidic Messiah, who is marked by righteousness, who will help Israel gain dominion over her enemies, who will reestablish David's kingdom and who will rule forever, never to be cut off again.

Thus the role ascribed to this Messiah is a royal one, and given the ideology of the community, also warlike.

2.2.2.2. 4QFlorilegium (4QFlor = 4Q174)

The hope for the Davidic Messiah, based on the Davidic promise from 2 Sam 7,12-16, can also be found in another text from Qumran – namely in 4Q174 (4QFlor). This manuscript consists of 26 fragments which originally comprised at least five columns and is dated from the end of the first century B.C.E. to the first century C.E.³⁹⁴ 4Q174 is a fragmentary text which contains

³⁹² Pomykala admits both possibilities – i.e., Romans as well as Herodian kings, leaving the final answer opened because of the scanty evidence. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 190-191.

³⁹³ The text of 4Q252, presented together with the Psalms of Solomon 17 and 18, contains the earliest evidence of the application of the title messiah to the expected Davidic king. Zimmermann says that “diese Texte zeigen, dass die Bezeichnung des erwarteten Davididen als משיח im Judentum bereits vor 70 n. Chr. erfolgte.” Zimmermann, *Messianische Texte aus Qumran*, 125.

³⁹⁴ Cross dates the scroll to between 30-1 B.C.E. Cross, “The Development of the Jewish Scripts,” 176. Brooke suggested the second or third quarter of the first century C.E.: Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran, 4QFlorilegium in Its Jewish Context*, 217. Milgrom dates the scroll early in the first century C.E. Milgrom, “Florilegium: A Midrash on 2 Samuel and Psalm 1-2,” 248.

a midrash on 2 Sam 7,10-14 and Ps 1,1 and 2,1. Categorizing the text, 4QFlor is a thematic pesher devoted to the theme of eschatology.

The manuscript begins with a quotation of 2 Sam 7,10b-11a and interprets the text using Exod 15,17b-18 to refer to the eschatological temple. Then the rest from the Sons of Belial is promised to all the Sons of the Light as the fulfillment of the promise, given to David in 2 Sam 7,11b “and I will give you rest from all your enemies”, promise, which is verbally quoted in col. 1, line 7 of fragments 1-2 and 21 (4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 7). The passage, which is relevant for our topic, follows almost immediately line 7. The text of 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 10-13³⁹⁵ reads as follows:

¹⁰ [וְהָיָה לְךָ יְהוָה כִּיָּא בֵּית יִבְנֶה וְהִקְיִמוּתִי אֶת זֶרְעֶכָּה
 אַחֲרֶיכָּה וְהִכְיִנוּתִי אֶת כֶּסֶּא מְמַלְכָּתוֹ
¹¹ [לְעוֹלָם אֲנִי אֱהִיָּה לּוֹא לְאָב וְהוּא יִהְיֶה לִּי לְבֵן הוּאָה צִמַּח
 דוֹיד הָעוֹמֵד עִם דּוֹרֵשׁ הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר
¹² [יָקוּם] בְּצִיּוֹן בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים כְּאֲשֶׁר כָּתוּב וְהִקְיִמוּתִי
 אֶת סוּכַת דּוֹיד הַנּוֹפֶלֶת הִיאָה סוּכַת
¹³ דּוֹיד הַנּוֹפֶלֶת אֲשֶׁר יַעֲמֹד לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל

Translation:

¹⁰ *And the Lord [declares] to you that he will build you a house. And I will raise up your seed after you, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom.*

¹¹ *[for]ever. I will be to him a father, and he will be to me a son*

He is the Shoot of David who will stand with the Interpreter of the Law, who

¹² *[will arise] in Zi[on in] the last days, as it is written, And I will raise up the hut of David which is fallen: he is the hut of*

¹³ *David which was fallen, who will stand³⁹⁶ to save Israel.*

³⁹⁵ For text and English translation, see Milgrom, “Florilegium: A Midrash on 2 Samuel and Psalm 1-2,” 250-253. Cf. Allegro, Qumran Cave 4.I (4Q158-4Q186), 53-55; García Martínez and Tigchelaar, Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition, 1:352-353. For commentaries and further literature, see Pomykala, The Davidic Dynasty Tradition, 191-197; Atkinson, I Cried to the Lord, 162-165. I follow the verse division as found in Pomykala, The Davidic Dynasty Tradition, 193. The translation is mine.

³⁹⁶ There is a grammatical problem here. The hut, which is the grammatical subject of the clause, is feminine in Hebrew and therefore a verb in the 3rd person feminine singular imperfect qal should be in this place but the verb עמד is used in the 3rd person masculine singular imperfect qal. The error can be easily explained. It is obvious that the author of the scroll wanted to identify the fallen hut of David with the Shoot of David (צמח דויד), from line 11, as

The text begins with a quotation of 2 Sam 7,11-14 but with several omissions. This will stand in fort when we put these two texts side by side:

2 Sam 7,11-14

¹¹ *And the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make (יַעֲשֶׂה) you a house.*

¹² *When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers,*

I will raise up your seed after you, who shall come forth from your body,

and I will establish (וְהִכִּינֹתִי) his kingdom. ¹³ *He shall build a house for*

my name, and I will establish (וְכִנְנֹתִי) the throne of his kingdom

forever.

¹⁴ *I will be to him a father, and he will be to me a son.*

4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 10-11

¹⁰ *And the Lord [decla]res to you that he will build (יִבְנֶה) you a house.*

And I will raise up your seed after you,

and I will establish (וְהִכִּינֹתִי) his

the throne of his kingdom.

¹¹ *[for]ever.*

I will be to him a father, and he will be to me a son.

Already the first look betrays that all parts from the anchor dynastic promise to David, which could be associated with Solomon and thus, could limit the text of 2 Sam 7,11-14 on the immediate descendant of David, are omitted in 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 10-11. Truly, Solomon was a direct descendant from David, who was elevated, after David's death, to be king of Israel, and who built the Jerusalem temple, however with the omission of these details the text was freed from its historical moorings and could have been interpreted as an

well as with the promised David's seed (line 10) – which are both masculine in Hebrew. The Shoot of David will stand (the same word עֹמֵר is used, this time in the participle masculine singular qal) together with the Interpreter of the Law. Thus, the error can be explained as an intentional identification of the hut with the Shoot of David, which was in the back of the author's mind, and which could have resulted in the author's writing of the masculine form of the verb.

eschatological prophecy referring to the future Davidic figure.³⁹⁷ Despite these omissions, the main elements of the promise tradition are still present in 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 10-13. Thus, we are told that God will raise up David's seed, he will establish the throne of his kingdom forever, and he will have the father-son relationship with the descendant of David.

In the second part of line 11, David's seed (זרעכה) is identified as the Shoot of David (צמח דוד) who will arise at the end of days. The title the Shoot of David is derived from Jer 23,5; 33,15 and is used as a designation for the Davidic messianic figure in 4Q252 6 V, 1-7, as we argued in a previous section, and also in 4Q Sefer Hamilhamah (4Q285), as we shall see later.

It is stated that this figure will stand with the Interpreter of the Law at the end of days. It is a matter of discussion whether the Interpreter of the Law is a priestly Messiah or not,³⁹⁸ but there is a general agreement that it is the Davidic Messiah who is the focus of the author's intention.

The place for his appearance is unclear – it could be Jerusalem if the proposed reconstruction is correct. However, the time is quite certain – he will arise at the end of the days. Thus, we can conclude that for the author of 4QFlor, the end of the days was connected with the coming of the seed of David – i.e., the Shoot of David – i.e., the messianic figure.³⁹⁹

The author's interpretation of 2 Sam 7,11b-14 is supported by the citation from Amos 9,11 which contains an ancient promise that God will raise up the fallen hut of David (סוכה דוד). The seed of David (זרעכה) from 2 Sam 7,12b,

³⁹⁷ Such a broad interpretation which looks up to a future Davidic figure and not to Solomon is already attested by 1 Chr 17,11 which reads "When your days are fulfilled to go to be with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom." Already the author of 1 Chr 17,11 let the Nathan's prophecy open for the eschatological interpretation.

³⁹⁸ The commentators differ in opinion on the character and role of the Interpreter of the Law. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 195 sees in him priestly figure, "probably a priestly messiah" while Charlesworth claims that "according to 4QFlorilegium there are not two messiahs." Charlesworth, "From Messianology to Christology," 26.

³⁹⁹ The word Messiah does not occur in the text, however, the context is clearly messianic. The metaphorical expression the Shoot of David is derived from Jer 23,5; 33,15, and serves unambiguously as the titular designation for the future Messiah, the Son of David. Burger in his book *Jesus als Davidsohn* in comment on 4QFlor writes: "Bemerkenswert bei der Kommentierung von 2. Sam 7 ist der Ausdruck Spross Davids (צמח דוד), der hier die stelle υἱὸς Δαυὶδ in PsSal 17,21 einnimmt." Burger, *Jesus als Davidsohn*, 19.

identified with the Shoot of David (צמח דוד) in 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 11b is now identified with the fallen hut of David (סוכת דוד הנופלת) from Amos 9,11. The identification is possible because of the word והכינתי (raise up) – thus the raising up of the offspring of David is interpreted as the raising up of the fallen hut of David. That the author truly wanted to identify David's seed (זרע – masculine) = the Shoot of David (צמח דוד – masculine) with the fallen hut of David (סוכת דוד הנופלת – feminine) is attested indirectly with the grammatical error which he made in his description of the action of this future messianic figure.

The task of this Davidic Messiah is uniquely determined – he will save Israel. Although, it is not explicitly stated from what or from whom Israel should be saved, we can still assume that Israel is supposed to be delivered from its enemies. The context of this text supports this hypothesis. We have already noted that in the line 7-9 of 4QFlor, rest from all enemies is promised to the Sons of the Light as a fulfillment of the promise given to David in 2 Sam 7,11b, quoted in 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 7. Although the identity of enemies is not explicitly stated, it is possible that they could be identical with the Kittim, mentioned in 1QM XI, 7.

Thus we can conclude that although the picture of the eschatological Messiah, the Shoot of David is sketchy in 4QFlor, there are still a few useful details which can be extracted. The Davidic Messiah is in 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 10-13 portrayed as God's agent, who will at the end of days save Israel in the eschatological battle between the Sons of the Light and the Sons of the Darkness. His role is that of liberator and warrior, and most likely he will be king, fulfilling the prediction of 2 Sam 7,12-14. In this respect the Davidic Messiah of 4QFlor is similar to the one described in 4QCommGen A (4Q252).

Similarly as in 4Q252, this figure is identified by various metaphorical expressions originating in the language of the Hebrew Bible, and is called the seed (זרע), the Shoot of David (צמח דוד) and the hut of David (סוכת דוד). This clearly shows that these expressions could have been and were

combined together and were interchangeable. This should warn us that we can not limit ourselves on a specific technical (titular) designation when we are searching for the expectations connected with the Son of David.

The new in 4QFlor is that the Shoot of David is also identified as the son of God.⁴⁰⁰ Unfortunately, the pesher only identifies the Shoot of David with the son of God, but does not contain any further comment on 2 Sam 7,14. Nor does the text further expand the motif of divine sonship or relationship between God and his Messiah.

The scroll 4Q174 (4QFlor) provides us more proof that the messianic expectations, connected with the eschatological descendant of David and rooted in the dynasty promise in 2 Sam 7,12-16, were also known in Qumran community.

2.2.2.3. The Pesher on Isaiah – 4QpIsa^a (4Q161)

The 4QpIsa^a is a fragmentary scroll which contains a pesher (commentary) on Isa 10,21-11,5. The ten fragments which have been preserved can be dated, approximately, to the second half of the first century B.C.E. or the beginning of the first century C.E.⁴⁰¹ In terms of the genre the scroll is a continuous pesher. There are several parallels between 4QpIsa^a and the War scroll (1QM), which describes the final battle against Belial and the Kittim. The pesher on Isaiah could also be related to Sefer Hamilhamah (4Q285) which also contains an interpretation of Isa 10,33-11,1.

The importance of this scroll is found in the fact that it preserves a testimony that the passage of Isa 11,1-5, which had a decisive influence on the portrait of the Davidic Messiah in the Psalm of Solomon 17, was interpreted messianically also within the Qumran community.

Understanding the role of the Davidic Messiah in 4QpIsa^a requires closer examination. As already stated, the scroll is a pesher on the biblical passage of

⁴⁰⁰ I am aware that the title is not explicitly used, but the father-son relationship promised in 2 Sam 7,14a to the descendant of David is explicitly mentioned.

⁴⁰¹ Collins dates the scroll shortly after Pompey's capture of Jerusalem. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 57-58. Cross proposed dating the text to the Herodian period – between 30 B.C.E. and 20 C.E. Cross, "The Development of the Jewish Scripts," 176. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery*, 96, n. 1. suggested first century C.E. date.

Isa 10,21-11,5 which consists of predications dealing with the return of the remnants of Israel (Isa 10,21-23); God's judgment against Assyria (10,24-27a); the advance of enemies towards Jerusalem (10,27b-32); God's judgment against the proud ones (10,33-34); and the coming of the branch from the stump of Jesse (11,1-5).

The peshet interprets all these events eschatologically. The sectarian author views Isaiah's predications about the final battle between the faithful remnant of Israel – i.e., the Sons of the Light and the Kittim – as being a final conflict with the Romans.⁴⁰² At this point the text of 4QpIsa^a is similar to other Qumran documents. For example the wording of 4QpIsa^a 2-6 II, 18 “when they return from the wilderness of the pe[ople]s” recalls 1QM I, 3 where the same phrase is used, having as the subject the exiles from the Sons of the Light who will return at the end of days to join the Qumran community in the final decisive battle against the Kittim.

In the following line of 4QpIsa^a, the Prince of the Congregation, a messianic figure known from other Qumran documents,⁴⁰³ is also mentioned. Unfortunately this reference is fragmentary and little has survived except the statement that “afterwards he will de[pa]rt from [them]” (4QpIsa^a 2-6 II, 19). From the context it can be assumed that he will probably play some role in the final battle, but nothing more can be said with certainty.⁴⁰⁴

The advance of the enemies up to the boundary of Jerusalem, at the end of days, is portrayed in 4QpIsa^a 2-6 II, 21-29. In fragments 8-10, col. 3 lines 1-14 a scenario of the eschatological battle, in which the Sons of Light will defeat

⁴⁰² Kittim is derived from the Citium in Cyprus and is applied to Westerners. Dan 11,30 identifies the Kittim with the Romans and there is general agreement that such identification is also valid for the Qumran pesharim (cf. esp. 1QpHab) and War Scroll. Cf. Brownlee, “Kittim,” *ISBE* 3:45-46; Horgan, *Pesharim*, 80-81; Flusser, *Judaism of the Second Temple Period*, 1:140; Brooke, “The Kittim in the Qumran Pesharim,” 135-159.

⁴⁰³ CD-A VII, 20; 4Q285; 1Qsb V, 21. Cf. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 60-64.

⁴⁰⁴ The role of the Prince of the Congregation is expanded in 4Q285. See Horgan, *Pesharim*, 79 who restored the line 19 in the light of CD-A VII, 20 to read “[השבט הוה] the rod is] the Prince of the Congregation.” In the text of Isa 10,24 it is said that Israel should not be afraid when Assyria smites him with the rod (שֶׁבֶט) and lifts up their staff (מִטְּהָ) against him and in verse 27 it is said that the Lord's staff (מִטְּהָ) will be over the sea. It is disputable whether the Prince of the Congregation should be identified with the rod (שֶׁבֶט) or staff (מִטְּהָ) in 4QpIsa^a 2-6 II, 18.



their enemies, who are identified as the Kittim (cf. 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 7.9.11.12.), is detailed.

At this point, in the context of the eschatological battle, Isaiah's prophecy concerning the future branch/sprout of David is quoted (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 15-20). The text of Isaiah 11,1-5 contains a promise for a coming ruler – a branch from the stump of Jesse (חֹטֶר מִגֹּזַע יֵשׁוּעַ) also called the sprout (נֶצֶחַ – Isa 11,1) on whom the spirit of the Lord shall rest (Isa 11,2), “the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.” This eschatological Son of David will righteously judge the poor and weak, and “he shall smite the earth with the word of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he kill the wicked” (Isa 11,3-4). Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins (Isa 11,5).

After this quotation, an interpretation is added. The text of the pesher 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 21-29 [17-24] is as follows, together with the proposed reconstruction in brackets:⁴⁰⁵

²¹ [-- III III --]

²² [פֶּשֶׁר הַפְּתִיחַ עַל צִמְחָה] דוֹד הָעוֹמֵד בְּאַחֲנֵי הַיָּמִים לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת

²³ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלִכְלֹת אֶת אֲחֵיבָיו וְאֵל יִסְמְכֵנוּ בְּרוּחַ [נְבוֹרָה] --]

²⁴ [--] וְאֵל יִתֵּן לוֹ כֹּסֵא כְבוֹד נֹר קְוֹדֶשׁ] וּבְגָדֵי רוּקְמָוִת] .

²⁵ [--] וְאֵל יֵשִׁים שְׁבִטָּתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ וּבְכֹל הַנְּוֹאִים יִמְשֹׁל וּמְגוֹנִים

²⁶ [--] כִּתְּלֵי הָעַמִּים תִּשְׁפֹּט חֲרָבוֹ . וְאִשֶּׁר אָמַר לֹא

²⁷ [לְמִרְאָה עֵינָיו יִשְׁפֹּט] וְלֹא לְמִשְׁמַע אוֹזְנָיו יִזְכִּיחַ פֶּשֶׁרוֹ אִשֶּׁר

²⁸ [--] וְכִאֲשֶׁר יִזְרֹהוּ כֵן יִשְׁפֹּט וְעַל פִּיהֶם

²⁹ [--] עָמְדוּ יֵצֵא אֶחָד מִכֹּהֲנֵי הַשָּׁם וּבִידוֹ בְּגָדִים .

⁴⁰⁵ I am following the division and reconstructions as available in Abegg, *Qumran Sectarian Manuscripts*, n.p. Translation mine. For the same numbering and reconstruction (in footnotes) as the one used in this work, see Horgan, “Isaiah Pesher 4 (4Q161 = 4QpIsa^a),” 96-97. For a different reconstruction and alternative numbering, see Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4.I (4Q158-4Q186)*, 14; García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 1:316-317; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 200. The numbering according to Allegro is in [brackets]. For a detailed commentary and further literature, see Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 197-203.

Translation:

²¹ [...] (vacat) [...]

²² [The interpretation of the matter concerns the Shoot of] David, who will stand in the la[st days to save]

²³ [Israel and to terminate] his [ene]my. And God will sustain him with [a mi]ghty [spirit...]

²⁴ [And God will give him a th]rone of glory, a h[oly] crown, and embroider[ed] garments.

²⁵ [And God will put a rod/scepter] in his hand, and over all the n[ation]s he will rule, and Magog

²⁶ [... al]l the peoples will his sword judge, and when it says, *neither*

²⁷ [*will he judge according the sight of his eyes,*] *nor will he decide according to the hearing of his ears,* its interpretation (is) that

²⁸ [...] and as they instruct him, so will he judge, and according to their mouth

²⁹ [...] with him. One of the priests of name will go out and in his hand the garments of

The text provides important details about the figure of the Messiah, his role and office. Firstly, it is apparent that the branch from the stump of Jesse from Isa 11,1, is identified with the Shoot of David (צמח דוד). Because of the lacuna in the beginning of line 22, the extant appellation is not preserved; however it can be, from the examples of 4QFlor and 4QCommGenA, plausibly reconstructed, as proved by J.M. Allegro.⁴⁰⁶ Allegro's reconstruction is supported by the usage of the similar, but careful – not the same, metaphorical expressions in Isa 11,1 (הַטֵּר – branch, גִּצְר – sprout) but above by the testimony of the scroll 4Q Sefer Hamilhamah (4Q285 7, 2-3) which identifies the branch from the stump of Jesse (הוֹטֵר מִגִּזְע יִשְׁרָאֵל) from Isa 11,1 with the Shoot of David (צמח דוד).

Secondly, we are told that the Shoot of David (צמח דוד) will stand in the last days. Although the words, last days, are reconstructed it is attested by the context of the pesher that all the described events are supposed to take place in

⁴⁰⁶ Allegro, Qumran Cave 4.I (4Q158–4Q186), 14.

eschaton, resp. during the eschatological war between the Sons of the Light and the Kittim. We can conclude that the Shoot of David is an eschatological figure who shall play a role in the final battle.

Surprisingly little is said about the character of the Davidic figure. The colorful depiction of the character of the Shoot of David, from Isa 11,2, is not commented on in the pesher, or to be precise, in the extant fragments. The only surviving characteristic states, if the reconstruction of the line 23 is correct, that “God will sustain him with [a mi]ghty [spirit...].” Pomykala offered an explanation:

“This is not, however, a coincidence, since might is a characteristic most suitable for a warrior and ruler, and it is precisely this figure’s power and rule that is appropriate to the military conflict envisioned in the preceding context and marked out for special attention in the succeeding lines.”⁴⁰⁷

Pomykala is right, that the Shoot of David is presented as a warrior and ruler in the pesher and that the mighty spirit is a suitable characteristic for this role. However, the Shoot of David is also supposed to judge the nations and as a result his duties are not limited to that of warrior and ruler, but also include the role of a judge. And “a mighty spirit” is not necessarily an appropriate quality for a judge. Since the line begins and ends with a lacuna, we should be aware that possibly also other qualities, aside from a mighty spirit, were ascribed to the Shoot of David.

This brings us to the roles of the eschatological Son of David. We have already argued that the Shoot of David will play a role in the eschatological battle between the Sons of the Light and the Kittim. This interpretation is supported by the reference to Magog at the end of line 25 (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 25). Magog is the name of an eschatological enemy of Israel (cf. Ezek 38-39), who will be, according to 1QM XI, 16, delivered by God into the hands of the holy ones in the eschatological battle. Thus it is appropriate, in regards to 4QpIsa^a, to claim that the Shoot of David is portrayed as a warlike Messiah and that his role is also partially violent.

⁴⁰⁷ Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 201.

Another role of the Shoot of David is his role as King. The regal references are found in line 24 where it is said that the Shoot of David shall receive “a th[ron]e of glory, a h[oly] crown, and embroider[ed] garments” which are the symbols of royal dignity recalling enthronement. As well, in the line 25, it is explicitly stated that he will reign “over all the n[at]ion[s].” Thus, we can conclude that another aspect of the Davidic Messiah’s character is to include the role of the king.

Finally the Shoot of David is also portrayed as a judge, however, this judge differs in several ways from the one portrayed in Isa 11,3-5. Firstly, while the Davidic figure from Isa 11,4 smites the earth with the word of his mouth and with the breath of his lips he kills the wicked – i.e., with non-military weapons; in the pesher it is the sword of the Shoot of David which shall judge all the peoples (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 26). This shift from non-military to military weapons is not surprising; especially when we consider that the character of the Davidic Messiah in 4QpIsa^a is partially violent, due to his role as a warrior in the eschatological battle. Secondly – there is no trace in the pesher of righteous judgments on behalf of the poor and the weak, as promised in Isa 11,4a.

The most striking difference between Isa 11,1-5 and the pesher is the nature of the judging activity of the eschatological Davidid. According to Isa 11,3b the branch from the stump of Jesse “shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear” but the basis of his judgments shall be the spirit of the Lord – “the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord,” as it is evident from Isa 11,2. However, in the pesher the passage of Isa 11,3b, quoted in 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 27, is interpreted differently in the line which follows: “and as they instruct him, so will he judge, and according to their mouth/command.”

The explicit identity of those who will instruct the Shoot of David is lost but it is probable that these are the priests – the sons of Zadok.⁴⁰⁸ With regards to the teaching of the Qumran sect, they are also the most logical group to do this

⁴⁰⁸ The phrase על פייהם is often used in connection with the sons of Zadok – amongst others in 1QSa I, 2. For details, see Woude, Die messianischen Vorstellungen in Qumran, 181.

instruction. Surprisingly, according to the pesher, the Shoot of David plays a judicial role but he is not autonomous but subordinated to those who instruct him how to judge – most probably to the sons of Zadok. In the context of Isa 11,3-4 this means that according to the pesher, the priests take over the role of the spirit of the Lord.

If summarized the 4QpIsa^a preserves an expectation of the Davidic Messiah.⁴⁰⁹ This Messiah, the Shoot of David (צמח דוד) will appear at the end of days as a warlike Messiah who he will play a role in the final battle between the Sons of the Light and the Kittim, like the Davidic figure described in 4QFlor. This Messiah will hold royal office over nations as well as a judicial one. As judge he is, however, subordinated to the priests.

The scroll of 4QpIsa^a provides thus further evidence for the popularity of messianic hope connected with the descendant of David, who is once again called the Shoot of David, and was earlier identified with the branch from the stump of Jesse from Isa 11,1. This identification, once again proves that within the Qumran community various metaphorical designations of the future messianic Davidic figure were juxtaposed, and that among these expressions the designation the Shoot of David (צמח דוד) played an important role. In fact, these metaphorical expressions are the nearest to what we usually understand to be titular designation, and there is no doubt that the Shoot of David is just another expression for the Son of David (בן דוד, υἱὸς Δαυίδ).

2.2.2.4. 4Q Sefer Hamilhamah (4Q285)

The title the Shoot of David together with the designation the Prince of the Congregation in the context of Isaiah's prophecy can also be found in 4Q285, better known as the "Dying Messiah" text, unpublished prior to 1991. The scroll became the focus of a vivid debate over the question whether the

⁴⁰⁹ Although the word Messiah itself does not occur in the text of 4QpIsa^a, it can be assumed from the context of Isa 11,1-5, that the Shoot of David mentioned in the text is a messianic figure. Whether he is identical with the Prince of the Congregation, mentioned in 4QpIsa^a 2-6, II, 19, is a matter of discussion.

text refers to the death of the Davidic Messiah,⁴¹⁰ or whether the Messiah kills someone in the eschatological war.⁴¹¹

The manuscript consists of ten fragments,⁴¹² and can be dated to the early Herodian period⁴¹³ and was identified by J.T. Milik in the year 1972 on the basis of similarities (the war against the Kittim, mention of Michael) as a fragment of the War Rule scroll.⁴¹⁴

The reference to the Davidic Messiah occurs in the context of the eschatological war between Israel and the Kittim (i.e., Romans), in fragment seven of 4Q285. The text of 4Q285 7, 1-6 including the proposed reconstruction, is following:⁴¹⁵

¹ [-- כאשר כתוב בספר] ישעיהו הנביא ונקפן

² [סבכי היער בברזל ולבנון באדיר קפול . ויצא חוטר מגזע ישי

³ [ונצד משורשיו יפרה --] צמח דויד ונשפטו את

⁴ [--] ° והמיתו נשיא העדה צמן

⁵ [רויד -- בנגעם ובמחוללות וצוה כוהן

⁶ [השם -- חללן] כתיבן [לן] .

Translation:

¹ [As written in the book of] Isaiah the prophet: *cut [down*

² *shall be the thickets of the forest with an axe and Lebanon by a majestic one will fall. And there shall come forth a branch from the stump of Jesse*

⁴¹⁰ Cf. Eisenman and Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, 24-27.

⁴¹¹ Vermes, "Rule of War from Cave 4 (4Q285)," 85-90; Bockmuehl, "A 'Slain Messiah' in 4Q Serek HaMilhamah (4Q285)?" 155-169. On further discussion, see Tabor, "A Pierced or Piercing Messiah?," 58-59; Eisenmann and Vermes, "More on the Pierced Messiah Text," 66-67; Abegg, "Messianic Hope and 4Q285," 81-91; Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 58-60; Oegema, *The Anointed and His People*, 113-114; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 203-212; Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 167-170. For further literature, see *ibid.* For a detailed analysis, see esp. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 203-212.

⁴¹² Cf. Wacholder and Abegg, *Preliminary Edition*, 2:223-227.

⁴¹³ Abegg, "Messianic Hope and 4Q285," 81. Cf. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 204.

⁴¹⁴ Milik, "Milki-sedeq et Milki-resa," 143.

⁴¹⁵ I am following the reconstructions as available in Abegg, *Qumran Sectarian Manuscripts*, n.p. Translation is mine. For another proposed reconstruction and English translation, see e.g., García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 2:642-643; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 200; Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 167-168.

³ [and a sprout from his roots will bear fruit] – the Shoot of David and they will enter into judgment with
⁴ [] and the Prince of the Congregation, the Shoo[t
⁵ of David] will kill him by stroke]s and by wounds. And a priest [of the name] will command
⁶ the s]lai[n] of the Kitti[m]

Fragment seven begins with a reference to “Isaiah the Prophet” and continues with the quotation of Isa 10,34 and probably also Isa 11,1. Due to the lacuna, the beginning of the citation is not preserved, however, it can be plausibly reconstructed.

The first readable word, נְפִיל, from the quotation is in line 2. It has been suggested that Isa 10,34 was the verse being quoted here.⁴¹⁶ In the favor of this reconstruction speak similarities with the scroll 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 10-12 which also quotes Isa 10,34, and subsequently Isa 11,1 (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 15) and which also interprets these two texts as referring to the defeat of the Kittim (identified with the cedars of Lebanon⁴¹⁷ from Isa 10,34 in 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 7.12) in the eschatological battle (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 6-13. 22-23) by the Messiah, the Shoot of David (צמח דוד), the branch from the stump of Jesse (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 15.22).

These elements of 4QpIsa^a are also found in 4Q Sefer Hamilhamah. As well, 4Q285 7, 3 identifies the Shoot of David (צמח דוד) with the branch from the stump of Jesse (חוטב מגזע ישי) and sees him as the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy within the context of the eschatological battle. But, unlike 4QpIsa^a 2-6 II, 19, where the connection is ambiguous, the author of 4Q285 identifies the Shoot of David (צמח דוד) also with the Prince of the Congregation (נשיא העדה) in 4Q285 7, 4-5). Since the Prince of the

⁴¹⁶ Vermes, “Rule of War from Cave 4 (4Q285),” 89.

⁴¹⁷ R.P. Gordon has plausibly demonstrated that the cedars of Lebanon were used within Jewish midrashic tradition as a symbol for enemy nation or kings. Gordon, “The Interpretation of ‘Lebanon’ and 4Q285,” 92-94. Vermes noted that in 2 Bar. 36-40 the ruler of the world kingdom (Rome), symbolized by the cedar of Lebanon, will be judged and killed by the Messiah. Vermes, “Rule of War from Cave 4 (4Q285),” 89.

Congregation is identified with the Shoot of David we can learn more about this messianic figure.

Fragment 4, lines 1-10 of 4Q285, refers to the advance of the Prince of the Congregation together with Israel onto a sea coast, his military victory probably over the Kittim, and his return to dry land, where the male person is brought before him (4Q285 4, 10). The identity of this person is indeterminate because of the fragmentary state of the text, however, Vermes suggested that:

“It is, to put it modestly, a reasonable surmise that this person is the same as the object of the verb ‘and he, the Prince of the Congregation, will kill him’ in line 4 of fr.5. If so, the most likely candidate for it is מֶלֶךְ כְּתִיִּים, the king of the Kittim (1QM 15,2).”⁴¹⁸

Vermes’ suggestion can be strengthened by the analogy found in *2 Bar.* 40,1-3 which refers to the judgment and the execution of the ruler of the world kingdom by the Messiah. The text of *2 Bar.* 40,1-3, dated to the early second century C.E.,⁴¹⁹ reads in Klijn’s⁴²⁰ translation:

¹ The last ruler who is left alive at that time will be bound, whereas the entire host will be destroyed. And they will carry him on Mount Zion, and my Anointed One will convict him of all his wicked deeds and will assemble and set before him all the works of his hosts. ² And after these things he will kill him and protect the rest of my people who will be found in the place that I have chosen. ³ And his dominion will last forever until the world of corruption has ended and until the times which have been mentioned before have been fulfilled.

The similarity is remarkable, especially since the theme of judgment is also present in 4Q285. It is said in 4Q285 7, 3 that: “and they will enter into judgment with.” Unfortunately, neither the subject nor the object of the judgment is preserved but it is reasonable to assume that the subject of the verb is the Shoot of David, mentioned in the same line, together with the Sons of Light. This would explain the plural form of the verb and would be consistent

⁴¹⁸ Vermes, “Rule of War from Cave 4 (4Q285),” 89.

⁴¹⁹ Klijn, “2 Baruch,” *OTP* 1:615-652, 617.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 633.

with a typical image of the Davidic Messiah in Qumran. After all the judicial activity is ascribed to the Davidic figure in Isa 11,3-4, as well as in 4QPIsa^a 8-10 III, 26-28, which is, as we have already demonstrated, a text very close to 4Q285.

Further activity of the Prince of the Congregation, the Shoot of David, is described in the much debated line 4 which reads וְהָמִיתוּ נְשִׂיאַ הָעֵדָה צְמֶנֶת. The line can be either translated: “and they will put to death the Leader of the Community, the Bran[ch of David]”, as suggested by Eisenman and Wise,⁴²¹ or as Vermes and others suggested “and the Prince of the Congregation, the Bran[ch of David] will kill him.”⁴²² Although both translations are grammatically correct, the deciding factor for proper reading of the text, is not the grammatical reconstruction but the context.

It is evident that the fragment 7 is an interpretation of Isa 10,34 and Isa 11,1. As noted above, Isa 10,34 speaks about the fall of Lebanon. And the fall of Lebanon, in the Jewish midrashic tradition, was understood as a reference to the destruction of Israel’s enemies⁴²³ – i.e., as a picture of Israel’s victory, not defeat.

We have also seen that Isa 11,1-4 was interpreted in Qumran messianically (cf. 4QPIsa^a), and contains a promise for the coming of a descendant of David, whose activities include the judging of the people and the destruction of the wicked. According to this image, it is always the branch/sprout from the stump of Jesse who judges and kills.

Besides, the title the Shoot of David (צֶמַח דָּוִד) is used as a designation for the triumphant messianic figure in several texts found in the Qumran. The Shoot of David, according 4QCommGen A, shall rule for ever, never to be cut off again (4Q252 6 V, 2), save Israel (4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 13), receive the

⁴²¹ Eisenman and Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, 29.

⁴²² Vermes, “Rule of War from Cave 4 (4Q285),” 88. Cf. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 58-60; Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 167-169; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 207-209.

⁴²³ Gordon, “The Interpretation of ‘Lebanon’ and 4Q285,” 92-94.

throne of glory, holy crown, embroidered garments, and rule over all the nations while his sword will judge all the peoples (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 24-28).

Similarly, the Prince of the Congregation is portrayed in 1QSb 5,20-29, as a victorious figure who will establish the kingdom of Israel, kill the ungodly and be served by the rulers of all the nations. The Shoot of David, and the Prince of the Congregation, who are identical in 4Q285, always are characterized by triumph and victory and not defeat in the Qumran scrolls. Therefore the image of a pierced Messiah as proposed by Eisenman and Wise, is simply out of context in 4Q Sefer Hamilhamah. Thus line four must be interpreted as referring to the Messiah who will kill a male person and not be slain himself. This person is most likely his opponent, the king of the Kittim, as already suggested by Vermes.⁴²⁴

Line 5 could possibly describe the details of the execution ordered by the priest. The appearance of a priest is not surprising – the activity of the Davidic Messiah is also connected with a priestly figure in 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 28-29. Nor should we forget that according to the War Rule scroll, the priests regulate the activities in the eschatological war against the Kittim (cf. 1QM VII, 9-18; 1QM X, 2). The last line of the fragment also mentions the slaying of the Kittim, recalling events mentioned in 1QM XVI, 8 and 1QM XIX, 13 and presents thus a victory of the Davidic Messiah and the Sons of the Light over their enemies.

If summarized, in 4Q285, the eschatological Messiah⁴²⁵ is titled the Shoot of David (צמח דוד) and the Prince of the Congregation (נשיא העדה) and is identified with the promised branch from the sprout of Jesse from Isa 11,1 (4Q285 7, 3). This Messiah is portrayed as a warrior who plays an important role in the final war between the Sons of the Light and the Kittim. He will win some battle at the sea coast (4Q 285 4, 4-7) and then a male person, probably the king of the

⁴²⁴ Vermes, "Rule of War from Cave 4 (4Q285)," 89.

⁴²⁵ Eisenman and Wise recognized the messianic character of the figure from 4Q285, although the word Messiah does not occur in the text. Cf. Eisenman and Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, 24-27. Contrary Charlesworth, "Sense or Sensationalism?," 97 denies the messianic character of the text.

Kittim, will be brought before him (4Q 285 4, 10). Together with the Sons of Light he will judge his enemies (4Q 285 7, 3) and slay the king of the Kittim (4Q 285 7, 4-6).

The role of the Davidic Messiah is filled with violence and he is a militant figure. His role as a judge is also mentioned but the text stresses his involvement in the final eschatological war more. Nothing is said about his role as ruler.

2.2.2.5. Conclusion: The Davidic Messiah in the Qumran Scrolls

We have presented evidence that in the four Qumran texts (4QCommGen A, 4QFlor, 4QpIsa^a and 4Q Sefer Hamilhamah) the Davidic dynasty tradition was interpreted in a way to express hope for the coming of the eschatological Davidic Messiah. The image of the Messiah, which emerges from the scrolls is sketchy but consistent – being rooted in the heritage of biblical texts such as Gen 49,10; Jer 23,5-6; 33,17; 2 Sam 7,10-16; Amos 9,11 and most significantly Isa 10,34-11,5.

The Davidic Messiah, identified in all four texts as the Shoot of David (צמח דוד), is also associated with various metaphorical designations such as: the branch/sprout from the stump of Jesse from Isa 11,1 in 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 15.22 (implicitly) and in Sefer Hamilhamah (4Q285 7, 2-3 – explicitly), with the hut of David from Amos 9,11 in 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 11-13, with David's seed in 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 10-11 as well as with the Prince of the Congregation (implicitly in 4QpIsa^a 2-6 II, 19, explicitly in 4Q285 7, 4-5). This is sufficient enough proof that various titles (as *קִנְיָן מִצֵּיט יֵשׁוּעַ*; *צמח דוד*; *קִנְיָן מִצֵּיט יֵשׁוּעַ*; *בְּרִי דָוִד*; *ὁ υἱὸς Δαυίδ*, etc.) were used in order to designate the future Davidic Messiah and that these titles were interchangeable.

The scrolls, in comparison with *Pss. Sol.* 17, provide few details about the character of the Shoot of David. In fact, the only two characteristics from the rich scale of qualities ascribed to the branch/sprout from the stump of Jesse in Isa 11,2-3 are ascribed to the Messiah of the scrolls – righteousness (4QCommGen A 6 V, 3) and a mighty spirit (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 23).

The scrolls contain more details about the Messiah's actions and role. All four texts agree⁴²⁶ that the Shoot of David will be raised up at the end of days, and will take a place in the eschatological battle against Israel's enemies – the Kittim (the Romans). According to 4QpIsa^a this Messiah will repulse an attack of the Kittim on Jerusalem. In the text of 4Q Sefer Hamilhamah, he will defeat the Kittim on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, capturing and judging their King and subsequently executing him. 4QFlor even states that the Messiah will save Israel (4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 13). We are not exaggerating when we claim that the Davidic Messiah in the four scrolls is portrayed first of all as a warrior who plays a decisive role in the eschatological war and that his role is violent.

However the role of the warrior is not the only one ascribed to the Shoot of David. In 4QpIsa^a as well as in Sefer Hamilhamah (4Q285) he is portrayed as a judge whose sword will judge all the peoples (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 26) and who will according to 4Q285 7, 3 sentence to the death the king of the Kittim. However, his judicial powers are limited and his authority is subordinated to the priests. 4QpIsa^a claims that he will judge according to their instruction (4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 28). Sefer Hamilhamah also mentions the priestly instruction of the Messiah (4Q285 7, 5). This subordination of the Davidic Messiah to the priest(s) is most likely to be explained due to the ideology of the sect, as expressed in 1QS IX, 11 and 1QSa II, 11-22 where the Davidic Messiah is subordinate to the priestly Messiah from Aaron.

Finally, the Shoot of David is also presented as the eschatological king, who will fulfill the promise given to David (4QFlor) and who will reign for ever, never to be cut off again, as expressed in 4QCommGen A 6 V, 1-4. A throne of glory, a holy crown, and embroidered garments – the symbols of royal dignity and power shall be given to him and he will rule over all the nations, as attested by 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 24-25. But in some texts the Messiah is a co-ruler with the Interpreter of the Law (4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 11).

⁴²⁶ In the case of 4QCommGen A it can be presupposed because according to the teaching of the sect, Israel was supposed to gain dominion after the victory in the eschatological battle against the Sons of the Darkness.

It is at this point, as well as with his evidently militant nature, that the Davidic Messiah from the Qumran scrolls differs from the one portrayed in *Pss. Sol.* 17. In comparison with *Pss. Sol.* 17, the Davidic Messiah in the Qumran texts is explicitly an eschatological figure⁴²⁷, his character receives little development and even less is said about his reign. Although this portrayal of the Messiah in Qumran is less developed it shares many of the same traits, except those based on the specific ideology of the sect, with the portrayal preserved in *Pss. Sol.* 17 and 18. Collins rightly notes that the Peshier on Isaiah (4QpIsa^a) and the part of the War Scroll (4Q285) share a common understanding of Isaiah 11 with the Psalms of Solomon, even though these texts were created by differing sects, and that “it is reasonable to assume that this interpretation was widespread.”⁴²⁸ In other words the image of the eschatological king, judge and warrior, which emerges from the Scrolls, is in the first two named points (roles) consistent with the one portrayed in *Pss. Sol.* 17. However, the war-like Messiah differs from the regal judge in *Pss. Sol.* 17. It should be noted that the Messiah from Psalms of Solomon as well as from Qumran is human, made of flesh and bones.

2.2.3. The Fourth Book of Ezra

The use of the Davidic dynastic tradition can also be found in *4 Ezra*. The Fourth book of Ezra⁴²⁹ is a typical Jewish apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic book composed by a Jew at the end of the first century C.E,⁴³⁰ originating possibly in Palestine.⁴³¹ Originally written in Hebrew⁴³² or Aramaic⁴³³ *4 Ezra* was soon translated into Greek, and then into Latin and other languages.

⁴²⁷ *Pss. Sol.* 17 does not explicitly state that the Messiah will come at the end of the days, however he is portrayed as a final idealized Davidic king.

⁴²⁸ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 65.

⁴²⁹ For translations, commentaries and further bibliography, see Metzger, “The Fourth Book of Ezra,” *OTP* 1:517-559; Stone, *The Fourth Ezra*. On the Messiah in *4 Ezra* see Stone, “The Question of the Messiah in *4 Ezra*,” 209-224; Müller, *Messias und Menschensohn*, 107-156; Oegema, *The Anointed and His People*, 216-220; Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, 349-365; Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 216-221; Stone, “The Concept of the Messiah in *4 Ezra*,” 295-312.

⁴³⁰ Metzger, “The Fourth Book of Ezra,” *OTP* 1:520; Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, 349; Stone, *The Fourth Ezra*, 10.

⁴³¹ Metzger, “The Fourth Book of Ezra,” *OTP* 1:520.

The Fourth book of Ezra contains several passages which suggest some Christian redaction, however the majority of the text is certainly Jewish. The text is closely related to *2 Baruch* and shares a few striking parallels with *1 Enoch*. The author of *4 Ezra* was also acquainted with the Psalms of Solomon.⁴³⁴

The book is usually divided into seven visions.⁴³⁵ The one, which concerns us, is the famous Eagle Vision, which is found together with an explanation in *4 Ezra* 11,1-12,39. The vision itself (*4 Ezra* 11,1-12,3) describes a many-winged, multi-headed eagle who comes out of the sea and who controls and oppresses the earth. The eagle is judged for his crimes by a lion rising up from the forest. In the interpretation which is conveyed to Ezra (*4 Ezra* 12,10-35), the eagle is identified with the fourth kingdom (mentioned in Dan 7), understood here as Rome. The eagle's wings and heads represent various Roman rulers and their oppressive rules. The lion, in *4 Ezra* 12,32-34, is described as:⁴³⁶

This is the Messiah whom the Most High has kept until the end of days, who will arise from the posterity of David, and will come and speak to them; he will denounce them for their ungodliness and for their wickedness, and will cast up before them their contemptuous dealings. For first he will set them living before his judgment seat, and when he has reproved them, then he will destroy them. But he will deliver in mercy the remnant of my people, those who have been saved throughout my borders, and he will make them joyful until the end comes, the day of judgment, of which I spoke to you at the beginning.

The lion symbolizes the Messiah. This is most probably an allusion to Gen 49,9-10 where it is said that Judah is a lion's whelp and that the scepter

⁴³² Ibid., 519-520; Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, 349; Stone, *The Fourth Ezra*, 10-11.

⁴³³ Bloch, "The Ezra Apocalypse," 279-294.

⁴³⁴ Cf. Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," *OTP* 1:522-523.

⁴³⁵ Violet, *Die Ezra-Apokalypse (IV Ezra)*, 44-45. For a detail division and description of the content of particular passages, see Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," *OTP* 1:517-518. On the theology of *4 Ezra*, see *ibid.*, 520-521.

⁴³⁶ Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," *OTP* 1:550.

shall never depart from him. It is noteworthy, that also in a Qumran text – namely in 4Q252 6 V, 1-7, this particular verse is interpreted messianically, referring to the Messiah of righteousness, the Shoot of David.

Similarly *4 Ezra* 12,32 also states that the Messiah (Lat. *Unctus*; Syr. *mšyh*) will arise from the posterity of David at the end of days, and he is also called the seed (Syr. *zr'h*) of David. But in contrast to the Qumran texts or *Pss. Sol.* 17 the Messiah from *4 Ezra* 12,32 seems to be a preexisting figure⁴³⁷ – thus are to be understood the words “the Most High has kept until the end of days.”

The role of this Messiah is a judicial one.⁴³⁸ While in the vision itself, the lion speaks the words of judgment which take effect on the disappearance of the eagle’s wings and heads and on the burning of the eagle’s body, in the explanation of this imagery, as found in *4 Ezra*, the Messiah (lion) himself acts as a judge who denounces, reproves and destroys the wicked. He also makes joyful the remnants of God’s people. Thus the Messiah of *4 Ezra* 12,32, plays the role of judge and comforter.

Stone notes that the messianic figure is never spoken of as a ruler, nor does he rule over the people.⁴³⁹ This Messiah’s activities are largely directed against Rome. The question is whether he is also portrayed as a warrior. For Collins this Messiah clearly represents “a warlike Davidic messiah”⁴⁴⁰ while Pomykala claims the opposite: “Notably absent from this Davidic messiah is any military function, even though the vision’s political implications are unmistakable.”⁴⁴¹

Before exploring this issue, we should analyze another passage from *4 Ezra* which also contains references to the Messiah. According to the sixth vision in *4 Ezra* 13,1-13 a messianic figure called a man, whose description echoes that of the Son of Man in Dan 7, came from the sea. This man from the sea, then

⁴³⁷ Cf. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 68.

⁴³⁸ This is partially denied by Stone who claims that “it is not to be taken to indicate that judgment is the prime characteristic of that figure (the Messiah). The foremost features are still military, the overthrowing of the great Roman Empire ...” Stone, “The Concept of the Messiah in *4 Ezra*,” 302.

⁴³⁹ Stone, “The Question of the Messiah in *4 Ezra*,” 215.

⁴⁴⁰ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 68.

⁴⁴¹ Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 218.

stepped up on to a great mountain and an innumerable multitude of men gathered to make war against him (*4 Ezra* 13,5-8). *4 Ezra* 13,9-11 then describes what happened next:⁴⁴²

And behold, when he saw the onrush of the approaching multitude, he neither lifted his hand nor held a spear or any weapon of war; but I saw only how he sent forth from his mouth as it were a stream of fire, and from his lips a flaming breath, and from his tongue he shot forth a storm of sparks. All these were mingled together, the stream of fire and the flaming breath and the great storm, and fell on the onrushing multitude that was prepared to fight, and burned up all of them, so that suddenly nothing was seen of the innumerable multitude but only the dust of ashes and the smell of smoke.

If we understand the vision as being the imagery of the future actions of the Messiah, and not just allegorical, then we are dealing with the description of the eschatological “battle” in which all the enemies of Israel will be destroyed. However as it is explicitly stated, they will not be destroyed by a military force (*4 Ezra* 13,9) but by the fire coming from the mouth of the Messiah (*4 Ezra* 13,10-11). This portrayal is clearly an allusion to Isa 11,4 as well as the portrayal in *Pss. Sol.* 17,24 where the lawless nations are also destroyed “with the word of his mouth.”

The image of the Messiah’s action is in *4 Ezra* 13,9-11 much more colorful than the one in *Pss. Sol.* 17,24, however both texts share the same idea of the destruction of the enemies. As in the case of *Pss. Sol.* 17, it is not quite appropriate to label this Messiah warlike as the destruction is not accomplished by a military force. There is no army on the side of the Messiah, as in the case of Qumran scrolls, nor is there any mention of an actual “fight”. *4 Ezra* shares, with the Psalm of Solomon 17 and with some Qumran scrolls, the description of the destruction of the lawless nations – most probably the Roman Empire. In comparison with the warlike Messiah from Qumran, especially from the *Sefer Hamilhamah*, who leads a “regular” war against the Kittim and at the end executes their king; I find it problematic to claim the

⁴⁴² Metzger, “The Fourth Book of Ezra,” *OTP* 1:551-552.

Messiah in *4 Ezra* is warlike. In fact, it is even hard to claim that the nature of the messianic figure in *4 Ezra* is violent.

In the explanation, which follows the sixth vision, the man from the sea is identified as “my son” (*4 Ezra* 13,32; cf. *4 Ezra* 13,37.52; 14,9). Although it is not stated explicitly in *4 Ezra* 13,32 that the man from the sea is the Messiah, his identification as such is unquestionable.⁴⁴³

Stone observed that the interpretation of the vision is very lax and does not precisely fit the images from the vision but represents rather the author’s own viewpoint. Stone concluded that “the author is here writing his own interpretation to a previously existed allegory.”⁴⁴⁴ It is not the purpose of this study to decide whether this is the case or not. Our focus is on the function of “the man from the sea”, as presented in the interpretation. And as Stone, Collins, and Charlesworth⁴⁴⁵ claimed, and as will become clearer, his function is similar to that of the Davidic figure from *4 Ezra* 12,32-34.

According to *4 Ezra* 13,26 the man from the sea (cf. Dan 7,13), is the one “whom the Most High has been keeping for many ages, who will himself deliver his creation; and he will direct those who are left.” He is also, like the Davidic figure, preexistent. In *4 Ezra* 13,32, he is unambiguously identified as God’s son: “then my son will be revealed, whom you saw as a man coming up from the sea.”⁴⁴⁶ The time of his appearance, according to *4 Ezra* 13,52, is unknown: “Just as no one can explore or know what is in the depths of the sea, so no one on earth can see my Son or those who are with him, except in the time of his day.”

His actions are described in *4 Ezra* 13,26 (he “will himself deliver his creation; and he will direct those who are left”) and in 13,37-40a:

And he, my Son, will reprove the assembled nations for their ungodliness (this was symbolized by the storm), and will reproach them to their face with their evil thoughts and with the torments with which they are to be

⁴⁴³ In *4 Ezra* 7,28-29 the messiah is called my son.

⁴⁴⁴ Stone, “The Concept of the Messiah in *4 Ezra*,” 306.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 309; Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 166; Charlesworth, “The Concept of the Messiah in the Pseudepigrapha,” *ANRW* II.19.1:205.

⁴⁴⁶ The phrase “from the sea” is omitted by Syr. and most Lat. MSS.

tortured (which were symbolized by the fames); and he will destroy them without effort by the law (which was symbolized by the fire). And as for your seeing him gather to himself another multitude that was peaceable, these are the ten tribes which were led away from their own land into captivity...

The similarities between the man of the sea and the Davidic figure from *4 Ezra* 11-12 are obvious. His task is the same as the task of the Davidic figure in *4 Ezra* 11-12, namely to judge and to gather the exiles (Cf. *4 Ezra* 13,39-40 with 12,32-34). As the supreme judge he will reprove, condemn and also destroy the ungodly nations. Then he will gather the exiles including the ten northern tribes.

Although the Messiah destroys the nations “it would be wise to be cautious and no to label without qualifications this messianic figure as militant since his means of conquering the enemies of Israel is not by human militant means.”⁴⁴⁷ His role is primarily a judicial one, modeled on the pattern of the Danielic Son of Man (Dan 7) and the descendant of David (cf. e.g., Isa 11,1-4; *Pss. Sol.* 17 or 4QpIsa^a, *Sefer Hamilhamah*).

We can conclude that in the two visions of *4 Ezra*, the Davidic Messiah is described primarily as a judge who will condemn and destroy Israel’s enemies – the Romans, and also as a gatherer of the people. The judicial role of this messianic figure stands out in the forefront in *4 Ezra* 12,32-34 as well as in *4 Ezra* 13,37-40a. This portrayal seems to be modeled on Isa 11,3-4, Dan 2 and Dan 7.

The Davidic Messiah from *4 Ezra* 11-12 is identified with the man from the sea, who is to be understood as the Danielic Son of Man – the eschatological cosmic judge, and he is also identified as the son of God (my son, to be precise) in *4 Ezra* 13,32.

It is evident that in the Fourth book of Ezra various titles together with the concepts standing behind them are mixed together in order to puzzle the picture

⁴⁴⁷ Charlesworth, “The Concept of the Messiah in the Pseudepigrapha,” *ANRW* II.19.1:206.

of an apocalyptic cosmic Messiah who will save his people and first of all who will judge and destroy the oppressors. Because his final victory over the Romans will not be achieved by the sword but rather by “supernatural means” – by flames coming of his mouth; it is problematic to claim this Messiah is warlike. In his role of eschatological judge, destroyer of enemies and gatherer of exiles the Davidic Messiah from *4 Ezra* matches to the picture of the Messiah in *Pss. Sol.* 17.

There are, however, several differences between the *4 Ezra* Messiah and the other sources previously discussed. The Messiah from *4 Ezra* 11-13 is pre-existent. As well, his divine sonship is more clearly expressed in *4 Ezra* 13,32.37.52; 14,9 than in *Pss. Sol.* 17 or in 4Q174. In contrast to *Pss. Sol.* 17, the character of this Messiah’s reign, which is so significant in the Psalm of Solomon, is not mentioned in the two visions. The last named difference is a result of different historical circumstances as well as distant eschatological concepts.

Despite of all the differences there are still many similarities. The judicial role of the Davidic Messiah, son of God, emphasized by his identification with the Son of Man from Dan 7, remains the point which connects the *4 Ezra* with the Psalm of Solomon 17 and Qumran scrolls. Other links include the strong political message of *4 Ezra*, as well as the influence of Isaiah 11 on the portrayal of the Davidic Messiah. In contrast to the texts from Qumran, there is no interest in priestly figures to aide the Davidic Messiah in *4 Ezra*.

Finally it should be noted that the seventh chapter of *4 Ezra* also contains a reference to the Messiah. However, this reference is quite different from the two in chapters 12 and 13. It is said in *4 Ezra* 7,28-29 that:

For my son the Messiah shall be revealed with those who are with him, and those who remain shall rejoice four hundred years. And after these years my son the Messiah shall die, and all who draw human berth.

After this Messiah’s death, for seven days, the world will return to primeval silence and after these seven days, all the people will be resurrected and judged. The old world will end and a new eon shall begin (*4 Ezra* 7,30-44).

Striking is the unique idea of the Messiah's death, which in present context does not have any soteriological meaning and thus can not be explained as Christian interpolation. The messianic age is clearly separated from the new age but in consonance with the Jewish ideas it is characterized by happiness. At this point *4 Ezra* 7 departs from previous messianic expectations.

This departure does not detract from the importance of *4 Ezra* for our understanding of messianic expectations connected with the descendant of David. As we have proven, there are several significant similarities between *4 Ezra* 11-13 and the image of the Davidic Messiah in Qumran texts and *Pss. Sol.* 17. Thus the Fourth book of Ezra represents important testimony that various messianic ideas could have been linked together with various messianic titles. The result of this synthesis is a picture of the cosmic Davidic judge who is the son of God, the Son of David and the Son of Man in one person.

2.2.4. Shemoneh Esreh

The hope for the coming of the Messiah, Son of David, is also found in one of the most important synagogal prayers, the Shemoneh Esreh. The prayer of the 18 benedictions, as it is usually called, is also known as the Tefillah (the Prayer).⁴⁴⁸ The Tefillah was supposedly recited three times a day by every Israelite at the beginning of the second century C.E. The date of its origin, from the first to the third century C.E., has been widely debated.⁴⁴⁹ It is also debated whether the Palestinian or the Babylonian recension is older.

From its content it is evident that the prayer's final form appeared only after the destruction of the second temple in year 70 C.E. However, the final form of the prayer can not be much older than 100 C.E. because of its mention in the Mishna (*m. Ber.* 4,3; *m. Ta'an.* 2,2). As well, the rabbis Gamaliel II., Joshua, Akiba, and Eliezer, all authorities from the beginning of the second century C.E., discuss whether all eighteen benedictions needed to be recited daily, how the additions during the rainy season, and on Sabbath should be interpolated, etc. (*b. Ber.* 28b).

⁴⁴⁸ See Elbogen, "Shemoneh Esreh," *JE* 11:270-282.

⁴⁴⁹ For the debate, see Duling, "The Promises to David," 63, n. 4.

Support for the early dating of Shemoneh Esreh comes from the Hebrew text of Sirach (Sir 51,12 I-XVI, MS B) found in Cairo Geniza and published by S. Schechter.⁴⁵⁰ This text contains a prayer which displays remarkable parallels with Shemoneh Esreh, and “which may go back to ben Sirach or even to the Qumran Community.”⁴⁵¹ The parallels⁴⁵² include references to God as the ‘shield of Abraham’ (Sir 51,12 X, cf. Shemoneh Esreh 1), as a ‘redeemer of Israel’ (Sir 51,12 V, cf. Shemoneh Esreh 8), as ‘gatherer of the dispersed Israel’ (Sir 51,12, V cf. Shemoneh Esreh 10).

The most important parallel, for our study, is the distich VII and VIII of Sir 51,12 and the fourteenth and fifteenth benediction of Shemoneh Esreh. The text of Sir 51,12 VII-VIII reads:⁴⁵³

Give thanks to him who rebuilt his city and his sanctuary, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to him who makes a horn to sprout for the house of David, for his mercy endures forever.

The 14th and the 15th benedictions of the Babylonian recension of Shemoneh Esreh read as:⁴⁵⁴

14. And to Jerusalem, thy city, return with mercy and dwell in its midst as thou hast spoken; and build it soon in our days to be an everlasting building; and raise up quickly in its midst the throne of David. *Blessed art thou, Lord, who buildest Jerusalem.*

15. Cause the shoot of David to shoot forth quickly, and raise up his horn by thy salvation. For we wait on thy salvation all the day. *Blessed art thou, Lord, who causest the horn of salvation to shoot forth.*

⁴⁵⁰ Schechter and Taylor, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*.

⁴⁵¹ Duling, “The Promises to David,” 63. He is following Di Lella, *The Hebrew Text of Sirach*, 101 who dates the text into the second century B.C.E.

⁴⁵² Cf. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 2:459, n. 159.

⁴⁵³ On the Hebrew text and translation, see Schechter and Taylor, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, quoted also in Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 148.

⁴⁵⁴ For an English translation, see Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 2:456-461, 458. See also Heinemann, *Prayer in the Period of Tannaim and the Amoraim*, 138-157; idem, *Prayer in the Talmud*, 218-250. For the Hebrew text and the German translation, see Staerk, *Altjüdische liturgische Gebete*, 18.

As noted above, both texts hope for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and Jerusalem temple and for the coming of a horn/shoot of David. In the 14th benediction of the Babylonian recension of Shemoneh Esreh, God is asked to raise up quickly the throne of David in Jerusalem. This can be understood as prayer for the restoration of the Davidic kingdom. In the benediction 15 of the Babylonian recension God is asked to “cause the shoot of David to shoot forth quickly.”

Almost every word from this prayer has its parallel in the earlier tradition. We have already observed that the expression the shoot of David (צמח דוד) has a strong messianic meaning in the Qumran where it is used as a title for the eschatological Davidic Messiah. And Shemoneh Esreh stands in one line with this tradition. Also in this prayer, strong messianic expectations are directly connected with the Davidic descendant whose coming will bring salvation. Causing the shoot of David to sprout (Hebrew verb צמח) is an image paralleled in Jer 33,15 as well as in Jer 23,5. That God will make “a horn (קַרְנֵי) to sprout for David” is promised in the 17th verse of the messianic Psalm 132, where it is also said that the Lord had chosen Zion to rest there forever (Ps 132,13-14). Besides the establishing the throne of David’s descendant, there is also a reference to the building of the temple in 2 Sam 7,13 – the locus classicus for the Davidic dynasty tradition. And Zech 6,12 expects that the temple will be built by the man named צִמְחָה – Shoot.

Nothing specific is said about the Shoot of David in the prayer. It can be deduced from Shemoneh Esreh 14 that he will exercise the royal office (represented by the image of sitting on the throne), and that his coming will bring salvation (Shemoneh Esreh 15).

For the sake of accuracy we should also mention the 14th benediction of Shemoneh Esreh in the Palestinian recension,⁴⁵⁵ which reads:

Be merciful, Lord our God, with thy great mercies, to Israel thy people and to Jerusalem thy city; and to Zion, the dwelling-place of the glory; and to thy Temple and thy habitation; and to the kingship of the house of David,

⁴⁵⁵ Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 2:460-461.

thy righteous Messiah. *Blessed art thou, Lord, God of David, who buildest Jerusalem.*

As is shown, even in this shorter version, which wording also recalls several biblical passages (2 Sam 7,16; Jer 23,5; 33,15), a hope for the coming of the Messiah of righteousness from the house of David is present. The phrase the Messiah of righteousness reminds us of Jer 23,5, and is similar to a reference found in 4Q252 6 V, 3-4 (“until the Messiah of righteousness comes, the Shoot of David”).

We can conclude that the focus of this prayer, its messianic references and the intentional associations with scriptural passages referring to the Davidic Messiah, provide enough evidence for the claim that the messianic expectations connected with the descendant of David, in Shemoneh Esreh titled as the shoot (צמח) and horn (קֶרֶן) (Babylonian recension) or Messiah of righteousness (משיח הצדק – in Palestinian recension) were known amongst the rabbis who at the end of the first century C.E. not only discussed the order of the 18 benedictions, the time and the conditions needed for the prayer, but also prayed the Shemoneh Esreh, asking for the coming of the Davidic Messiah.⁴⁵⁶

For the popularity of a Davidic messianic hope in the first century C.E. and even earlier speaks also the fact, pointed out already by Vermes,⁴⁵⁷ that also another two (three if we count also *Pss. Sol. 18*) prayers which are older than the Shemoneh Esreh contain the petition for the coming of a Davidic messianic figure – namely Psalm of Solomon 17 and Hebrew Sir 51,12. A petition for the coming of a Davidic Messiah is also found in later synagogal prayers.

In the Palestinian recension of Habbienu Prayer a plea is made for the shoot of David while the Babylonian recension prays for the “sprouting forth of a horn for David, thy servant.”⁴⁵⁸ In the Babylonian recension of Musaph

⁴⁵⁶ Duling even supposes that the pious Jews prayed the 15th benediction of the Babylonian recension of Shemoneh Esreh already in pre-Christian times. Duling, “The Promises to David,” 63-64.

⁴⁵⁷ Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 130.

⁴⁵⁸ Lohse, “ὁ ἄριστος Δαυιδ,” *TDNT* 8:481; cf. Staerk, *Altjüdische liturgische Gebete*, 20.

Prayer, a prayer to God asks for several gifts. One gift which is requested is a “sprouting forth of a horn for David, thy servant,” and the “setting up of a light for the son of Jesse, thine anointed.”⁴⁵⁹ The wording of this last prayer recalls Ps 132,17 and Isa 11,1 – both important messianic passages. These prayers are a further proof of the expectation of a Davidic Messiah in Judaism.

2.2.5. The Messiah ben David and Rabbis

In our analysis of the Shemoneh Esreh we have already demonstrated that the messianic hope connected with the descendant of David was a belief held by many rabbis. Evidence for this claim can be found mainly in *b. Sanh.* 97a-99a. This tractate reflects vivid discussion amongst the rabbis, from the first century C.E. forth, regarding names of the Messiah, his nature, the time of his coming and length of his reign. It is not the purpose of my study to provide an analysis of the various rabbinic concepts of the Messiah,⁴⁶⁰ nor to investigate in detail the references to the Son of David in rabbinical Judaism.⁴⁶¹ My intention is to focus on a few examples from the Talmud which illustrate the rabbi usage of the title Son of David (בְּרִי דָּוִד) as a designation for the Messiah.

An example can be found e.g., in *b. Sanh.* 98a where it is reported that the disciples of Rabbi Jose ben Kisma (110 C.E.) asked him: “When will the Messiah come?” ... He answered them, ‘When this gate falls down, is rebuilt, falls again, and is again rebuilt, and then falls a third time, before it can be rebuilt the son of David will come.’”

Another text which refers to the Messiah as Son of David can also be found in *b. Sanh.* 97a: “R. Nehemiah said: in the generation of Messiah’s coming impudence will increase, esteem be perverted, the vine yield its fruit, yet shall

⁴⁵⁹ Lohse, “ὁ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ,” *TDNT* 8:482; cf. Staerk, *Altjüdische liturgische Gebete*, 23.

⁴⁶⁰ See e.g., Neusner, *The Foundations of Judaism*, vol. 2; Oegema, *The Anointed and His People*, 259-286.

⁴⁶¹ For references to the messiah as Son of David in the Babylonian Talmud, see Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*, 317. On the Davidic Messiah in rabbinic thought, see Neusner, *The Foundations of Judaism*, 2:175, 187-191. On Davidic messianism in the Targums, see Levey, *The Messiah*, 142. For the messianic ideal in the period of the Tannaim, see Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, 388-517. For a brief overview of Davidic messianism in Targums and rabbinic literature with references to primary sources, see Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts*, 50-53.

wine be dear, and the Kingdom will be converted to heresy with none to rebuke them. This supports R. Isaac, who said: The son of David will not come until the whole world is converted to the belief of the heretics.”

The portrayal of this Davidic Messiah can be, with regard to the diversity of the material preserved in Talmud and Targums, delineated only in main contours. The rabbis created their image of the Messiah from Scriptures as well as tradition, thus their portrayal of the Son of David is similar to the one preserved in *Pss. Sol.* 17. As well some rabbis thought the Messiah, Son of David as a human figure, an eschatological king who would emerge to save Israel at the end of the days, who would destroy all its enemies, gather the exiles, and inaugurate the kingdom into an (age) of peace, wealth and justice.

Although, some details deviate from the images preserved in *Pss. Sol.* 17 and in examined Qumran scrolls, and more than one messianic image exists in the rabbinic literature,⁴⁶² rabbinic expectations are consistent with earlier tradition. An example of this consistency is found in Hippolytus' (ca. 170-235 C.E.) report, in which he describes the Jewish Davidic messianic hopes of the end of the second century C.E. Hippolytus in *Haer.* IX, 25 writes:⁴⁶³

For they say that his generation will be from the stock of David, but not from a virgin and *the* Holy Spirit, but from a woman and a man, according as it is a rule for all to be procreated from seed. And they allege that this *Messiah* will be King over them, – a warlike and powerful individual, who, after having gathered together the entire people of the Jews, *and* having done battle with all the nations, will restore for them Jerusalem the royal city. And into this city He will collect together the entire *Hebrew* race, and bring it back once more into the ancient customs, that it may fulfil the regal and sacerdotal functions, and dwell in confidence for periods of time of sufficient duration. *After this repose, it is their opinion* that war would next

⁴⁶² There is also a depiction of two messiahs – Messiah ben Joseph and Messiah ben David e.g., in *b. Sukkah* 52a. For details, see e.g., Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, 483-501; Cohn-Sherbock, *The Jewish Messiah*, 47-51.

⁴⁶³ Trans. Roberts, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 5:138.

be waged against them after being thus congregated; that in this conflict Christ would fall by the edge of the sword; *and* that, after no long time, would next succeed the termination and conflagration of the universe; and that in this way their opinions concerning the resurrection would receive completion, and a recompense be rendered to each man according to his works.

The significance of this text is that it not only records the Jewish messianic expectations of the second century C.E., but it also illuminates the resemblances (as well as the differences) between the rabbinic image of the Davidic Messiah and the image of various Jewish groups of the first century B.C.E. and C.E.

2.2.6. Conclusion: Son of David as Expected Eschatological Messiah

In our analysis of various pseudepigraphic, Qumran and rabbinical texts we have been tracing the messianic⁴⁶⁴ ideas connected with a descendant of David, focusing on specific expectations connected with his person, the offices which he performed, and also on various titles and designations which were associated with this figure.

We have observed that this messianic figure was either given the title (designation) (the) Son of David (ὁ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ / בן־דָּוִד (Pss. Sol. 17,21; rabbis – b. Sanh. 97a-99a) or received a more metaphorical designations, such as the branch/sprout from the stump of Jesse (הַצֶּמַח מִגִּזְעֵי יֵשׁוּעַ – cf. 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 15.22; 4Q285 7, 2-3), the hut of David (סוּכַת דָּוִד – cf. 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 11-13), David's seed (זֶרַע דָּוִד – cf. 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 10-11), Prince of the Congregation (נָשִׂיא הָעֵדֻהָ – cf. 4QpIsa^a 2-6 II, 19; 4Q285 7, 4-5), Shoot of David (צֶמַח דָּוִד – cf. 4QFlor 1-2 and 21 I, 11; 4QpIsa^a 8-10 III, 22;

⁴⁶⁴ The analysis of Pss. Sol. 17 has shown that in the first century B.C.E. the word anointed one (מָשִׁיחַ), which earlier referred to any anointed priest, prophet, or Israelite king, was transformed into a standard title designating the eschatological deliverer of Israel – the Messiah.

4Q285 7, 3.4-5; 4Q252 6 V, 3-4), lion (cf. 4 *Ezra* 12,31-34), scepter (שֶׁבֶט) or ruler's staff (מִזְרָקָה – cf. the messianic interpretation of Gen 49,10 in 4Q252 6 V, 1-7), the horn (קֶרֶן – cf. Hebrew Sir 51,12 VIII), etc.

All these designations have their origin in the numerous passages of the Hebrew Scriptures, such as: Gen 49,10; Jer 23,5-6; 33,17; Amos 9,11; Zech 3,8; 6,12; Ps 89,5; Ps 132,17; Isa 11,1-4, and are mostly related to the promise given to David in 2 Sam 7,12-16, which contains three main elements:

1. the Davidic descent of the future ruler⁴⁶⁵
2. Father-son relationship between God and descendant of David⁴⁶⁶
3. the promise of perpetuity for the Davidic dynasty and rule⁴⁶⁷

Our analysis demonstrates that especially two biblical texts, Isa 11,1-5 and 2 Sam 7,12-16, had a decisive influence on the formation of the roles, personality, and tasks of the future Davidic deliverer of Israel.

We have also seen that within the framework of these two centuries (ca. from year 100 B.C.E. till the year 100 C.E.) portrayals of the Messianic Son of David were not only popular and widespread amongst various Jewish groups, but that they were also consistent. Surely the finer details of these depictions could have varied greatly, but the similarities are remarkable.

The expected eschatological Davidid, whether he was called (the) “Son of David”, as in the case of the rabbis and *Pss. Sol.* 17, the “Shoot of David” as in the Qumran, “my son” as in the case of 4 *Ezra*, or simply the “Messiah”, as in the case of *Pss. Sol.* 18; was basically portrayed as an eschatological king who will liberate Jerusalem from foreign oppressors, destroy the irregular rulers, gather the exiles, judge Israel and all the nations, and who will then reign in peace and justice for ever.

⁴⁶⁵ 2 Sam 7,12: BHS: וְהִקְיַמְתִּי אֶחְזֵרְעֵל אֶחְזֵרְעֵל אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמֶּעֶיךָ LXX: καὶ ἀναστήσω τὸ σπέρμα σου μετὰ σέ ὃς ἔσται ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας σου; I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body.

⁴⁶⁶ 2 Sam 7,14a BHS: וְהָיָא יְהוָה לִי לְבָן וְהָיָא אֲנִי אֶחְזֵרְעֵל לְאָב LXX: ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.

⁴⁶⁷ 2 Sam 7,16 BHS: וְהָיָא נֶגְדוֹן עַד-עוֹלָם: וְהָיָא כְּסֶלֶס לְפָנֶיךָ עַד-עוֹלָם וְנִמְלְכְתָה עַד-עוֹלָם עִמּוֹן לְפָנֶיךָ LXX: καὶ πιστωθήσεται ὁ οἶκος αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ ἕως αἰῶνος ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ καὶ ὁ θρόνος αὐτοῦ ἔσται ἀνωρθωμένος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

As we have stated each portrayal differs in the specific details, as has been demonstrated by the exegesis of various texts, but these differences can be often ascribed on the account of historical conditions under which the author of the text wrote, on the account of a slightly differing ideology, as is most obvious in the case of Qumran, or on the account of the intentional emphasis. However, in all these texts the Messiah, the Son of David, takes on one of three roles, if not all three: the role/office of a king, judge and eventually a warrior.

The amount of surviving material, the similarities of the expectations, as well as the continual development of the messianic ideals demonstrates the significance of hope for the coming of the Messiah, the Son of David, in the Palestinian Judentum. Pomykala is wrong in his claim that “there existed in early Judaism no continuous, widespread, or dominant expectation for a Davidic messiah.”⁴⁶⁸ The surviving evidence which we have examined, (which however Pomykala finds almost insignificant, emphasizing rather the differences, while not being willing to see the commonalities,) speaks clearly against his thesis.

Within our analysis, we have not only just seen the significance and popularity of messianic hope but also the fact that several titles were used to refer to the eschatological Davidic Messiah. We have observed that these titles (designations) were not only combined together but were interchangeable as is evident in the case of Qumran scrolls and *4 Ezra*. The fact that these titles were used in the same way by various Jewish communities – i.e., as referring to the eschatological Davidic Messiah, on the one hand attests the popularity of these messianic ideas and on the other hand supports the thesis that the expression Son of David ((ὁ) υἱὸς Δαυίδ / בְּן־דָּוִד), unimportant whether used with definite article or not (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17,21), was a messianic title, or better told one among many, with clearly defined messianic content, which was understandable for Jewish ears from the first century B.C.E. onward.

⁴⁶⁸ Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 270.

2.3. Conclusion: The Jewish Background of the Designation Son of David (υἱὸς Δαυίδ) and Its Relationship to Matthew's Gospel

The analysis of the previous two passages provided us with valuable information about the Zeitgeist in Palestine, in the first century C.E. This analysis of the texts, relating to the Son of David, demonstrates that there existed two separate portrayals/concepts of the Son of David in first century Judaism in Palestine.

The first image suggests that the designation son of David could have referred to the non-messianic figure of Solomon, the greatest and wisest king of Israel, an actual offspring of David, who was in the first century C.E. known as a mighty exorcist and healer. We have further suggested that in the first century C.E. the designation son of David may have also referred to a person endowed with great exorcistic/healing powers reminiscent of those of Solomon.

The other portrayal/concept suggests that the designation (title) Son of David, unimportant whether used with or without a definite article, could have been used as designation of the eschatological Davidic Messiah in the first century Judaism. This Messiah from the Davidic line was expected to liberate Jerusalem from foreign oppressors, to destroy the irregular rulers, to gather the exiles, to judge Israel and all the nations, to restore the kingdom and to reign in peace and justice for ever.

One may ask, how can the concept of the messianic Son of David, who is not depicted as someone who heals or exorcizes, be related to the non-messianic concept of the exorcistic/healing son of David? The answer may lie in the motif of wisdom. We have already claimed and in our exegesis proved that Isa 11,1-5 had a decisive influence on the forming of the character of the Davidic Messiah. According to Isa 11,2 the sprout from the stump of Jesse – i.e., the messianic Son of David will be endowed with divine wisdom: “On him will rest the spirit of Yahweh, the spirit of wisdom and insight, the spirit of counsel and power, the spirit of knowledge and fear

of Yahweh.” In our analysis of the Solomon as exorcist traditions we have observed that it was believed already in the first century C.E. among various Jewish groups that Solomon, son of David, was endowed with exorcistic knowledge and powers, which can be used by other persons, and that these powers were part of his great wisdom, as it is evident not only from Wis 7,15-21; and *T. Sol.* prologue, but first of all from *Ant.* 42-44.49.

These two portrayals/concepts create the background on which the Gospel of Matthew was written. In the framework of my hypothesis, I presuppose that Matthew, whose intention was to plausibly demonstrate that Jesus was the true Messiah of Israel (an intention which could have been achieved only by critical and creative usage of already existing ideas and not by formulating new ones), was well aware of both of these concepts/portrayals and that he incorporated them into his portrayal of Jesus.

The way in which Matthew drew on the tradition of the royal messianic Son of David and especially on the Solomon as exorcist and healer tradition, and whether he is responsible for the connection of these two originally separated concepts/traditions or not, will be discussed in the following – main section.

3. Jesus as the Son of David in Matthew's Gospel

3.1. The Prologue and the Infancy Narratives

3.1.1. The Superscription (Matt 1,1)

Matthew begins his Gospel with the words Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ. As most commentators agree the lack of definitive articles, as well as verbs, indicates that the first verse is meant to be understood as a title. The question which arises, and whose answering influences the way in which the words βίβλος γενέσεως are translated, is whether the heading concerns the whole of Matthew's Gospel,⁴⁶⁹ the genealogy which immediately follows (Matt 1,2-17),⁴⁷⁰ the entire first chapter (1,2-25),⁴⁷¹ the entire infancy narrative,⁴⁷² or the first main part of the Gospel (Matt 1,2-4,16).⁴⁷³

Although the Greek word βίβλος can refer to the book of accounts, record/s or writing,⁴⁷⁴ the proper translation is "book" in the ordinary sense of the word. Davies and Allison have plausibly demonstrated that several Jewish writings, such as Nahum (1,1), Tobit (1,1), Baruch (1,1), *T. Job* (1,1), *Apoc. Ab.* (title) used to be opened "... with an independent titular sentence announcing the content of the work."⁴⁷⁵ It seems certain that βίβλος should refer to Matthew's Gospel as a whole and not only to its part.

Our problem, however, consists of two parts – firstly of the meaning of the word βίβλος and secondly of the understanding of the genitive γενέσεως. The Greek word γένεσις occurs only twice in Matthew's Gospel – here and in

⁴⁶⁹ Zahn, *Matthäus*, 39-44; Gaechter, *Matthäus*, 34-35; Grundmann, *Matthäus*, 61; Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 360-365; Beare, *Matthew*, 64; Sand, *Matthäus*, 39-41; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:69 (change from first ed. where Luz argued that Matt 1,1 was an introduction only to chapter 1); Mayordomo-Marín, *Den Anfang hören*, 206-217. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:149-155.

⁴⁷⁰ Gundy, *Matthew*, 13; Lohmeyer, *Matthäus*, 4; Schmid, *Matthäus*, 35; Tatum, "The Origin of Jesus Messiah," 526; Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 14; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:5; Wiefel, *Matthäus*, 27-28.

⁴⁷¹ Vögtle, "Genealogie," 73; Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 59.

⁴⁷² Allen, *Matthew*, 1-2; Plummer, *Matthew*, 1.

⁴⁷³ Krentz, "The Extent of Matthew's Prologue," 409-414; Kingsbury, *Matthew*, 7-17.

⁴⁷⁴ Cf. Deut 24,1.3 (bill of divorce); 2 Sam 11,14-15; 1 Kgs 21,8-9 (letter); Neh 7,5 (family register).

⁴⁷⁵ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:151-152.

Matt 1,18 (where, however, it undoubtedly means birth) – and has several meanings. It can mean: birth, origin, coming into being, existence, life, an account of someone’s life, history, lineage, family lineage, or creation.⁴⁷⁶ Although the number of possible meanings may be confusing for the present reader, it does not mean that it was confusing also for the first century reader. In fact Matthew may have used this word intentionally – because of the variety of meanings and associations it may have evoked.

If we understand γένεσις as lineage, it refers to the immediately following genealogy (Matt 1,2-17); however, if we understand it as origin, it can refer to the genealogy together with the “enlarged footnote”⁴⁷⁷ (Matt 1,18-25), and finally, if we understand the word as history or life story, we are not far from what Matthew among others intended to write – the life story of Jesus Christ – i.e., it refers to the whole Gospel of Matthew.

Besides, the phrase βίβλος γενέσεως could have evoked another association by the first century readers. It could be understood as an allusion to the first book of the Greek Bible which, already in the first century C.E., was known as Genesis.⁴⁷⁸ This allusion, however, should not be understood as Matthew’s attempt to present Jesus as an initiator of a new creation.⁴⁷⁹ In fact, the whole genealogy, which immediately follows, is conceived and structured in a way which presents Jesus as the “telos” of God’s salvation history, the one, in whom the promises given to Abraham and David will be fulfilled; but not as a new creation or even as a creator. The perspective is not aimed at the new beginning but rather at the eschatological fulfillment in Jesus. The allusion to Genesis must then have a different meaning.

The key to a proper understanding of Matt 1,1 may lie in a link to Gen 2,4 and 5,1 where the identical phrase βίβλος γενέσεως also is used. The first instance, Gen 2,4, either concludes the account of the creation of heaven and earth (Gen 1,1-2,3) or introduces the creation of man and woman (Gen 2,5-25). At any rate, it occurs in a text whose theme is beginnings. There is a reason to

⁴⁷⁶ See “γένεσις,” BDAG, 192-193.

⁴⁷⁷ The term “enlarged footnote” was used by Stendahl, “Quis et unde?,” 102.

⁴⁷⁸ Cf. Philo, *Post.* 127; *Abr.* 1; *Aet.* 19.

⁴⁷⁹ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:153.

believe that Matthew wanted to start his story about Jesus from the very beginning, as the author of Genesis did. Thus his starting point is not the beginning of the preaching of the gospel, as by Mark (Mark 1,1), but Jesus' birth and, through the genealogy, in abbreviation, even Abraham, in whom the God's dealing with Israel – the history of salvation, have begun. A history, which now is crowned by Jesus the Messiah.

Aside from this intention, there might be another reason why Matthew wanted to evoke associations with the Book of Genesis. This could be the fact that Genesis also contains the story of Abraham and the promises given to him by God. Promises which play an important role for Matthew, who in the heading introduces Jesus not only as Son of David but also as son of Abraham – i.e., as one who is connected with these promises and in whom they will be fulfilled.

In the second case (Gen 5,1), the phrase βίβλος γενέσεως introduces a list of Adam's descendants. It is then no mere coincidence that Matthew begins his Gospel with a genealogy of Jesus' ancestors.⁴⁸⁰

On the basis of my analysis, and under the influence of D.C. Allison,⁴⁸¹ I translate the subscription as: "Book of Genesis of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, son of Abraham."

The genitive, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ should not be understood as a subjective genitive, i.e., to recall a new creation through Jesus,⁴⁸² but rather as a genitive introducing the main figure of Matthew's Gospel. There is a deeper significance in the fact that βίβλος γενέσεως is followed by Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. It is important to note that genealogies in the Jewish tradition – i.e., in the Old Testament and in extra-biblical traditions – always took their name from the progenitor – i.e., the first name on the list. Matthew's genealogy is named after the last member of the list – Jesus. This focuses the reader on the importance of

⁴⁸⁰ The shift of perspective can be regarded as part of Matthew's narrative strategy – as mentioned above, it is his intention to represent Jesus as "telos" of the salvation history and as the fulfillment of hopes and promises.

⁴⁸¹ Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 157-162; similarly Luz, *Matthew*, 1:69.

⁴⁸² As held by Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:156.

Jesus, who is by Matthew seen as the eschatological point of the history of salvation.

It has been debated by some scholars whether Jesus Christ should be understood as a double name or a title. It is without doubt that Ἰησοῦς is not a Christological title in Matthew's Gospel,⁴⁸³ but a proper name originating from Hebrew יֵשׁוּעַ (Jeshua), a later form of יְהוֹשֻׁעַ (Jehosua), which means YHWH is salvation or YHWH saves. This name was popular in the time of Jesus,⁴⁸⁴ and could have evoked associations with Joshua – Moses' successor who led Israelites into Canaan and distributed the land to the tribes.

What is less certain is whether the addition Χριστός should be regarded as a title or as a name, as in other passages of the New Testament, like Rom 1,1; Gal 1,1; Jas 2,1. In my opinion, a precise distinction between the name and the title in Matthew's Gospel is not possible. On the one hand, it cannot be denied that the compound expression Jesus Christ had become a personal name in the second half of the first century C.E. and that Matthew could have used it in that sense. On the other hand, Matthew deliberately uses the designation χριστός in a titular sense (see e.g., Matt 1,17; 2,2) – evoking royal messianic expectations. It is hard to imagine that the Jewish reader of Matthew's Gospel would only regard it as a second name without any deeper significance, without being aware of the meaning of the Greek word χριστός (which is a translation of the Hebrew word מָשִׁיחַ and which means anointed one).

Originally the term χριστός – anointed one (the one who was anointed with oil) could have referred to the anointed priests (Lev 4,3.5), prophets (1 Kgs 19,16) or kings (Ps 2,2) (even to the Gentile ruler Cyrus – Isa 44,28-45,1) – i.e., to persons chosen to a specific service for God. In several cases, the anointment could have been connected with a special endowment by the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Sam 16,13). Generally, the anointment was understood as an expression of a commission for serving to God, and

⁴⁸³ Kingsbury, Matthew, 84-85.

⁴⁸⁴ See Foerster, "Ἰησοῦς," *TDNT* 3:284-293.

the anointed one became a commissioned agent of God's will. Since the first century B.C.E., the expression anointed one – χριστός – was a standard (titular) designation for the eschatological deliverer sent by God at the end of times, who played a partial or main role in the inauguration of a new age (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17; 18).⁴⁸⁵

What kind of associations could the title χριστός have evoked by the first century readers? Without further specifications – several; however, in the present context their number is limited. Jesus is designated as Messiah (χριστός), the Son of David (υἱὸς Δαυίδ), son of Abraham (υἱὸς Ἀβραάμ). This further specification limits the associations on royal messianic expectations – such as we have found e.g., in *Pss. Sol.* 17, where the “Messiah” is also identified as (the) “Son of David”. Although Χριστός is not used with a definitive article in Matt 1,1, the titular meaning should not be excluded, similarly as in the case of the designation Son of David in *Pss. Sol.* 17. The evoked royal messianic associations are, however, slightly revised by the designation son of Abraham, to which we shall turn our attention later.

The addition of Χριστός to Jesus' name lets the Jewish reader think of Jesus as God's chosen agent – the one who is linked to some type of commission, and it lets one ask what kind of commission it is and how it will be fulfilled. A question Matthew will answer within his narrative.

As already stated Jesus is designated not only as the Messiah (Χριστός), but also as the Son of David (υἱὸς Δαυίδ). This designation has several meanings. Firstly, it says that Jesus comes from a Davidic lineage, i.e., from the royal family which once ruled over Israel.

⁴⁸⁵ I am aware that there did not exist any uniform messianic expectations in the intertestamental Judaism – i.e., that the images of the character as well as the role and origin of the messianic deliverer may have differed. There also existed various groups within Judaism, which did not connect their hope for a change with the coming of the Messiah. However, the fact that the designation *Messiah* was used in an absolute sense is more than clear from various texts of that period. For various messianic expectations, see e.g., Charlesworth, “The Concept of the Messiah in the Pseudepigrapha,” *ANRW* II.19.1:188-218; idem, *The Messiah*; Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*; Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*.

Secondly, υἱὸς Δαυίδ specifies the title Messiah. As a result Jesus is presented as the Davidic Messiah. As discussed in chapter 2.2. the title Son of David became a standard messianic title from the first century B.C.E. on, denoting the eschatological Davidic ruler who was expected to fulfill the promises given to David in 2 Sam 7,12-16, to gather the exiles, to rule and to judge but also to defeat the enemies of Israel. In our analysis of *Pss. Sol. 17* we have proven that the terminus technicus did not have to be necessarily used with a definitive article – without loosing its titular force. Therefore it can be assumed that the designation Son of David, although used without the definite article, could have a titular meaning in Matt 1,1.⁴⁸⁶

For Matthew Jesus is not just any Davidid, as his adoptive father Joseph (1,20), he is not just another king from the Davidic line, but the promised eschatological Son of David, the final King, who encloses the lineage of kings and surpasses them all.

Already the structure of the heading speaks for Jesus' importance – the preposition of the name Jesus, as well as the ordering of the subsequent genealogy – which ends with Jesus, as well as Matthew's summary in verse 17, which creates a second half of a chiasm to verse 1 following the pattern Χριστοῦ ... Δαυίδ ... Ἀβραάμ – Ἀβραάμ ... Δαυίδ ... Χριστοῦ.

While the connection to the royal messianic expectation is certain, it is less certain whether there is a link to the Solomonic exorcistic tradition in the designation υἱὸς Δαυίδ. Could a reader also think of David's son Solomon, the mighty exorcist and healer, or of a Solomon-like figure endowed with healing and exorcistic powers reminiscent of/comparable with those of Solomon, when reading the heading? Well, theoretically yes (cf. chapter 2.1.), however, the question can not be satisfactorily answered at this stage of Matthew's narrative, because only within his story will Matthew demonstrate which expectations, hopes and traditions linked to the Son of David are fulfilled by Jesus and in which way.

⁴⁸⁶ Contra Nolland, Matthew, 72.

As noted above, the titles Χριστός as well as υἱὸς Δαυίδ evoke royal messianic expectations. The same can not be said about the further specification, that of the son of Abraham (υἱὸς Ἀβραάμ). The Son of Abraham can hardly be regarded as a messianic title.⁴⁸⁷ Why then is Jesus also called the son of Abraham? Are there any specific associations, intended by the author, which the reader could have had? What is the meaning of this designation?

Davies and Allison explain, that υἱὸς Ἀβραάμ was “an expression used either of one of Jewish blood (Lk 19.9; Jn 8; Acts 13.26; *m. B. Qam.* 8.6) or of one worthy of father Abraham (4 Macc 6.17, 22; 18.23; Gal 3.7; *b Besa* 32b)” concluding that both meanings are appropriate in Matthew’s Gospel.⁴⁸⁸ Thus, the purpose of the designation is to say, that Jesus is a true Israelite – the descendant of Abraham.

Secondly, Abraham was seen, within Judaism, as an example of a faithful and obedient servant who kept the Law⁴⁸⁹ perfectly. It seems to be in Matthew’s best interest to portray Jesus in a similar way.

As well, Abraham was remembered as subject of God’s election, and similarly Jesus can be seen as God’s chosen one. Finally, as in the case of David (2 Sam 7,12-16), there existed God’s promise to Abraham (cf. Gen 12,1-3; 17,1-7), that he will be a father of many nations and that “all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him” (Gen 18,18). This promise was not forgotten, but expanded in later Jewish literature (cf. *Ant.* 1,235; 1 Macc 12,19-21). The Jewish Christian Paul presented Abraham as a true father of all who have faith (Rom 4,1-25; Gal 3,6-29). Thus, in the first century C.E., Abraham had become “an international figure of significance for Jews and Gentiles.”⁴⁹⁰

Designating Jesus as the son of Abraham allowed Matthew to widen the narrow nationalistic horizon of the title Son of David, indicating thus the universalistic significance of Jesus and alluding to one of his main topics – the

⁴⁸⁷ Contra Argyle, Matthew, 25.

⁴⁸⁸ Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:158.

⁴⁸⁹ See Sir 44,19-21; *Pr. Man.* 8; *Jub.* 6,19; 16,28; 21,2; 23,10; 2 *Bar.* 57,1-2; *T. Ab.* 1,4; etc.

⁴⁹⁰ Carter, “Matthean Christology in Roman Imperial Key,” 163. On the seed of Abraham, see Dozeman, “Sperma Abraam,” 342-358, esp. 343-346.

salvation of Gentiles, which is implicitly taken up in Matt 1,1, continued in the inclusion of Gentile women in Jesus' lineage and in the magi's worship of Jesus (Matt 2,1-12), explicated in the picture of a banquet in Matt 8,10-12 as well as in the healing of a Canaanite woman's daughter (Matt 15,21-28), and culminating in the great commission in Matt 28,18-20.

Already at the beginning of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is thus introduced not only to Israel as the Davidic Messiah of Israel, who shall fulfill the promises given to David (2 Sam 7,12-16), but also as the one, who will bring salvation even to the Gentiles – fulfilling the promise given to Abraham (Gen 12,1-3; 17,1-7; 18,18).

3.1.2. The Genealogy (Matt 1,2-17)

The superscription is followed by a list of Jesus' ancestors (Abraham's descendants). Considering the form, the genealogy is a linear genealogical list of male descendants without side branches “that in antiquity often functioned to give legitimation.”⁴⁹¹ The list follows a standard genealogical pattern, X begat Y (found also e.g., in 1 Chr 1,34 and Ruth 4,18-22), which is suddenly and unexpectedly broken in verse 16, calling the reader's attention and rising questions of the integrity of the lineage. An explanation is required, and given in Matt 1,18-25.

The pattern is disrupted by several additions – such as mentioning of four women (1,3.5.6), of brothers (1,2.11), of the exile (1,11.12) and designating David as king (1,6).

The key for understanding the structure as well as the significance of the genealogy is given within the end of the list – in Matthew's summary in verse 17. Matt 1,17 reads:

Πᾶσαι οὖν αἱ γενεαὶ ἀπὸ Ἀβραάμ ἕως Δαυὶδ γενεαὶ δεκατέσσαρες, καὶ ἀπὸ Δαυὶδ ἕως τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος γενεαὶ δεκατέσσαρες, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος ἕως τοῦ Χριστοῦ γενεαὶ δεκατέσσαρες.

⁴⁹¹ Luz, Matthew, 1:81.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

First we have to ask what could have led the author of the genealogy to the division of time into 3x14 generations and for what purpose (the question of structure and purpose). Secondly, we have to ask how was this division achieved (the question of sources and redaction).

The division of history into several epochs, according to certain pattern, seems not to be unusual within the first century Judaism; it was quite popular in Jewish apocalyptic circles, where it served as a way to calculate the end of time and the coming of a new age.⁴⁹² This is also true for Matthew's Gospel, however, unlike the apocalypics, the perspective is different. In the apocalyptic writings, the division of history is used to support the hope for a coming delivery, whereas in Matthew's Gospel it is used to assure the audience that the Deliverer has already come – underlying the eschatological importance of Jesus, whose name appears last on the list. Already the structure of the genealogy points thus to the significance of Jesus, the Messiah, to whom the history of salvation headed to.

Another purpose of the genealogy is to integrate Jesus into the salvation history, which for Matthew began with Abraham, and which is presented in the form of a genealogical list. This list of ancestors is ordered in descending order (from Abraham to Jesus). Within this integration, Matthew's intention is especially to link Jesus with Abraham and David (cf. Matt 1,1). As Luz pertinently writes in his commentary: "The genealogy first of all elucidates what 'son of Abraham' means. Jesus the Messiah is an Israelite, Abraham's descendant."⁴⁹³ Jesus is a descendant of the patriarchs, the bearer and the fulfiller of promises once given to Abraham.

The genealogy (together with Matt 1,18-25) also elucidates two aspects of the designation the Son of David. Through the list of ancestors it is apparent

⁴⁹² Cf. Dan 9,24-27; *1 En.* 91,12-17; 93,1-10; *2 Bar.* 53-74 (the vision of clouds from which dark water is poured).

⁴⁹³ Luz, Matthew, 1:82.

that Jesus is David's descendant and thus rightly called son of David. Secondly, the structure of the genealogy indicates that he is not just another descendant of the royal Davidic family, but the Son of David – the Messiah (1,17) who was expected to fulfill the promises once given to David.

The fact that David plays an important role in Jesus' genealogy becomes clear not only from the addition "the king" to his name in verse 6 (Ἰησοῦ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Δαυὶδ τὸν βασιλέα) but also from the division of history into 3x14 generations.

We have already stated that division of time into several periods was quite usual in the first century Judaism, as well as the numbering of generations.⁴⁹⁴ Now we shall answer the question why did Matthew⁴⁹⁵ choose to divide the history into 3 sections each consisting of 14 generations.

Various answers have been proposed – some are more probable than others. C. Kaplan saw the 28 day moon cycle behind the scheme in Matt 1,2-17. According to Kaplan, the three generations represent three phases of the Moon – two waxing (Abraham – David; Exile – Jesus) and one waning (David – Exile) – each corresponding to the highest and lowest points of Israel's history. The weakness of this theory is that there is no sign of waxing or waning in the genealogy.

R.F. Moore's⁴⁹⁶ approach is as problematic. He attempts to understand Matthew's last 14 generations between the Exile and Jesus as a reference to Daniel's seven weeks of years (e.g., 490 years) which will pass until the coming of the Messiah. His idea is based on a mathematical speculation which allows 35 years for each generation in order to achieve the number 490 (35x14=490).

⁴⁹⁴ Thus for example Gen 5,3-32 lists 10 generations from Abraham to Noah and Gen 11,10-26 ten generations from Noah to Abraham. Cf. *m. Abot* 5,2; *Num. Rab.* 13,14 on 7,15.

⁴⁹⁵ I assume that the division into 3x14 generations comes from Matthew himself and not from a hypothetical source which he could have used, or from a Jewish apocalyptic.

⁴⁹⁶ Moore, "Fourteen Generations – 490 Years," 97-103.

Also Waetjen's supposed analogy⁴⁹⁷ with *2 Bar.* 53-74 or H.L. Strack and P. Billerbeck's⁴⁹⁸ analogy to "Ten Weeks Apocalypse" (*1 En.* 93,1-10; 91,12-17) is contributory and functions only as an additional proof of the division of history into a fixed number of periods within apocalyptic writings, both of these analogies, however, miss a closer link to Matthew's 3x14 generations and are based on speculation or mathematical games. The same applies to Farrer's⁴⁹⁹ division of Matthew's 3x14 generations into 6x7 generations.

A more probable explanation was offered by T. Zahn.⁵⁰⁰ According to Zahn, Matthew adopted the number 14 from the first division from Abraham to David, as he had found it in his Old Testament sources (1 Chr 1-2). This approach seems likely, however not without further discussion.

The structure of 1 Chr 1-2 did not have to be the only reason why Matthew decided to structure the rest of the genealogy into 2x14 generations. Aside from the attempted symmetry and the desire to reveal to his readers, due to a clear scheme, God's plan in the salvation history of Israel; there might be another reason why Matthew structured his genealogy according to the pattern of 3x14 generations.

The reason can be found in the numerical value of David's name. The Hebrew name David (דָּוִד) consists of three consonants whose sum is 14 ($דָּוִד = 4+6+4 = 14$) – therefore Matthew's division into 3x14 can originate in gematria.⁵⁰¹

There is sufficient evidence that gematria was commonly used also in Greek writings (*Sib. Or.* 5,12-51; *Num. Rab.* on 5,18 and 16,1; *b. Ned* 32a; *b. Yoma* 20a; *b. Sanh.* 22a; etc.) and especially in apocalyptic circles (e.g., Rev 13,18). Davies and Allison, who are defenders of the gematria hypothesis, use the example of Gad (Gen 46,8-27), whose name had the numerical value of seven, was placed in the seventh position, and who is told to

⁴⁹⁷ Waetjen, "The Genealogy as the Key to the Gospel according to Matthew," 207-212.

⁴⁹⁸ Str-B 1:44-45.

⁴⁹⁹ Farrer, *Matthew and Mark*, 189.

⁵⁰⁰ Zahn, *Matthäus*, 51.

⁵⁰¹ Cf. Box, "The Gospel Narratives of the Nativity," 80-81; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:163-165; Johnson, *The Purpose of Biblical Genealogies*, 192-193.

have had seven sons; to attest that gematria could have played an important role in the composition of a genealogy without being explicitly mentioned.⁵⁰²

As Davies and Allison have noted, the gematria may explain why David's name is 14th on the list. If we consider that: David has a specific meaning for Matthew (Son of David further more); his name is supplemented with the title king (Matt 1,6); and repeated two times at the end of the genealogy (Matt 1,17), the attractiveness of this explanation becomes evident.

A frequently raised objection, that Matthew's audience would be unable to grasp gematria based on the numerical value of a Hebrew name, is partially correct. Non-Hebrew readers would probably not be able to understand this "game", whereas bilingual readers would. As we have argued, it was one of Matthew's intentions to present Jesus also to his Jewish (bilingual) contemporaries as the true Messiah. The genealogy was one of many instruments used to fulfill this goal.

Now when we have examined why Matthew structured the genealogy in 3x14 generations, we can turn our attention to the question of how this division was achieved. We have already stated that Matthew adapted the first fourteen names (Matt 1,2-6a) from LXX 1 Chr 1,28.34; 2,1-15 (cf. Ruth 4,18-22). Similarly he used the list from 1 Chr 3,10-15 for the monarchical period (Matt 1,6b-11), however, in order to preserve the intended structure of 3x14 generations Matthew had to omit three names from the list.

He did so consciously in Matt 1,8 where he omitted three kings between Joram and Azariah – e.g., Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah. These omissions are often seen as errors based on the similarity of the two names Ahaziah and Azariah, which led to a visual slip resulting in the skipping of three kings.⁵⁰³

It is much more plausible that these omissions were intended, rather than they were "felix culpa". It has been proposed⁵⁰⁴ that these three kings were intentionally omitted because they were cursed. According to 1 Kgs 21,21, God placed a curse on the house of Ahab, and according to Exod 20,5 and

⁵⁰² Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:164.

⁵⁰³ Held e.g., by Luz, Matthew, 1:81.

⁵⁰⁴ Cf. Kuhn, "Die Geschlechtsregister Jesu bei Lukas und Matthäus," 206-228.

Num 14,18, it was believed that the curse should last three or four generations. The exact length of time in which the kings Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah reigned. It should be noted that these kings were killed in accordance with God's will (2 Chr 22,7; 24,24; 25,20).

If we consider that Matthew had to omit some kings from the genealogy, in order to have just 14 generations from David to the exile, the curse placed upon these three kings is a plausible explanation for their omission.

Although one can not be certain, this explanation is more probable than a casual error based on the similarity of two names. This explanation is strengthened if one remembers that Matthew was familiar with the Old Testament and that for him, or for his Jewish readers, the genealogy would not be a soulless list of names, but a list recording in short the history of Israel (and Judah), evoking the images from the biblical narratives of 1,2 Kings and 1,2 Chronicles – the stories of the kings. Would he not have been aware of an omission which he, or his hypothetical source, should have made? Surely he would. And since this omission fits very well in Matthew's intentions and theology one can assume that Matthew, himself, is the author of the genealogy.⁵⁰⁵

The omission is not unusual, in fact it was quite common to omit forefathers from one's genealogy as it is attested by several texts like Gen 46,21 (cf. 1 Chr 8,1-4); Josh 7,1.24, 1 Chr 4,1 (cf. 2,50); 1 Chr 6,7-9 (cf. Ezra 7,2-3); etc.

Besides, Matthew was not obligated to include each name from the list because the purpose of his genealogy was not to construct a detailed list of all Jesus' ancestors, but to connect Jesus with the history of God's people, and to present him as its fulfillment. Matthew achieved this goal among others due to the structure itself, when he obviously structured the not coeval historical periods (approximately 750, 400, and 600 years) into three periods each consisting of 14 generations.

⁵⁰⁵ Cf. Vögtle, "Genealogie," 102; Johnson, *The Purpose of Biblical Genealogies*, 210-228; Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 314.

Till now we have demonstrated how Matthew kept the scheme of 14 generations within the first and second period of Jesus' genealogical list. The question which remains to be answered is whether this scheme of having fourteen generations in three periods is true for the last period or whether there are only 13 generations in the last period.

The answer to this question lies in one's understanding of Matt 1,11 and in the role of the Exile as a second breakpoint in the history of Israel.

When Matthew writes in 1,11 Ἰωσίας δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰεχονίαν καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος (Josiah begat Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon) he departs from his main source – 1 Chr 3,15-16 on two points. Jeconiah (Ἰεχονίας) was not a son of Josiah, but his grandson and he had according to 1 Chr 3,16, only one brother – Zedekiah (Σεδεκίας), not brothers. How are we then supposed to understand this striking blunder?

The one possible explanation is that Matthew had to skip Jehoiachim to ensure that only 14 generations were noted in the monarchical period. This solution, however, does not explain the mention of brothers. Firstly, Jeconiah had only one brother, and secondly, even if there would have existed tradition which knew about other Jeconiah's brothers, there is no plausible reason why they should be mentioned anyway.

Some have argued that the word brother can not only mean a blood brother but also another kinsman or person of close affinity, which could remind the reader that Jeconiah was in the Exile not alone but that the whole nation was there with him.⁵⁰⁶ This can hardly be the case because in Matt 1,2, the same word exclusively occurs in the meaning of bloody brothers, recalling the twelve tribes of Israel and thus presenting Jesus as the Messiah of the whole Israel.

Another potential explanation draws our attention to a possible scribal error based on the similarity between the names Jehoiachim (יהויָחִים/Ἰωακίμ/Ἰωακεῖμ) and Jehoiachin (יהויָחִין/Ἰωαχίν), which was the royal name of Jeconiah (יהויָחִין/Ἰεχονίας). The supporters of this explanation argue that because of the

⁵⁰⁶ Bauer, "Function of the Genealogy in Matthew's Gospel," 129-159.

similarity between the names and the fact that the name Ἰωακίμ is on several places in the LXX used to refer not only to Jehoiachim but also to his son Jehoiachin (cf. 2 Kgs 24,6.8.12.15)⁵⁰⁷ and because both kings had a brother named Σεδεκίας,⁵⁰⁸ the author of the genealogy may have confused both names. Although, this explanation can not be excluded, the names Ἰωακίμ and Ἰεχονιάς which occur in 1 Chr 3,15-16 – i.e., in the main source for the genealogy, “are not so close as to be naturally confused.”⁵⁰⁹

A third possibility, supported by the author of this study, was proposed by A. Vögtle. Vögtle suggested that the author of the genealogy (for Vögtle Matthew) originally wrote in Matt 1,11 “Josiah begat Jehoiachim and his brothers”, but he could not follow with “After the deportation Jehoiachim begat Jeconiah” because he was aware that Jeconiah was born long before the exile and therefore he continued with “Jeconiah begat Salathiel” (Matt 1,12), leaving a gap between Jehoiachim and Jeconiah open because of the time expressions used to mark the Exile. Afterwards, a scribe altered, for symmetrical reasons, the name Jehoiachim to Jeconiah.⁵¹⁰

Although the main disadvantage of this hypothesis is the lack of textual support, the advantages of Vögtle’s hypothesis are obvious: It explains why the brothers are mentioned, while preserving the 3x14 generations scheme, regarding Jeconiah in Matt 1,12 as a new name.

Vögtle’s hypothesis is strengthened by the suggestion, that Matthew may have wanted to enclose the second group of 14 generations with a single name in each single generation, as he did in the case of the first (Matt 1,6a) and the third group of 14 (Matt 1,16). However, while the turning point in the genealogy in the first and third group is represented by a single person and a single generation (king David, Jesus Christ), in the case of the second group,

⁵⁰⁷ Cf. 1 Esd 1,32 LXX similarly as Matt 1,11 makes Jeconiah son of Josiah.

⁵⁰⁸ Cf. 2 Chr 36,10 which wrongly claims that Jehoiachin was succeeded by his brother Zedekiah. He was succeeded by his uncle.

⁵⁰⁹ Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:178.

⁵¹⁰ Vögtle, “Genealogie,” 95-99.

it is not a person, but an event (event of the Babylonian exile), which creates the break.

And since the exile itself covers at least two generations (ca. from 598/7 B.C.E. till 538 B.C.E.), and at its beginning there are three kings from two generations,⁵¹¹ and not simply one king (name) from one generation, as a result, Matthew had to simplify his list.

For this reason, he chose Jehoiachim as the final name for the second group of fourteen, since Jehoiachim was the first king (ruling from 609 till 598 B.C.E.) who was deported to Babylon, and it was mainly his politics and the politics of his brother which have led to the deportation. And he added a mention of his brothers since Jehoiachim's brother, Zedekiah (ruled 598/7-587/6 B.C.E.), was the last king of Judah, whose revolt led to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and to the final deportation to Babylon (cf. 2 Kgs 24,18-25,21).

In his abbreviated outline of the history of salvation in the form of a genealogy, structured into 3x14 generations, Matthew skipped a note that Jehoiachim begat Jeconiah, letting the reader to fill the gap, and included Jeconiah, called in 1 Chr 3,17 the captive (Ἰεχονια-ασιρ), whose reign lasted only three months (587/6 B.C.E.), to the third group of fourteen rather than to the second one. Later some scribe changed the name Johoiachim in Matt 1,11 into Jeconiah on the basis of information contained in Matt 1,12.

This leads us to the third group of fourteen – which begins with Jeconiah, which is, as we have argued above, a new name,⁵¹² not a repeated one, and ends with Jesus. When Matthew writes in Matt 1,12 Μετὰ δὲ τὴν μετοικεσίαν Βαβυλῶνος Ἰεχονίας ἐγέννησεν τὸν Σαλαθιήλ, Σαλαθιήλ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ζοροβαβέλ, (After the deportation to Babylon Jechoniah begat Shealtiel, Shealtiel begat Zerubbabel), he follows the LXX version of 1 Chr 3,17.19 making Schealtiel the father of Zerubbabel (the Hebrew text names Pedaiah as father of Zerubbabel).

⁵¹¹ The generation of Jehoiachim and his brother Zedekiah and the generation Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiachim.

⁵¹² The same position is held also by Hagner, Matthew, 1:5-6.

The time stamp μετὰ δὲ τὴν μετοικεσίαν Βαβυλῶνος does not refer to the restoration after year 538 B.C.E., but rather to the period after the deportation. As a result, Jeconiah still belongs to the period of the exile. He is the captive, but for the reasons listed above he was included at the beginning of the third generation sequence – surely also because of his importance in the continuation of the Davidic dynasty.

With Zerrubabel, the Davidic descendant and returnee from the Exile, with whom the hopes for the restoration of the Davidic kingship were associated (Zech 4,6-10; Hag 2,23) – hopes which however were never fulfilled, Matthew departs from the genealogical lists of 1 Chr 3-4 (although it could have provided another 11 generations for his list) and from now on (Matt 1,13-15) he uses another, to us unknown⁵¹³ source,⁵¹⁴ possibly some kind of list of one branch of Davidic descendants,⁵¹⁵ following further the pattern X begat Y.

This pattern is unexpectedly broken in Matt 1,16, where Matthew, instead of writing “Joseph begat Jesus by Mary,” radically alters his previous pattern and states:

Ἰακώβ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας, ἐξ ἧς ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός.

Jacob begat Joseph, the man of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Messiah.

This verse represents the main break in Jesus’ genealogy. Till now, Matthew’s reader could have followed a clear chain of Jesus’ ancestors – following the pattern X begat Y. A pattern which was only disrupted by several extra additions such as: the naming of four women,⁵¹⁶ the mention of brothers, the Exile, and the addition of the title “king,” to David’s name.

⁵¹³ Ibid., 8.

⁵¹⁴ Johnson has shown that all the names can be found in the Old Testament but never in a genealogical order. Johnson, *The Purpose of Biblical Genealogies*, 180.

⁵¹⁵ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:181.

⁵¹⁶ For the four women as representatives of Gentiles, see e.g., Stegemann, “‘Die des Uria’,” 260-266. For a different interpretation of the role of the four women in Jesus’ genealogy, see Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 73.

The active form of the Greek word, γεννάω is replaced by the passive form – called the divine passive, which has two functions. Firstly, it alerts the reader that something extraordinary is taking place. Secondly, it makes it apparent that God, not Joseph, was at work here – i.e., that Joseph was not Jesus’ biological father.

With the change in wording, the focus moves from Joseph, who is still important, to Mary – the mother of Jesus. The alerted reader is then faced with a question: How is the previous genealogy related to Jesus, when Joseph is not his biological father? And who is then the father of Jesus? Matthew answers these questions in the passage about the virgin birth of Jesus (Matt 1,18-25), but for now he leaves the questions unanswered (at least the idea of adoption is missing, while the virgin birth is at least partially foreshadowed by the divine passive).

The exact meaning of the phrase ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός can not be unambiguously determined. Although it seems that λεγόμενος means in Matthew’s Gospel almost exclusively something like “the one who is called by name XY”,⁵¹⁷ and that therefore ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός should be understood as Jesus, “the so called Christ” (referring to the name), the definiteness of this translation is made relative because of the occurrence of this phrase on the lips of Pilate in Matt 27,17 and 27,22. In Matt 27,17 and 27,22, the phrase ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός does not refer to a name but has a political meaning, serving as a substitution for the designation “the king of the Jews”. The “so called Messiah” is, in 27,17.22, used as a kind of a pseudo-title, expressing the belief of others that Jesus is the Messiah, as well as Pilate’s own distance from acknowledging such a claim as legitimate.

Thus the expression ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός is, similarly as the designation Jesus Christ, on the one hand a reference to Jesus’ messianic statute (repeated in 1,17), and on the other hand a designation which is on its way to be understood as a second name. We have to realize that Jesus was called Christ (in the sense of a second name) because he was believed to be the Christ

⁵¹⁷ Cf. Matt 4,18; 9,9; 10,2; 26,14; 27,16; 27,33; 26,36; 27,33 – of place.

(the Messiah) and a strict division between the name and the title is not possible.

The pericope ends with verse seventeen which concludes the section and is the key to the structure and the meaning of the whole genealogy, as noted above. This verse, while creating the second half of a chiasm to Matt 1,1, also serves as a summary of the genealogy,⁵¹⁸ providing the reader/listener, who probably would not count the generations out of his own initiative,⁵¹⁹ the key for understanding of what one just has read.

On the one hand it clearly presents Jesus as the Messiah who has already come – in accordance with God’s plan (3x14 generations), and on the other hand it incorporates him into the history of salvation which began with Abraham, making Jesus a “telos” of this history.

As the true Messiah of Israel, Jesus is the Son of David (in a titular as well as in a literary sense, as Matthew explains in 1,18-25,) but he is more than that – he is also the son of Abraham – the one who will fulfill the promises from Gen 12,2-3 and also bring salvation to the Gentiles.

We can conclude, in line with Johnson, that Jesus’ genealogy in Matt 1,2-17 (together with Luke’s genealogy) represent “... the only extant Messianic genealogies which are written to prove that the Messiah has come.”⁵²⁰

3.1.3. The Birth of Jesus the Messiah (Matt 1,18-25)

The genealogy is followed by the story of the birth of the Messiah, which shares a close connection with the genealogy, as noted below. The connection lies in the usage of several key words – such as γένεσις (Matt 1,18 – cf. Matt 1,1) and γεννήθην (Matt 1,20 – cf. ἐγεννήθη Matt 1,16) and in the shared topic. Stendahl,⁵²¹ used to speak about an “enlarged footnote to the

⁵¹⁸ Matthew likes to summarize – cf. Matt 4,23-25; 9,35; 14,34-36; 19,1-2.

⁵¹⁹ Luz, Matthew, 1:85.

⁵²⁰ Johnson, The Purpose of Biblical Genealogies, 208.

⁵²¹ Stendahl, “Quis et unde?,” 102.

crucial point in the genealogy” which, taken not literally, is quite an apposite comparison.

The unexpected break in the pattern X begat Y in Matt 1,16 raised the questions of how is Jesus actually related to Joseph? And if Joseph is not Jesus’ father, what is his relationship to the list of ancestors? And one purpose (however not the only one!) of this pericope is to provide explanations to these questions. But before we approach to our detailed analysis of the text, which reveals how Matthew answers these questions, additional notes to the text, its form, structure and possible sources must be made.

Text:

¹⁸ Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ γένεσις οὕτως ἦν. μνηστευθείσης τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας τῷ Ἰωσήφ, πρὶν ἢ συνελθεῖν αὐτοὺς εὐρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου.

¹⁹ Ἰωσήφ δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς, δίκαιος ὢν καὶ μὴ θέλων αὐτὴν δειγματίσαι, ἐβουλήθη λάθρα ἀπολῦσαι αὐτήν.

²⁰ ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐνθυμηθέντος ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος κυρίου κατ’ ὄναρ ἐφάνη αὐτῷ λέγων· Ἰωσήφ υἱὸς Δαβὶδ, μὴ φοβηθῆς παραλαβεῖν Μαρίαν τὴν γυναῖκά σου· τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου.

²¹ τέξεται δὲ υἱόν, καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν· αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν.

²² τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος·

²³ ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἕξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύμενον μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.

²⁴ ἐγερθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰωσήφ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου ἐποίησεν ὡς προσέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου καὶ παρέλαβεν τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ,

²⁵ καὶ οὐκ ἐγίνωσκεν αὐτὴν ἕως οὗ ἔτεκεν υἱόν· καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν.

Translation:

¹⁸ The birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, it was found that she was pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he intended to divorce her secretly.

²¹ And while he was considering these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying: "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For what has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

²⁰ She will bear a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

²² Now all this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken through the prophet:

²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel," that is translated "God with us."

²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife,

²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

The birth of Jesus, the Messiah, in the present form is not a legend, as Bultmann⁵²² suggested. Nor is it a midrash⁵²³ in the strictest sense of the term, but "the genre of the passage is best to be labeled as 'midrashic haggadah' – i.e. *midrashic* in the sense that the OT quotation is of key importance and phrases of it are utilized in the surrounding narrative; *haggadah* in the sense that the story is not told for the sake of facts alone, but in order to illustrate their deeper meaning, that is, the theological significance of Jesus as the fulfillment of OT promises."⁵²⁴

The birth narrative is based, at least partially, on older traditions (such as the story of the naming of the child by Joseph, the haggadic narratives concerning

⁵²² Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 291.

⁵²³ Pesch, "Ausführungsformel im Matthäus-Evangelium," 87.

⁵²⁴ Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:16.

Moses⁵²⁵), however, it is generally assumed⁵²⁶ that it is Matthew's redactional hand that was at work in this pericope.⁵²⁷

The structure of the pericope is apparent. After the introduction of the problematic situation and Joseph's plan (Matt 1,18b-19), the angel of the Lord appears on the scene, explains to Joseph the origin of the child and commands him how to name it (Matt 1,20-21). The angel's words are followed by the fulfillment quotation (Matt 1,22-23) and by a final report of Joseph's obedience to God's given instructions (Matt 1,24-25).

The pericope begins with a nominal sentence (Matt 1,18) which "prepares the stage". Matthew informs the reader that he will explain the origin and birth of Jesus (1,18a) which was unstated at the end of the genealogy (Matt 1,16); and Jesus' relationship to Joseph. Matthew briefly informs the reader about the betrothal of Mary and Joseph and Mary's pregnancy through the Holy Spirit (1,18b).

Although the phrase ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα is a standard expression used to refer to pregnancy, there is a reason to believe that Matthew used it intentionally here as an allusion to Isa 7,14, as quoted in Matt 1,23. Remarkable is Matthew's formulation ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου. Matthew repeatedly states (1,18; 1,20; cf. 1,16 – divine passive) that Jesus was conceived through the Holy Spirit and intentionally avoids any description which would allow the reader to perceive Joseph as Jesus' father. For example the words, πρὶν ἢ συνελθεῖν αὐτοὺς εὐρέθη in Matt 1,18, are meant to exclude any possibility that Joseph could be the father of Jesus. The same function has the break in the genealogy (1,16) and the formulation about the child and his mother (cf. Matt 2,13.14.20.21).

⁵²⁵ On the Mosaic traditions and their influence on Matt 1,18-2,23, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:192-195.

⁵²⁶ Thus e.g., Vögtle, "Genealogie," 155; Pesch, "Ausführungsformel im Matthäusevangelium," 88. Frankenmölle, *Jahwebund*, 310.

⁵²⁷ For details, see Luz, *Matthew*, 1:90-91.

It is not my intention to explore the debate regarding the virgin birth, nor will I discuss in detail the conception motif, but I will call attention to several salient points. It must be noted that the belief that a human being could be conceived with the help of God's creative power (that is how the Holy Spirit has to be understood – i.e., as a creative power of God⁵²⁸ and not as a sexual partner of Mary⁵²⁹) was not foreign to Judaism,⁵³⁰ whereas the idea of a physical conception through the Holy Spirit without the presence of a male partner was.⁵³¹ Does this mean that Matthew departed from the Jewish tradition? Yes, and no. From the perspective of Matthew's Jewish opponents, the idea of God fathering a human being was unthinkable. It is apparent, however, that Matthew, and his intended audience, believed that the conception could occur without any man's involvement and that it was a part of God's plan – as prophesized by Isaiah (Isa 7,14) and realized in Jesus, (Matt 1,22-23).

Thus the conception through the Spirit signifies the uniqueness of Jesus whose conception was “a direct act of creator himself such as never happened before in the case of any human being.”⁵³² This form of conception also marked Jesus as having the unique status as the Son of God.⁵³³ While every anointed Israelite

⁵²⁸ See the discussion in Bultmann, *Theology of New Testament*, 1:155-157.

⁵²⁹ Such understanding is impossible because of the fact that while in Hebrew *אִמָּה* is feminine, the Greek *πνεῦμα* is neuter.

⁵³⁰ Cf. *Gen. Rab.* 47 (29c); 63 (39c) and *Midr. Ruth* 4,12 (137a) where it is said that Sarah, Rebecca, and Ruth were able to conceive only by the miraculous intervention of God, who created their uterus.

⁵³¹ Contrary to Sigal, who claims that 1QSa II, 11-15 contains the idea of the divine conception of the Messiah (Sigal, “Further Reflections on the ‘Begotten’ Messiah,” 221-233; cf. also Smith, “‘God’s Begetting the Messiah’ in 1QSa,” 218-224). However, his interpretation is highly questionable. Cf. Evans who speaks of an overinterpretation of the text (Evans, “Are the ‘Son’ Texts at Qumran Messianic?,” 140).

⁵³² Schweizer, *The Holy Spirit*, 54-55.

⁵³³ Although, the title itself occurs firstly in Matt 4,3, it would be an error to assume that there is no Son of God Christology in first two chapters of Matthew's Gospel. The contrary is the case, as it has been claimed by several scholars, e.g., Fuller, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology*, 192; Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, 294; Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology*, 306-307; Pesch, “Der Gottessohn im matthäischen Evangelienprolog,” 395-420; Vögtle, *Messias und Gottessohn*, 16-17; Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 49-50; Soares Prabhu, *The Formula Quotations*, 52-53; Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 133-138.

king, at his coronation, was adopted as the son of God (cf. Ps 2,7), Jesus does not become the Son of God at his baptism, due to an adoption, but is the Son of God via his conception.⁵³⁴

The idea of “the conception through the Spirit,” can however refer not only to Jesus’ unparalleled status of the Son of God and the chosen agent of God’s will,⁵³⁵ but also to his empowerment by the Holy Spirit, by assuming that one who is conceived through the Holy Spirit also is endowed with the Spirit.

This is important, not only because the Messiah, the Son of David, was on the basis of Isa 11,1-4 expected to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, as we have seen in our exegesis of *Pss. Sol.* 17 and Qumran writings, similarly as it was the Suffering Servant of Isa 42,1 and Isa 61,1,⁵³⁶ but also because Matthew will thematise Jesus’ authorization by the Holy Spirit in the Beelzebul controversy in Matt 12,28.

When Matthew states, in Matt 1,18.20, that Jesus was conceived through the Holy Spirit he indicates to his readers that he is also endowed and empowered by the Spirit. Thus the reader will later realize that the accusation by the Pharisees against Jesus for exorcising demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons (Matt 9,34; 12,24), is bizarre. How could someone, conceived through the Holy Spirit, have any link to Satan?

Thus in his account of the conception through the Holy Spirit, Matthew creatively combines several older Jewish traditions (messianic, prophetic, servant traditions) which he will in detail elaborate later in his Gospel.

In the next verse (Matt 1,19), Matthew details Joseph’s intention to secretly divorce Mary. This verse allows us insight to the character of Joseph – he was a righteous (lawful and obedient – δίκαιος) man. The reference to righteous could be linked to Joseph’s intention to divorce Mary, thus fulfilling the Law,

⁵³⁴ This should not lead us to the conclusion that “throughout the whole of the Gospel, Matthew clearly subordinates the Davidic sonship of the earthy Jesus to his divine sonship.” Kingsbury, “The Title ‘Son of David’ in Matthew’s Gospel,” 597.

⁵³⁵ For the motif of election from a womb, see Jer 1,5; Isa 49,1; Gal 1,15.

⁵³⁶ The Suffering Servant is identified, at least in Christian tradition, with Jesus, and not with Israel.

or to Joseph's intention to divorce Mary secretly which suggests that he was trying to be merciful.⁵³⁷ Some commentators view Joseph as an ideal "disciple", who obeys the Law but tempers it with love.⁵³⁸

The appearance of the angel of the Lord (Matt 1,20) is an unexpected turning point in the story. The angel of the Lord is introduced by the macro-syntactical signal ἰδοὺ which is equivalent to the Hebrew word *הִנֵּה* used in narratives as a marker of strong emphasis. The angel appears to Joseph in a dream,⁵³⁹ and addresses him with the words Ἰωσήφ υἱὸς Δαυίδ. It is the only time in the whole Gospel when the designation son of David, is used to address someone other than Jesus. There is no doubt that this address to Joseph does not have a messianic or Solomonic meaning. This address is, however, intentionally used, as a reminder to the reader that Joseph is a descendant of the House of David, and thus Jesus is by adoption (indicated in verse 21 and fulfilled in 25) the legitimate Son of David.

With designating Joseph as a son of David demonstrates Matthew his willingness to use this designation in a variety of ways – as a designation for the expected Davidic Messiah (Matt 1,1), or as a designation for a descendant of David, and finally as the address of the Davidic Messiah when he was supposed to heal or exorcize in the way Solomon, the son of David, did, as we shall see later. In the first part of his speech, the angel encourages Joseph not to fear marrying Mary. The angel explains to Joseph, what the reader learned in verse 18, that Mary was impregnated by the Holy Spirit. The passive form of the verb γεννάω excludes, once again, any possibility that Joseph (or another man) could be the biological father of the child.

In the following verse (Matt 1,21), the angel predicts the birth of a son and he instructs Joseph which name this child should receive (the future indicative is to be understood as an imperative) and consequently, he explains the

⁵³⁷ Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 22.

⁵³⁸ For more on Joseph as typos, see Keener, *Matthew*, 87-95.

⁵³⁹ Dreams were common vehicles for divine revelation in the Old Testament – cf. Gen 20,3; 31,11; Job 33,15-17 – as well as in the Hellenistic world. For more, see Oepke, "ὄναρ," *TDNT* 5:220-238.

meaning of this name. The wording of Matt 1,21 is partially dependent on Isa 7,14, quoted in Matt 1,23. There are several important issues to note.

It is Joseph who gets to name the child. Naming a child is the father's right, and in legal terms it means Joseph is the legal father of the child, making it his own. This view is supported by *B. Bat.* 8,6 which states: "If a man says: 'This is my son', he is to be believed." Joseph's enacting of a father's right results in Jesus being adopted into the Davidic dynasty, and thus, he can be rightfully called son of David. The question raised by the break in Jesus' genealogy (Matt 1,16) is finally answered.

It is important to note that although it is Joseph who was commanded to name the child, it is not he who chooses the name, but God. Could this detail possibly indicate Joseph as "only" the legal father of Jesus? Or is the significance of this detail the possibility of a double paternity (God's and Joseph's)? It may be. However, the fact that God himself chose the name undoubtedly stresses the importance of Jesus and simultaneously indicates that the etymological significance of the name⁵⁴⁰ will be of great importance.

We have already noted that Jesus was a popular name in the first century C.E. The etymology of the name is related to the Hebrew word ישׁוּעַ which means to save and יְשׁוּעָה = salvation. Thus the name can mean "God saves," or "May God save," or even "God is salvation." Names were more than just labels in ancient cultures. It was believed that one's name was linked to the actual character and destiny of the individual.⁵⁴¹

The fact, that Matthew does not translate the name Jesus, indicates that this Hebrew etymology had already become part of common Jewish⁵⁴² and Christian traditions.⁵⁴³ The saving role of Jesus (cf. Matt 8,25; 9,21-22; 14,30; 27,42), already indicated by his name,⁵⁴⁴ is programmatically stated in the name's explanation: $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma \gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho \sigma\acute{\omega}\sigma\epsilon\iota \tau\omicron\nu\lambda\omicron\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron \tau\omicron\nu \acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\iota\omega\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$.

⁵⁴⁰ On the significance of the names cf. Gen 17,5; 32,29; Isa 8,3; Hos 1,4; etc.

⁵⁴¹ Cf. Bietenhard, "ὄνομα, ὀνομάζω, ἐπονομάζω, ψευδώνυμος," *TDNT* 5:242-283, esp. 243, 253. Cf. also the Latin "nomen omen."

⁵⁴² Philo, *Mut.* 121.

⁵⁴³ Cf. Justin, *1 Apol.* 33,7; *2 Apol.* 6; Eusebius, *Dem. Ev.* 4,10; 17; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 29,4.

⁵⁴⁴ Cf. Sir 46,1; *b. Sotah* 34b.

This explanation is surprising. There can be no doubt that the need for forgiveness of sins and for salvation was recognized commonly within Judaism (cf. Jer 31,34), however, salvation from the consequences of sins, preceded by their forgiveness, was originally expected from God alone.⁵⁴⁵

The development of messianic ideas demonstrates that deeds, such as gathering of the exiles, destruction of Israel's enemies, judging, etc., which were originally expected to be directed by God himself, were later transferred to the expected Messiah, who was understood as God's representative and as chosen agent of God's will. From this point of view, Matthew does not stray from older Jewish messianic traditions. Although, it must be admitted, that he goes one step further when he delegates salvation from sins (and thus also their forgiveness) onto Jesus.⁵⁴⁶

That it is Jesus, and not God, who is meant, is evident not only from the usage of the pronoun αὐτός, which has an emphatic function in this place, but also from Matthew's usage of the word σῶζω, which he always associates with Jesus. At this point, Matthew differs from Ps 130,8 which reads καὶ αὐτός λυτρώσεται τὸν Ἰσραὴλ ἐκ πασῶν τῶν ἁνομιῶν αὐτοῦ and which ascribes salvation to God alone. However, this difference is not as significant as it could appear, especially if we realize that for Matthew, salvation from sins, through Jesus, is a sign of divine presence manifested in Jesus' person, in his healing, in his ministry and even in his death. It is no mere coincidence that the programmatic declaration of Jesus' task is placed before the fulfillment formula quotation, which interprets Jesus as Immanuel – as the one in whom God is present amongst his people.

At this point – in the recognition of God's engagement behind the actions of the Davidic Messiah, Matthew's Gospel is in harmony with *Pss. Sol.* 17. But along with the similarities there are several important differences.

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. Isa 51,5; Ps 3,9; Jer 3,23; Jonah 2,10.

⁵⁴⁶ There are some parallels in the Jewish literature. For example *T. Levi* 18,9 promises that with the appearance of the priestly Messiah sin will cease. In 11QMelch II, 6-8, forgiveness is bestowed by the heavenly Melchizedek and successfully asked for by the Messiah in *Tg. Isa.* 53,4.6-7. The relationship of these texts to Matthew's salvation of sins remains uncertain.

The political aspect of salvation, stressed in *Pss. Sol.* 17, is missing in Matthew.⁵⁴⁷ Another difference will become clear when we focus on Matthew's interest for forgiveness of sins and Jesus' compassion with sinners in contrary to the destruction and removal of sinners as portrayed in *Pss. Sol.* 17.

And thus while in *Pss. Sol.* 17,23-24 the sinners are driven away, their arrogance smashed, and their substance shattered by an iron rod, in Matthew's narrative, John the Baptist calls for the confession of sins (Matt 3,2), Jesus himself forgives sins (9,2.5-6) and is criticized because of his compassion for sinners (11,19 – this clamber may well go back even to the historical Jesus) and finally his blood is poured out for the forgiveness of sins (Matt 26,28).

Thus already at the beginning of his Gospel, Matthew clearly proclaims that the task of the Davidic Messiah is not to save Israel from her political enemies, as one familiar with Psalms of Solomon would expect, but to save his people from their sins. Perhaps Luz is closer to truth, when he concludes that Matthew's "own understanding of Jesus' Davidic messiahship means a shift of Jewish hopes from the 'political' to the 'human' level."⁵⁴⁸

What does salvation from sins mean – if not political liberation from Roman oppression? According to Davies and Allison, salvation concerns religious and moral sins, removing "... the wall of sin between God and the human race."⁵⁴⁹ Little is said about the way Jesus saves.

Although apart from Matt 1,21, we can not find any direct connection between salvation and sin, the indirect link is found between the sin, forgiveness, salvation and healing. And thus while the word σῶζω occurs, apart from Jesus' eschatological speeches,⁵⁵⁰ almost exclusively within the context of Jesus' miracles,⁵⁵¹ and his crucifixion,⁵⁵² the word ἀμαρτία is associated

⁵⁴⁷ Otherwise Carter, *Matthew and Empire*, 75-92.

⁵⁴⁸ Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 87. This shift from a political to human level of messiahship could have been a result of the events which led to the destruction of the second temple. The roots to this change however probably go deeper – namely to the historical Jesus himself.

⁵⁴⁹ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:210.

⁵⁵⁰ Matt 10,22; 19,25; 24,13; 24,22.

⁵⁵¹ Matt 8,25; 9,21.22; 14,30.

with forgiveness in the context of the last supper (Matt 26,28) and in healing of the paralytic in Matt 9,2-8. And thus the one way in which Jesus saves is through his death (the link between the new covenant and crucifixion is found in Matt 20,28). Another way Jesus saves is through his healings – which are interpreted in Matt 9,2-8 as the forgiveness of sins. Lidija Novakovic concludes: “Matt 9,2-8 shows that Matthew, similarly to others Synoptics, saw a close connection between sickness and sin. It is therefore highly likely that Jesus’ healing ministry is viewed by Matthew as saving his people from their sins.”⁵⁵³

It remains to be solved whom does the salvation concern? Should the words τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ be applied to Israel,⁵⁵⁴ to the church,⁵⁵⁵ or to both?⁵⁵⁶ As noted by Luz and others λαός refers within Matthew’s Gospel to Israel and there is no reason to assume that Matt 1,21 is an exception. Matthew stresses, more than once, that Jesus came primarily to save Israel. We should not exclude the possibility, that Matthew’s Christian readers could have understood the words as referring also to the church, but the primary concern remains unmistakable – Israel.

Mathew 1,22-23 represents a Matthean insertion which provides the scriptural foundation of the virgin birth. The change of the LXX’s wording of Isa 7,14 from καλέσεις (“you shall call”) to καλέσουσιν (“they shall call”) in Matt 1,23; the appearance of a different name (Immanuel instead of Jesus) and the fact that Immanuel is translated supports the hypothesis that these two verses contain Matthew’s interpretation of the preceding episode.

This supports the view that we should not understand these two verses as a part of an angelic speech,⁵⁵⁷ but as Matthew’s comment. The placement of

⁵⁵² Matt 27,40.42.49.

⁵⁵³ Novakovic, Messiah, 73. Similarly Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:210.

⁵⁵⁴ Luz, Matthew, 1:95.

⁵⁵⁵ Hagner, Matthew, 1:20.

⁵⁵⁶ Bruner, Matthew, 1:31.

⁵⁵⁷ So e.g., Zahn, Matthäus, 80.

these two verses is also remarkable, because they introduce the fulfillment claim in advance (fulfillment is reported only in Matt 1,24-25).⁵⁵⁸

When Matthew writes: τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῆ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος, he reassures his readers, that everything that has happened till now – the conception through the Holy Spirit and the announcement of Jesus' birth, happened according to God's plan and was foretold through the prophet.

In his interpretation of the prophet's words as referring to Jesus, Matthew does not differ from some of his contemporaries, who interpreted prophetic books as referring to present events.⁵⁵⁹ Matthew also shares with his contemporaries the belief that God himself spoke through the prophets, disclosing his intentions, just as he used to speak through his angels. As a result, it is God himself who stands with all his authority behind these words. I think that this is primary the meaning of the words ὑπὸ κυρίου. Pesch's⁵⁶⁰ suggestion that this could be an allusion to the Son of God Christology can not be rejected. However, as Luz noted, the reader would only notice this new Christological theme with a second reading of the Gospel.⁵⁶¹

The fulfillment quotation⁵⁶² itself (Matt 1,23), is the only one in Matthew's Gospel in which the text is almost identical with the Septuagint. Matthew changed καλέσεις into καλέσουσιν so it would better suit his narrative, because Mary will not name her son in Matthew's Gospel. God, himself, has chosen the child's name and ordered Joseph to name him. Could the plural point in this direction?⁵⁶³

⁵⁵⁸ Cf. Matt 21,4-5 where the situation is similar.

⁵⁵⁹ See for example the interpretation of the prophets in the Qumran. Cf. Henze, *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran*.

⁵⁶⁰ Pesch, "Der Gottessohn im matthäischen Evangelienprolog," 397.

⁵⁶¹ Luz, *Matthew*, 1:96.

⁵⁶² On Matthew's fulfillment quotations, see Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew*, 97-127, 183-206; Soares Prabhu, *The Formula Quotations*, 18-161.

⁵⁶³ The other possible interpretation is that the plural suggests the possibility that the readers will identify themselves with those who call Jesus Immanuel. Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 1:96.

Matthew then added the words ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον (taken probably from Mark 5,41) and the translation of the name Immanuel (μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός), taken from Isa 8,8.

The meaning of the first half of Matt 1,23 has been long debated. The Masoretic Text reads *תַּלְמִידָה* which translates as a young woman, but not a virgin (*παρθένος*). The word *παρθένος* occurs only in the Septuagint. It is unclear why the translator chose this translation but it is apparent that a virgin conception was not intended.

It is not my intention to discuss in detail the matter of virginal conception or its possible parallels in the pagan world or possible allusions in Judaism.⁵⁶⁴ Nor do I intend dealing with the original meaning of Isa 7,14 or questioning the historicity of Jesus' birth.

What is relevant is Matthew's usage of this text. And this usage is apparent. Matthew included this text in its LXX wording into his narrative for two reasons. He wanted to provide scriptural evidence for Mary's virgin conception, so he uses the word *παρθένος*. Secondly, he wanted to interpret the significance of Jesus' person and task, which is alluded to by the name Immanuel. Thus Matthew's reading of the prophecy allowed him to base the answer of the scandal in his story (Mary's miraculous conception) on the biblical foundations, further more to present it as the fulfillment of a prophecy. This text serves as an exemplary of Matthew's creative theological work. Matthew uses existing ideas (in this case, Isaiah's prophecy) and interprets them in a new, sometimes unexpected light.

Immanuel is not the second name of Jesus, "it is not a personal name but rather a name that is descriptive of the task this person will perform."⁵⁶⁵ Matthew already explained the meaning of Jesus' name by specifying and foreshadowing his saving activity in Matt 1,21. Now, with the help of the

⁵⁶⁴ See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:214-217.

⁵⁶⁵ Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:21.

Immanuel motif,⁵⁶⁶ he further specifies Jesus' significance, underlining once again his unique status and points, as *Pss. Sol.* 17, towards God who stands behind the activities of his Messiah and is for Matthew uniquely present through Jesus, the Son of God, Son of David, with his people.

Jesus, as Immanuel (μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός), is the embodiment of God's presence on earth.⁵⁶⁷ A presence, which was not only part of the Davidic dynasty tradition (cf. 2 Sam 7,9; 1 Kgs 1,37) but also part of Israel's eschatological hope (cf. Isa 43,5; Ezek 34,30; 37,26-27, etc.). What this presence means will be explained by Matthew in his Gospel. It should be noted, that Matthew carefully chose to end his Gospel with Jesus' promise to be with his disciples till the end of times (ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν) – Matt 28,20. The Immanuel concept creates thus an inclusion to the whole Gospel.⁵⁶⁸

The point of Matt 1,23 is thus to present Jesus' miraculous conception as a fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy and to further emphasize his importance, alluding to his unique status as the Son of David, Son of God and his role (savior, God's representative on earth) in the history of salvation.

Joseph's precise fulfillment of the angel's command: "he took his wife" (παρέλαβεν τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ), "he called his name Jesus" (καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν); as well as the fulfillment of Scriptures: she bore a son (ἔτεκεν υἱόν), he called his name (ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ); is then reported in Matt 1,24-25. Joseph is (again) presented as an example of obedience. Not only did he fulfill all the Angel's commands (ἐποίησεν ὡς προσέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου) but by not having a sexual intercourse with his wife within the period of her pregnancy, Joseph even fulfilled the Law.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁶ On the Immanuel motif, see: Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 7-83; Unnik, "Dominus vobiscum," 270-305; Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 138-156.

⁵⁶⁷ Immanuel is not an ontological category. It does not refer to Jesus' divine nature or to his identification with God. The argument against such an interpretation is the fact that heavenly names are used to emphasize the actions of God himself, rather than the bearer of the name (such an understanding fits also in the original context of Isa 8,8). Secondly, the two names, Immanuel and Jesus, explain each other when understood as both emphasizing God's activities – God saves (through his Messiah) with his own presence, his people. Besides, the expression μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός "with us is God," is not as powerful as "God is with us" ὁ θεός μεθ' ἡμῶν would be.

⁵⁶⁸ Cf. Luz, *Matthew* 1:96.

⁵⁶⁹ Cf. Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 163-172.

3.1.4. The Magi Pay Homage to Jesus the King of the Jews (Matt 2,1-12)

While in the first chapter, Matthew established the royal identity of the Messiah and foreshadowed his activities, in the second chapter, he presents the first reactions regarding the Messiah, underlining Jesus' importance and royal status. For these reasons he⁵⁷⁰ also narrates the following story (Matt 2,1-12):

¹ Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ γεννηθέντος ἐν Βηθλέεμ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐν ἡμέραις Ἡρώδου τοῦ βασιλέως, ἰδοὺ μάγοι ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν παρεγένοντο εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα

² λέγοντες· ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ τεχθεὶς βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; εἶδομεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀστέρα ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ ἤλθομεν προσκυνῆσαι αὐτῷ.

³ ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἡρώδης ἐταράχθη καὶ πᾶσα Ἱεροσόλυμα μετ' αὐτοῦ,

⁴ καὶ συναγαγὼν πάντας τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς τοῦ λαοῦ ἐπυνθάνετο παρ' αὐτῶν ποῦ ὁ χριστὸς γεννᾶται.

⁵ οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ἐν Βηθλέεμ τῆς Ἰουδαίας· οὕτως γὰρ γέγραπται διὰ τοῦ προφήτου·

⁶ καὶ σὺ Βηθλέεμ, γῆ Ἰούδα, οὐδαμῶς ἐλαχίστη εἶ ἐν τοῖς ἡγεμόσιν Ἰούδα· ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ ἐξελεύσεται ἡγούμενος, ὅστις ποιμανεῖ τὸν λαόν μου τὸν Ἰσραήλ.

⁷ Τότε Ἡρώδης λάθρα καλέσας τοὺς μάγους ἠκρίβωσεν παρ' αὐτῶν τὸν χρόνον τοῦ φαινομένου ἀστέρος,

⁸ καὶ πέμψας αὐτοὺς εἰς Βηθλέεμ εἶπεν· πορευθέντες ἐξετάσατε ἀκριβῶς περὶ τοῦ παιδίου· ἐπὶ δὲ εὔρητε, ἀπαγγείλατέ μοι, ὅπως κἀγὼ ἐλθὼν προσκυνήσω αὐτῷ.

⁹ οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπορεύθησαν καὶ ἰδοὺ ὁ ἀστήρ, ὃν εἶδον ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ, προῆγεν αὐτούς, ἕως ἐλθὼν ἐστάθη ἐπάνω οὗ ἦν τὸ παιδίον.

¹⁰ ἰδόντες δὲ τὸν ἀστέρα ἐχάρησαν χαρὰν μεγάλην σφόδρα.

¹¹ καὶ ἐλθόντες εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἶδον τὸ παιδίον μετὰ Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀνοίξαντες τοὺς θησαυροὺς αὐτῶν προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα, χρυσὸν καὶ λίβανον καὶ σμύρναν.

¹² καὶ χρηματισθέντες κατ' ὄναρ μὴ ἀνακάμψαι πρὸς Ἡρώδη, δι' ἄλλης ὁδοῦ ἀνεχώρησαν εἰς τὴν χώραν αὐτῶν.

⁵⁷⁰ The pericope comes from Matthew's redactional hand. On Mattheisms, see Luz, Matthew, 1:102-103. The lack of parallels with Luke 2,1-20 suggest that the text is based on the oral tradition, which Matthew was the first to record. Cf. Luz, Matthew, 1:102-103.

Translation:

¹ When Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, in the days of the king Herod, behold magi from the east came to Jerusalem,

² saying: “Where is the (new)born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star at its rising⁵⁷¹ and we have come to pay homage to him.”

³ When the king Herod heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

⁴ He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Messiah is to be born.

⁵ They told him: “At Bethlehem in Judea, for it is written through the prophet:

⁶ ‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means you are the least among the princes of Judah. For from you shall come forth a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

⁷ Then Herod secretly summoned the magi and ascertained from them the time the star had appeared.

⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said: “Go and search carefully for the child, and when you have found him report to me so that I too can come and pay homage to him.”

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went away, and behold, the star that they had seen at its rising went before them until it came and stopped over the place where the child was.

¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

¹¹ And as they came into the house and saw the child with Mary his mother, they fell down and paid homage to him. They opened their treasure boxes and offered him gifts – gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they departed by another route to their country.

The story begins after the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, in the province of Judea, during the days of Herod (Matt 2,1a), with the arrival of the magi from the east

⁵⁷¹ As most commentators agree, the phrase ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ should not be understood as the geographical expression “from the east” (otherwise used in plural in Matt 2,1; 8,11; 24,27) but rather as an astronomical term. Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:236; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:27; Gundry, *Matthew*, 27; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:102.

into Jerusalem (2,1b). Paradoxically, the birth, itself, is not narrated by Matthew (in contrast to Luke 2,1-7) but remains in the background. Only two important circumstances concerning the birth are noted, place and time of birth.

The mention of Herod has a chronological⁵⁷² and an introductory significance, introducing the person of Herod and providing a specific time period in which Jesus was born. Herod was the king of Judea who would become an opponent of the new born king Jesus.

The mention of Bethlehem has a theological significance. In Jewish circles, Bethlehem was remembered not only as the birth place of king David (1 Sam 17,12; 20,6) and the place where he was anointed as king of Israel (1 Sam 16,1-13) but it was also believed that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (cf. *Tg. Mic.* 5,1; John 7,41-42).

That Matthew adopted this tradition, and presented Jesus, once again, as the fulfillment of Jewish messianic expectations, is apparent from a quotation from Mic 5,1, inserted in the mouth of chief priests and scribes, in Matt 2,5-6. The addition τῆς Ἰουδαίας to the noun Bethlehem serves as a geographical corrector (distinguishing Bethlehem of Judea from Bethlehem in Zebulon – cf. Josh 19,15) as well as a theological one, underlining Jesus' royal status and his implementation into Davidic line.

Jesus, the king of the Jews (βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων – cf. Matt 2,2) – i.e., the Messiah (cf. Matt 2,4), comes from Judea (Ἰουδαία), from the tribe of Judah (Ἰούδας – cf. Matt 1,2), from the hometown of David. The importance of this concept is stressed by the repetitive usage of Βηθλέεμ τῆς Ἰουδαίας in Matt 2,5 and Matt 2,6 (there in altered form Βηθλέεμ, γῆ Ἰούδα).

After the exposition in verse 1a, Matthew starts his narrative in Matt 2,1b by the unexpected⁵⁷³ appearance of magi from the east. According to G. Dellings,⁵⁷⁴ the designation μάγοι can have four general meanings: it can refer to (1) members of a Persian priestly class; (2) possessors of supernatural

⁵⁷² Herod the Great ruled from 37 to 4 B.C.E.

⁵⁷³ Marked by ἰδοὺ.

⁵⁷⁴ Dellings, “μάγος, μαγεία, μαγεύω,” *TDNT* 4:356-359.

knowledge and power; (3) magicians; and (4) deceivers or seducers. Although in Judaism, the term was linked mostly with the third and fourth meaning – i.e., it had negative connotations,⁵⁷⁵ in the Hellenistic world, the second and third meanings were in view.⁵⁷⁶ However since in Matthew's narrative the role of the magi is unambiguously positive, the third and fourth meaning of the word is excluded, while the second one is the most appropriate.⁵⁷⁷

The accuracy of this interpretation is underlined by the characteristic ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν which should not be understood just as a descriptive (geographical) information but rather as a qualitative one. "East", in ancient times, was believed to be the place where great wisdom originated from.⁵⁷⁸ Thus, the magi from the east are "representatives of the best wisdom of the Gentile world, its spiritual élite."⁵⁷⁹

The reason for the magi' pilgrimage into Jerusalem is clarified by their own words in Matt 2,2. This is the only place in the text, where the magi are allowed to speak, and into their words Matthew inserts several significant themes. The reader learns that the magi are searching for the newborn King of the Jews. The expression βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων – a Messianic title which occurs in Matthew's Gospels only on the lips of the Gentiles (cf. Matt 27,11.29.37) and which is used as substitution for the designation the Messiah, as it is evident from Herod's question in Matt 2,4, is put in the magi's mouth intentionally in order to stress Jesus' royal status.

Secondly, the Gentile magi are the first to recognize the birth and significance of the Messiah and to draw the proper consequences by coming and paying homage to Jesus. At this point, Matthew once again alludes to his favorite theme of the role of Gentiles in the story of Jesus, exemplifying their

⁵⁷⁵ Dan 2,2.10; Theodotion Dan 1,20; 2,2.10.27; 4,7; 5,7.11.15; cf. Deut 18,10-12; 1 Sam 28,3; etc.

⁵⁷⁶ For Jewish, Hellenistic and Christian examples, see Delling, "μάγος, μαγεία, μαγεύω," *TDNT* 4:356-359; Keener, Matthew, 99.

⁵⁷⁷ Cf. Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:227-231.

⁵⁷⁸ Cf. 1 Kgs 5,10 which claims that "Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the East (צָרָף) and all the wisdom of Egypt."

⁵⁷⁹ Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:228.

reaction as the proper reaction to Jesus. The text further states that the magi learned about the birth of the King of the Jews through the occurrence of “his star” (αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀστέρα).

It is not my intention to discuss the historicity of this report or to identify the star,⁵⁸⁰ but rather to focus on the significance of the motif of the star and the possible connotations such a report could have evoked by Matthew’s readers. It has been attested,⁵⁸¹ that there existed a widespread belief, in the ancient world, that the conjunction of constellations, the appearance of comets and the appearance and disappearance of stars heralded the rise and the fall of monarchs. It was astrologers who often heralded the forthcoming arrival of great kings. Understanding this concept with regards to religious beliefs which Matthew shared with his readers, the star motif then signifies the importance of Jesus – as the whole infancy narrative does.

However the star could have pointed on Jesus’ importance not only on the basis of a shared understanding of heavenly signs, but also on the basis of the Scripture. There existed a tradition within Judaism, which interpreted Balaam’s oracle from Num 24,17 “A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel” messianically, identifying the star with the Messiah.⁵⁸² Perhaps the most famous example of this type of identification is the act of Rabbi Akiba who hailed Bar Kosiva as Messiah, naming him Bar Kochba – son of the star (cf. *j. Ta’an.* 68d). That the early Christians interpreted Matthew’s star in this way as well, is attested by Justin.⁵⁸³

Did Matthew intentionally allude to Num 24,17? Since there are no further allusions to Num 24,17 in the text, and because the star is not identified with the Messiah, as in other Jewish texts, but only signals his coming (Matt 2,2)

⁵⁸⁰ Various suggestions have been made regarding the exact nature of the star: a constellation of planets Jupiter and Saturn in the year 7-6 B.C.E.; Halley’s comet (12-11 B.C.E.), supernova. Cf. Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:27; Nolland, *Matthew*, 110-111.

⁵⁸¹ For details and sources, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:233-234.

⁵⁸² Cf. CD VII, 18-26; *T. Jud.* 24,1-6. The Balaam’s oracle is also mentioned, within an eschatological/messianic context, in 4QTest I, 11-13 and 1QM XI, 5-7; In *T. Levi* 18,3 it is written that the star of the priestly Messiah “shall arise in heaven as of a king. Lighting up the light of knowledge as the sun the day, And he shall be magnified in the world.” Cf. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 63-66.

⁵⁸³ Cf. Justin, *Dial.* 106. For further early Christian sources, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:235.

and guides to the infant (cf. Matt 2,9), this interpretation seems unlikely. It is probable that Matthew was not trying to evoke such an association. However, we should not exclude the possibility that Matthew's Jewish readers could have made the link themselves, and most likely did. In any case the star motif emphasizes Jesus' importance and his royal status.

It is only because of the magi questions regarding the birthplace of the Messiah, that King Herod learns of the Messiah's birth and is troubled, as is the whole Jerusalem (Matt 2,3). Herod assembles the chief priests and scribes (the religious authorities, who will stand against Jesus in Matthew's narrative) in order to find the birth place of the Messiah (Matt 2,4).

The scribes, and the high priests answer Herod's (resp. magi's) question on the basis of their knowledge of Scriptures (Matt 2,5-6). The scribes and priests announce, what the reader already knows from Matt 2,1, that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem (Matt 2,5). The wording of the introduction phrase (2,5b) is close to but not the same as the fulfillment formula. Obviously, Matthew did not want to place the fulfillment formula on the lips of the scribes and high priests.

As a scriptural basis they (resp. Matthew through their mouth) quote Mic 5,1, saying "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means you are the least among the princes of Judah. For from you shall come forth a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." (Matt 2,6).

This citation does not follow the Septuagint or the Masoretic text. In fact, the citation does not originate from one biblical source but is a combination of Mic 5,1 and 2 Sam 5,2. Its wording bears traces of Matthew's hand, and rather than being just a citation it can be regarded as an interpretation of Mic 5,1 (Matt 2,6a) combined with a slightly altered quote from 2 Sam 5,2. Both texts are combined because of their thematic similarity. There are three important changes in Matt 2,6 in comparison to Mic 5,1.

Firstly, Matthew omits the reference to Ephratha from Mic 5,1 (οἶκος τοῦ Εφραθα) and substitutes it with γῆ Ἰούδα. So one's attention is drawn not only to the land of Judah but simultaneously to the tribe of Judah. Once again, the

reader is reminded of the Davidic descent of the Messiah – not only that he comes from David’s birthplace, but also from the same tribe – of Judah, which the royal Messiah was expected to descend from (cf. Gen 49,10).⁵⁸⁴

Secondly, Matthew rejects the insignificance of Bethlehem, which is stated in Masoretic Text and LXX wording of Mic 5,1, and claims the opposite. This change can be explained on theological grounds; because the Messiah was born in Bethlehem, the city gained importance and the prophetic word had to be changed to fit the current situation.

Thirdly, Matthew changed ἐκ σοῦ μοι ἐξελεύσεται τοῦ εἶναι εἰς ἄρχοντα of Mic 5,1 into ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ ἐξελεύσεται ἡγούμενος. The change from ἄρχων to ἡγούμενος is best explained due to the occurrence of the word ἡγούμενος in 2 Sam 5,2, which is immediately quoted. Besides, the same word occurs, as mentioned above, in Gen 49,10, and would most likely be remembered by Matthew and his intended audience. In this citation, Jesus’ kingly status and task are made apparent.

That Jesus’ reign/kingdom will differ substantially from Herod’s one,⁵⁸⁵ is indicated by the altered citation of 1 Sam 5,2, which was added to Mic 5,1 in Matt 2,6. When Matthew allows the chief priests and scribes to say that the Messiah “will shepherd my people Israel” he is alluding to the traditional shepherd motif,⁵⁸⁶ a motif which would evoke several associations for Matthew’s audience. One association is the idea of the gathering of the twelve tribes, another is the restoration of Israel,⁵⁸⁷ and the image of the good and just Davidic shepherd-ruler (cf. Ezek 34,23-24).

Thus, the function of the pseudo fulfillment quotation is manifold. Firstly, it serves as a further proof of Jesus’ messianic identity. Secondly, it draws

⁵⁸⁴ The allusion to Gen 49,10 is achieved with the common words *Ιουδα* and *ἡγούμενος*.

⁵⁸⁵ One of the central topics of the second chapter of Matthew’s Gospel is the conflict between the king Herod and the new born King Jesus.

⁵⁸⁶ On the (Davidic) shepherd motif in Matthew’s Gospel, see Head, *Christology*, 183; Cousland, *Crowds in Matthew*, 120-122, 169-172, 185-191; Baxter, “Healing and the ‘Son of David’,” 36-50; Konradt, *Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium*, 18-52; Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 173-395.

⁵⁸⁷ Cf. Ezek 34,11-16; Mic 5,1-9; *Pss. Sol.* 17.

attention to Jesus' status as the Son of David. Thirdly, it underlines his royal dignity. Fourthly, it indicates what his tasks will be (to shepherd his people Israel). Fifthly, it anticipates the character of his rule by alluding to the shepherd tradition. Finally, it also indirectly (due to the context of Matt 2,1-12 and Mic 5,1-3) indicates the universal significance of Jesus.⁵⁸⁸ In all these aspects the citation fulfills one purpose – to attest that Jesus accomplishes all the prerequisites necessary for the Davidic Messiah of Israel.

The scriptural answer of the chief priests and scribes does contain a hidden edge. Although the religious leaders of Israel, unlike the magi, know where the Messiah was supposed to be born, and after the arrival of magi they know that he was actually born already, they do not draw the proper conclusions from their knowledge. They do not seek him, nor do they pay honors to him. They are not filled with joy as the magi will be (cf. Matt 2,10) but are troubled (Matt 2,4). Paradoxically they align themselves with Herod. Matt 2,4-6 thus, may be understood as Matthew's indirect critique of his contemporary Jewish opponents, who knew that the Messiah has come but did not draw the right conclusions, being led astray by their leaders.

Knowing the place of the Messiah's birth, Herod secretly calls the magi back, questioning them about the time of the occurrence of the star (Matt 2,7) and sending them to Bethlehem in order to find the child (Matt 2,8). The magi, led by the reappeared star (Matt 2,9), go to Bethlehem and, filled with joy (Matt 2,10), they finally arrive at the goal of their journey (Matt 2,11).

They find the child and his mother, fall on the ground and prostrate themselves before Jesus. The act of prostration was a common Eastern custom symbolizing homage and submission on the part of the worshipper; and dignity, authority and superiority of the one to whom the prostration was directed.⁵⁸⁹ While the Persians prostrated themselves in the presence of their deified king, and the Greeks before a divinity or something holy, the Jews

⁵⁸⁸ I admit that the universal significance of Jesus is in Matt 2,6 rather latent and that this particular point will become more obvious in Matt 2,11.

⁵⁸⁹ Cf. Greeven, "προσκυνέω, προσκυνητής," *TDNT* 6:758-766, esp. 759-761; "προσκυνέω," *BDAG*, 882-883.

reserved this act for God alone. In Matthew's Gospel, prostration represents a religious worship (cf. Matt 2,11; 14,33; 20,20; 28,9; 28,17) and is directed towards Jesus. Often the prostration is followed by a plea for healing (cf. Matt 8,2; 9,18; 15,22).

There are various ways in which the prostration, as well as the gift's offering which accompanies it, can be interpreted. Firstly, at the level of the story, the magi in their prostration acknowledge the royal status of Jesus, the King of the Jews. Simultaneously, their coming points on the universalistic significance of the new born child (otherwise there would be no reason for their pilgrimage). The gifts, which they offer him, are expressions of loyalty and submission.

Secondly, as viewed by Matthew (and also his readers), the prostration of the magi and their offerings represent the proper attitude towards Jesus, who is the point of the salvation history (1,2-17), the Messiah (1,1; 1,16-17; 2,4), the King of the Jews (2,4), the Son of David (1,1), son of Abraham (1,1), Son of God (1,18.20), Immanuel (1,23). The magi are contrasted with Israel's leaders, who did not recognize Jesus' status and significance and who, in contrary to Matthew's own community, do not worship him.

Thirdly, the coming of the magi, their prostration and gift offerings, can be understood as the first fruits of the eschatological pilgrimage of Gentiles and their kings to Zion (cf. Isa 60,1-6) and their submission to the Davidic king (cf. Ps 72,10-11.15; *Pss. Sol.* 17,31).⁵⁹⁰ Although there is no direct citation of Isa 60,1-6; Ps 72,10-11 or *Pss. Sol.* 17,31 in Matt 2,11, this does not mean that these texts were not alluded to. Thus Ps 72,10-11, whose messianic interpretation can not be excluded,⁵⁹¹ reads:

The kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to him; the kings of Sheba and Sheba will present him gifts (δῶρα). All the kings will fall down before him (προσκυθήσουσιν), all nations will serve him.

⁵⁹⁰ This interpretation is held among others by: Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:249-251; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:31; Nolan, *The Royal Son of God*, 43-46.

⁵⁹¹ See Veugelers, "Le Psaume LXXII, poeme messianique?," 317-343.

That gold will be amongst the gifts from the Gentile rulers brought to the Davidic king is expressed in Ps 72,15: “Long may he live; may gold (ἐκ τοῦ χρυσοῦ) of Sheba be given to him.” Also Isa 60,3 states that “the wealth of the nations shall come to” Israel and that “all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense (χρυσίου καὶ λίβανον), and shall bring good news, the salvation of the Lord” (Isa 60,5c-6).

But the link between Matt 2,11 and Isa 60 and Ps 72,10-11 is not established only due to the usage of several catchwords, but also due to the thematic similarity. Within the analysis of *Pss. Sol.* 17,31 we have seen that the theme of submission of the Gentiles to the Son of David was an important part of Davidic messianism⁵⁹² – a part Matthew could easily have used in his pursuit to portray Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of David. Besides, the theme of the Gentiles is of a great importance to Matthew. The eschatological pilgrimage of the Gentiles (magi) can be understood not only as the fulfillment of the Isaianic (Isa 60,1-6) and messianic (*Pss. Sol.* 17,31) expectations, but also as the fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham about the blessing of all nations. Matthew is thus in this section recalling not only the significance of Jesus as the Son of David, but also his significance as the son of Abraham (cf. Matt 1,1).

Finally, Davies and Allison⁵⁹³ have argued in their commentary, that “a Jesus/Solomon typology may also perhaps be discerned in Mt 2.11.”⁵⁹⁴ They list five main supporting arguments for their thesis: firstly – gold and myrrh were amongst the gifts which the foreign nations and rulers brought to king Solomon (cf. 1 Kgs 10,1.10; 2 Chr 9,23-24); and gold and frankincense were associated with the temple which Solomon built (Neh 13,5).

Secondly – Ps 72, alluded to in Matt 2,11, is attributed in the Old Testament to Solomon and according to Justin (*Dial.* 34) it was, at least in some Jewish

⁵⁹² That the Messiah should receive gifts from Gentiles was an idea hold also by several rabbis (cf. *b. Pesah.* 118b). For further rabbinic sources, see Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary on NT*, 10.

⁵⁹³ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:250-251.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 250.

circles, also applied to him. Thirdly – frankincense and myrrh occur together in the OT (except in Sir 24,15), always in connection with Solomon (cf. Song 3,6). Fourthly – the eschatological pilgrimage was sometimes understood as a return to – or a surpassing of – the days of Solomon (Hag 2,7-9; *T. Benj.* 9,2). Fifthly – just as the magi gave gifts and paid homage to the king Jesus, so have foreign rulers once given gifts and honor to king Solomon (1 Kgs 10,1-10; 2 Chr 9,23-24).

In my opinion, a possible link is found in the following points. The first motif focuses on the themes of honor and gifts. Solomon was honored by Gentile rulers (first and most of all by the Queen of Sheba – cf. 1 Kgs 10,1-10) and from these rulers he received not only honor, but also gifts – amongst which were gold, oil of myrrh and spices (cf. 2 Chr 9,24; 1 Kgs 10,25). And although Matthew names, besides gold, as further two gifts λίβανον καὶ σμύρναν (frankincense and myrrh), while 2 Chr 9,24 and 1 Kgs 10,25 list alongside with gold στακτὴν καὶ ἡδύσματα (oil of myrrh and spices), the gifts are by their nature very similar, and thus alluding to Solomon.

Besides, the magi do not only offer gifts to Jesus, expressing their submission, loyalty and respect, but they also pay homage to him – as foreign rulers once paid homage to Solomon.

Another motif focuses on the theme of wisdom. Solomon was honored because of his God-given wisdom (1 Kgs 10,1-10; 10,24-25; 2 Chr 9,23-24). In Matthew's narrative, the magi from the east – the representatives of Gentile wisdom, come to pay homage to Jesus, the King of the Jews, who in Matthew's eyes is not only "more than the temple" (12,6) or Jonah (12,41), but also "more than Solomon"⁵⁹⁵ (12,42) – the wisest king of Israel; namely Jesus is the incarnation of Wisdom itself (cf. Matt 11,19).⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹⁵ Within further exegesis (Matt 12,42) it will become apparent that the words "more than Solomon" are a reference to more than Jesus' wisdom.

⁵⁹⁶ It is probable that the reader would make this link only after the second reading of the Gospel or retroactively, however, if we consider that Matthew intended his Gospel to be continually reread, this fact does not consist an obstacle for our thesis.

These two motifs – the motif of pilgrimage of Gentile rulers and the motif of Solomon’s wisdom, are brought together not only in this place in Matthew’s Gospel, but also in another one – namely in Matt 12,42. It is no mere coincidence that the situation of Matt 2,1-12 and Matt 12,42 is much the same in several points.

In the first case (Matt 2,1-12), the Gentile magi, unlike the Jewish leaders (scribes and chief priests) who stand beside Herod, recognize the significance of Jesus and react properly – they come and worship him. In the second case, the Gentile Queen of Sheba (Queen of the South), provides an example of a proper reaction⁵⁹⁷ towards Jesus and is contrasted to the Jewish leaders (in Matt 12,38-42 scribes and Pharisees), who, having witnessed Jesus’ miracles and wisdom, do not recognize Jesus’ importance and messianic identity. They oppose him, and are ready to destroy him (12,14), by accusing him of working his miracles with the help of Beelzebub (12,24). In their malice, the leaders are not only unwilling to be convinced that Jesus is the Messiah, but they even lead the crowds, who are asking whether Jesus might be the Son of David (12,23), astray.

The similarities between the magi’s pilgrimage and the pilgrimage of the Queen of Sheba, are found in the motifs of wisdom, gifts, honor and acknowledgement of the divinely ordained royalty of the visited; and they can be reinforced by the motif of the star. As Bruns,⁵⁹⁸ followed by Davies and Allison,⁵⁹⁹ suggested, Matthew could have been familiar with a tradition, later recorded, in the Targum Sheni to Esther, about a star which guided the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, son of David. The Targum reads:

“As the Queen of Sheba approached the Holy City, reclining in her litter, she saw at a distance a wondrous rose growing at the edge of a lake. But when she came near she saw to her astonishment the rose suddenly

⁵⁹⁷ She came to test Solomon’s wisdom and when she witnessed his wisdom, she honored him.

⁵⁹⁸ Bruns, “The Magi Episode,” 53.

⁵⁹⁹ Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:251.

transformed into a flashing star. The closer she came the more dazing was its light.”⁶⁰⁰

Bruns believes, this tradition, “may, orally at least, go back to NT times.”⁶⁰¹ If he is correct, then the allusion to Solomon would be even stronger in Matt 2,11. However, even if one rejects the idea that Matthew was familiar with this tradition,⁶⁰² there are still enough remaining links to support the argument that Matthew consciously used Solomonic typology in Matt 2,11.⁶⁰³ The whole episode is ended by the departure of the magi in Matt 2,12.

3.1.5. The Escape to Egypt and Return to Nazareth (Matt 2,13-23)

The pericope of the magi paying homage to Jesus the King of the Jews (Matt 2,1-12) is then closely followed by the pericope the escape to Egypt and return to Nazareth (Matt 12,13-23), with which the infancy narratives come to an end.

The pericope can be divided into three sections, each enclosed by a quotation formula. The first section narrates the flight of Joseph’s family into Egypt (Matt 2,13-15), the second section tells of the slaughter of the innocents (Matt 2,16-18), and the third part tells of the family’s return from Egypt and their settling in Nazareth (Matt 2,19-23).

This pericope is closely related to the previous one by a series of repeated motifs, such as: Herod (2,13.15.16.19.22), the magi (2,13.16), the child and his mother (2,13.14.20.21). The text also shares several motifs with the first chapter, such as: a revelation of an angel in a dream (2,13.19 – cf. 1,20), heavenly instructions (2,13.20.22 – cf. 1,20-21; 2,12), Joseph’s obedience (2,14.21-22 – cf. 1,24-25), Jesus’ divine sonship (2,15 – cf. 1,18.20), and the stress of Jesus’ Davidic messiahship (2,23 – cf. 1,1; 1,20; 2,1.4-6).

⁶⁰⁰ Bruns, “The Magi Episode,” 53 – citing: Ausubel, *A Treasury of Jewish Folklore*, 482. On the whole story of Solomon and Queen of Sheba, see Ausubel, *A Treasury of Jewish Folklore*, 480-487.

⁶⁰¹ Bruns, “The Magi Episode,” 53.

⁶⁰² Nolan, *The Royal Son of God*, 45, n. 5.

⁶⁰³ Cf. Green, “Solomon the Son of David in Matthaean Typology,” 228.

Except for the last two of the motifs mentioned above, there are other prominent motifs favored by Matthew, these include: the implicit allusion to the rejection of Jesus by Israel's leaders in the quotation of Jeremiah (2,18),⁶⁰⁴ and the motif of the Gentile mission implicitly present in the setting down in Galilee (2,22).⁶⁰⁵ Although these motifs are interesting, they are not primarily related to the subject of this study. There is, however, one verse within this pericope, which contains a possible allusion to the Messianic expectations concerning the Son of David – namely Matt 2,23:

καὶ ἐλθὼν κατώκησεν εἰς πόλιν λεγομένην Ναζαρέτ⁶⁰⁶ ὅπως πληρωθῆ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν ὅτι Ναζωραῖος κληθήσεται.

He came and settled down in a city called Nazareth, so that it may be fulfilled what was said through the prophets that: “He shall be called Nazarene.”

The verse occurs at the end of the infancy narrative. It is a part of the story (2,19-23) in which the widely known fact, that Jesus came from Nazareth (cf. John 1,46; Mark 1,24; 10,47; 16,6; etc.), is explained. The explanation for this fact is given by Matthew in 2,22-23a. Joseph is warned in the dream not to return to Judea, where the Archelaus rules, and he turns to Galilee and settles down in Nazareth, a small insignificant village unknown in the Old Testament.

What draws our attention to the text is not the narrative itself, but Matthew's fulfillment quotation (2,23b) which is added as an explanation and has no parallel in LXX or MT. The citation, or interpretation, is introduced by the standard quotation formula, with two important differences.

Firstly, Matthew speaks about prophets (διὰ τῶν προφητῶν) in Matt 2,23b, while in all other formula quotations he uses the singular (διὰ τοῦ προφήτου + name).⁶⁰⁷ Secondly, the quotation is not introduced by the usual word λέγοντος

⁶⁰⁴ Cf. Gundry, Matthew, 36.

⁶⁰⁵ Designated in Matt 4,15 as Galilee of the Gentiles (Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν).

⁶⁰⁶ Ναζαρέτ is the spelling in κ B D L. Other MSS (C K N W G (D) $f^{(1)13}$ lat co) have the alternate spelling Ναζαρέθ and P^{70vid} has Ναζαρά.

⁶⁰⁷ Cf. Matt 1,22; 2,5; 2,15; 2,17; 3,3; 4,14; 8,17; 12,12; 13,35; 21,4; 27,9.

(in this case it would have to be in the plural form – i.e., λέγοντων) as one would expect, but by the word ὅτι. Although, ὅτι can theoretically refer to a direct as well as an indirect quotation (Matt 26,54), or it can be understood as a part of the quotation, its meaning is determined by the context.

Since the quotation does not originate in MT or in LXX, the word ὅτι should be regarded as a signal that the quotation which follows is not a verbal citation from the Scripture. The same function can be adjudged to the change from singular to plural (prophets). Due to these changes, the reader is alerted that the text is not a verbal quote from the Scriptures. The pluralization of the noun, “prophets”, also notifies the reader that more than one text from the Scriptures is in play.⁶⁰⁸ But which passages of the Scripture did Matthew have in mind and what is the significance of Ναζωραῖος κληθήσεται?

The word Ναζωραῖος can be understood firstly as a nomen gentilicium.⁶⁰⁹ Jesus was known to come from Nazareth and was called a Ναζωραῖος (cf. Luke 18,37; John 19,19; Acts 6,14; 22,8) or Ναζαρηνός (cf. Mark 1,24; 10,47; 14,67; 16,6; Luke 4,34; 24,19). The fulfillment quotation then functions as “a general claim that Jesus’ dwelling in Nazareth is in accord with the divine will...”⁶¹⁰ Such an interpretation is certainly correct, however, one has to ask whether this answer is superfluous. Could there be a deeper theological meaning to the designation Ναζωραῖος? Scholars have offered various answers to this question and two of the most popular responses are discussed below.⁶¹¹

The first interpretation⁶¹² draws attention to a play on words involving Nazarene and Nazirite and is based firstly on references found in Judg 13,5.7; 16,17; Isa 4,3. The word play involves the interchangeability of the terms “Holy one of God” and “Nazarite”. According to this interpretation, Matthew

⁶⁰⁸ Cf. Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:275. For rabbinic parallels, see Str-B 1:92-93; cf. Ezra 9,11-12.

⁶⁰⁹ Luz, Matthew, 1:123.

⁶¹⁰ Carter, Matthew and the Margins, 89.

⁶¹¹ On various proposals, see Davies and Allison, Matthew 1:276-280.

⁶¹² Held e.g., by Sanders, Schweizer, Schaefer, Zuckschwerdt, Davies and Allison: Sanders, “Ναζωραῖος in Matt. 2:23,” 169-172; Schaefer, “Ναζαρηνός, Ναζωραῖος,” *TDNT* 4:874-879; Schweizer, “‘Er wird Nazoräer heissen,’” 90-93; Zuckschwerdt, “Ναζωραῖος in Mat 2,23,” 65-77; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:276-277.

found the phrase “and he will be called holy” in MS Isa 4,3⁶¹³ and understood the word, holy, as referring to a Nazirite. This was possible because of the appearance of the word, נָזִיר in Judg 13,5.7. This Hebrew word נָזִיר refers to a holy person consecrated into God’s service. The consecration requires a special vow demanding abstinence from wine and keeping of uncut hair (cf. Num 6; Judg 13,5-7; 16,17). The Hebrew word נָזִיר is transliterated in LXX Judg 13,5 as ναζιρ (Ναζιραῖος in ms. A and B LXX) and then translated as ἅγιος θεοῦ (Holy one of God – Judg 13,7). Matthew substituted Nazirite for Nazarene to emphasize that Jesus is the holy one of God who comes from Nazareth.

The problem with this interpretation hinges on the designation “the Holy one of God,” which is an appropriate designation for the Messiah; but the concept of Nazirite holiness can hardly be applied to Jesus. And secondly, there are too many substitutions which the reader would have had to make to link Matthew’s text to a “quotation” from Isa 4,3.

The second interpretation⁶¹⁴ traces Matthew’s sources back to Isa 11,1 which contains an old Messianic prophecy concerning the Davidic dynasty: “And there shall come forth a branch from the stump of Jesse and a sprout from his roots will bear fruit.” We have already earlier in this study stated, that this prophecy had a decisive impact on the formation of Messianic hopes within various first century C.E. Jewish groups, and that it was interpreted as referring to the eschatological Son of David.

The link between Isa 11,1 and Matt 2,23 is in the Hebrew word נֶזֶר (neser – sprout) which could be read as Ναζαρ in first century Hebrew.⁶¹⁵ The term had been used, in the first century C.E., as a designation for the Davidic Messiah similarly as the other interchangeable metaphorical expressions such as the Shoot, the Branch, etc.

⁶¹³ The LXX has the plural – they will call (ἅγιοι κληθήσονται).

⁶¹⁴ Held e.g., by Hagner; Davies and Allison (only as a “secondary allusion”), Keener and Gundry: Hagner, Matthew, 1:41-42; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1:277-278; Keener, Matthew, 114-115; Gundry, Matthew, 40.

⁶¹⁵ Rüger, “NAZAPEΘ/NAZAPA NAZAPHNOS/NAZΩΠΑΙΟΣ,” 262.

The words “through prophets” in the quotation formula may be understood then as referring to other passages of Scriptures which also refer to the eschatological Son of David using similar metaphorical expressions (cf. Jer 23,5; 33,15; Zech 6,12). They serve as a signal to the reader that there is no verbal but rather an ideological agreement with the Scriptures, and that more than one passage in the Scriptures is alluded to. This change has to be ascribed on account of Matthew’s theological consequentiality and not on account of his ignorance.⁶¹⁶

And since we have demonstrated in our exegesis of Matt 1-2 that it was Matthew’s intent to portray Jesus as the Son of David, it seems logical to assume, when Matthew started his infancy narrative with the words “Book of Genesis of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, son of Abraham,” that he wanted to close this chapter with a reference to Jesus’ Davidic sonship. This argument is strengthened by Matthew’s reference to Jesus being the Son of God (2,15).

We can not forget that the main intent of the infancy material was to integrate Jesus into the Davidic lineage (1,2-17), and to explain the unexpected break in the genealogy (1,18-25), and thus qualify him as the true Messiah, the Son of David (1,1) who accomplishes all the prerequisites. Jesus is the eschatological King (2,1), the Son of David, born in Bethlehem as foretold (2,1.4-6), who brings salvation to Israel (1,23) and to the Gentiles (2,11).

Given the evidence, considering the popularity of the messianic interpretation of Isa 11,1 in the first century Judaism, and Matthew’s interest in the Davidic sonship of Jesus as well as his endeavor to represent him as a fulfiller of Israel’s traditions and expectations; as a result I believe the second interpretation to be the most accurate. Thus in Matt 2,23 Matthew explains why Jesus is called Nazarene, and emphasizes (once again), with the help of Isa 11,1, that Jesus is the promised Son of David.

⁶¹⁶ Contra Luz’s position that Matthew wrote “through prophets” because he was not able to identify the quotation transmitted to him. Luz, *Matthew*, 1:123.

3.1.6. Conclusion: Son of David in Infancy Narratives (Matt 1,1-2,23).

In our analysis of Matt 1,1-2,23, we have seen that Matthew creatively used various existing traditions in order to present Jesus as the true Messiah of Israel, in whom the promises given to fathers (Gen 12,1-3; 17,1-7; 18,18; 22,17-18; 49,10; 2 Sam 7,12-16; Mic 5,1; Isa 7,14; 11,1; 60,1-6; Ps 72) would come true and who fulfills all the messianic prerequisites.

In the first chapter of his Gospel, Matthew introduces Jesus on the scene and foreshadows not only his status, but also his future tasks. Jesus is the Son of David (1,1; 1,18-25), son of Abraham (Matt 1,1) – the long expected Messiah (Matt 1,1; 1,16-17) and the final goal of the history of salvation (Matt 1,2-17), the one conceived through the Holy Spirit (1,18; 1,20) in whom God is present with his people (1,23). He is the one who will save his people from their sins (Matt 1,21).

Simultaneously Matthew intentionally prepares his readers (mainly the Jewish ones) from the beginning of his narrative for the fact that Jesus' messiahship differs in some aspects from popular messianic expectations (1,21 – Jesus is not a political or warlike Messiah), however, it corresponds to the eternal God's plan (1,2-17; 1,22-23).

In the pericope the birth of Jesus, the Messiah (Matt 1,18-25), Matthew provides his readers with the answer to the question, which concerned Jesus' sonship and his incorporation into the Davidic lineage. Jesus, through Mary and the Holy Spirit, is the Son of God (1,18; 1,20) and through his legal (adoptive) father Joseph (Matt 1,20-21; 1,25) he is also the Son of David. Lidija Novakovic notes important details regarding the reversed adoption of Jesus:

“In Matthew, Jesus' divine sonship precedes his Davidic sonship, with the consequence that the idea of adoption becomes associated with his Davidic lineage, not his status as the Son of God... Matthew thus does not present Jesus as the Son of David who has been installed to the position of the Son

of God by an act of divine adoption, but as the Son of God who became the Son of David by an act of human adoption.⁶¹⁷

In the second chapter of his Gospel, Matthew further stresses the royal identity of the Messiah (Matt 2,2.4.6.11) and his universal significance (2,1.2.11), at the same time there is a trace of a paradox and foreshadowing of the rejection of Jesus by Israel's leaders (2,3.18). Jesus, the King of the Jews (2,2), the Messiah (2,4) – Son of David and Son of God (2,15), is born in Bethlehem (2,1.5-6), the birthplace of David, thus fulfilling Micah's prophecy (Mic 5,1). Jesus is destined to shepherd his people (2,6). Although he is Israel's King, the offspring of David, he is not honored by Israel's leaders (2,3), but pursued by king Herod, who wants to kill him (2,8.13.16). The announcement of his birth by the Gentile magi (what an irony) does not result in joy, but in trouble in Jerusalem (2,3). The scribes and high priests know, where the Messiah is to be born, but unlike the magi they do not seek him (2,4-6).

Paradoxically the magi from the east, the representatives of the wisdom of the Gentile, the spiritual elite, are the first to recognize Jesus' significance. In their prostrations and gift offerings they not only acknowledge his exalted position (2,11), and their own submission to the Davidic king (cf. Ps 72,10-11.15; *Pss. Sol.* 17,31), but they also foreshadow the eschatological pilgrimage of Gentiles and their kings (cf. Isa 60,1-6) to the one, in whom all the nations will be blessed – the Messiah, Son of David (2,23), son of Abraham, Son of God.

In our analysis of the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, we were able to find an indirect link to the Solomon as exorcist tradition, based on the connection between Jesus' conception (Matt 1,18.20) through the Holy Spirit (which implicitly presupposes endowment by the Spirit) and his healing activity, understandable on the basis of Matt 9,2-8 as a part of his saving ministry (Matt 1,21); but no direct link to Solomon, except for Matthew's tracing of Jesus' genealogy back to Solomon (Matt 1,6). We have found

⁶¹⁷ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 50, 63.

Solomon typology in Matt 2,11. The typology is based on the similarity between the magi's pilgrimage, prostration and gift offering (Matt 2,1.2.11) to Jesus (who is identified with wisdom in Matt 11,19) and the pilgrimage of foreign rulers who traveled from afar to hear Solomon's wisdom, honoring him with gifts (cf. 1 Kgs 10,1-10; 10,24-25; 2 Chr 9,23-24). It was further stressed by the thematic proximity between Matt 2,1-12 and Matt 12,42 – where in both cases the Gentiles are given as examples of the proper reaction towards Jesus, in contrast to the Jewish leaders.

Our analysis of Matt 1,1-2,23 has further shown that Matthew did not only include the main Christological motives in the first two chapters of his Gospel (Son of David, Son of God, Immanuel Christology), but also incorporated other topics such as the inclusion of Gentiles (women in Jesus' lineage, the magi, son of Abraham motif), the motif of righteousness and obedience of the Law (Joseph).

We have seen, in several places through Matt 1,1-2,23, the innovative usage of older messianic traditions and expectations (e.g., Matt 1,21) and traces of Matthew's theologically critical work with the tradition. We have also witnessed that Matthew's introduction of Jesus as the messianic Son of David was based on existing contemporary ideas and concepts, which had their origins in Judaism, and were not only concepts created by Matthew ad-hoc and ex nihilo.

The usage of the Davidic dynasty tradition, as well as the allusions to the Solomonic traditions, and Matthew's endeavor to present Jesus as the fulfiller of various traditions speak against Burger's claim "... daß die christliche Interpretation des Prädikates ‚Davidsson' bei Matthäus schon weit vom jüdischen Bild des davidischen Königs abgeführt hat" and contradicts with his conclusion that "das matthäische Bild von Jesus als Davidsson ganz auf der Darstellung des Markusevangeliums *beruht*."⁶¹⁸

We have already stated that Matthew in his first two chapters indicated the task of the Messiah, the Son of David, and partly also his character. And these

⁶¹⁸ Burger, Jesus als Davidsson, 90, 106.

two points will be our focus for the remainder of this study. A special attention will be paid to the way in which Matthew used the Solomon as exorcist and the royal messianic traditions in his portraying of Jesus.

3.2. The Healing of the Two Blind Men (Matt 9,27-31)

The healing of the two blind men (9,27-31) is the first pericope after the first two chapters of Matthew's Gospel, which applies the designation Son of David – this time in the form of a direct address to Jesus.

The text of Matt 9,27-31 reads:

²⁷ Καὶ παράγοντι ἐκεῖθεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ἠκολούθησαν [αὐτῷ] δύο τυφλοὶ κρᾶζοντες καὶ λέγοντες· ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὸς Δαυίδ.

²⁸ ἔλθόντι δὲ εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν προσῆλθον αὐτῷ οἱ τυφλοί, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· πιστεύετε ὅτι δύναμαι τοῦτο ποιῆσαι; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· ναὶ κύριε.

²⁹ τότε ἥψατο τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν λέγων· κατὰ τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν γενηθήτω ὑμῖν.

³⁰ καὶ ἠνεώχθησαν αὐτῶν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί. καὶ ἐνεβριμήθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· ὁρᾶτε μηδεὶς γινωσκέτω.

³¹ οἱ δὲ ἐξεληθόντες διεφήμισαν αὐτὸν ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ γῆ ἐκείνῃ.

Translation:

²⁷ As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, crying loudly, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

²⁸ When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord."

²⁹ Then he touched their eyes saying, "According to your faith, let it be done to you."

³⁰ And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying "See that no one knows about it."

³¹ But they went away and spread the news about him throughout that district.

Before we turn our attention to the analysis of the story of the healing of the two blind men, the function and setting of this pericope within Matthew's narrative must be discussed.

Within the larger context, this pericope is inserted between two almost identical summaries of Jesus' ministry in Israel for Israel (Matt 4,23-25; 9,35). This text is preceded by three chapters which record the words of the Messiah (Matt 5-7), and by a series of miracle stories, which predominately recount the miraculous deeds of the Messiah⁶¹⁹ (Matt 8,1-9,26). It is closely followed by the pericope of the healing of the deaf-muted demoniac (Matt 9,23-34).

While the division of the material into two main sections (Matt 5-7 and 8-9) is quite plausible as well as is Matthew's intention to present Jesus as the Messiah of deeds in his usage of a "representative collection of Jesus' miraculous deeds in preparation for the answer to the Baptist's question in 11:3-5"⁶²⁰ in chapters 8-9, the organization of the material (structure) in the second block is not altogether clear and is an issue for discussion.

Davies and Allison⁶²¹ divided these miracles into three groups of three (8,1-22; 8,23-9,17; 9,18-38; each ending with various words of Jesus, arguing that the two miracles of 9,18-26 are part of one indivisible unit.⁶²² Others scholars disagreed with this hypothesis. For example Held, followed by Thompson, has proposed to divide the composition into three groups of miracle stories, each emphasizing one theme: 8,1-17 Christology; 8,18-9,17 discipleship and 9,18-34 faith.⁶²³

⁶¹⁹ The terms "Messiah of the Word" and "Messiah of Deed" as designations for chapters 5-7 and 8-9 come originally from Schniewind, *Matthäus*, 36, 106. I am aware of the fact that the label "Messiah of Deed" for chapters 8-9 is not quite accurate. This is because chapters 8-9 contain not just miracle stories but also three other passages with a different theme (The Would-be Followers pericope in Matt 8,-22, The Calling of Matthew in Matt 9,9-13, The Question of Fasting – Matt 9,14-17). Due to the main theme – which truly is the presentation of Jesus as merciful miracle worker among his people in view of John's question in Matt 11,3-6, I still consider it to be the most suitable title.

⁶²⁰ Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:195.

⁶²¹ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:3-4.

⁶²² This argument was based on a formal consideration – namely the triad structure.

⁶²³ Held, "Matthew as Interpreter of the Miracle Stories," 165-299. Thompson, "Reflections on the Composition of Matt 8,1-9,34," 365-388.

Burger and Kingsbury⁶²⁴ divided the composition into four thematic units: Christology (8,1-17), discipleship (8,18-34), separation from Israel (9,1-17) and faith (9,18-34). Both disagree with Held, not only with regards to composition but also in regards to the main theme, which according to Burger is ecclesiology.

In his article "The Miracle Stories of Matthew 8-9," Luz⁶²⁵ has rightly noted the limitation of the thematic division of Matt 8-9. He has plausibly demonstrated one's inability to arrange the themes into separate blocs – stressing the repeating and intertangement of various themes. More importantly, Luz also stressed the narrative dimension of the whole composition. For Luz, Matthew's aim "is to narrate a connected story,"⁶²⁶ "... concerned with how the healing and merciful acts of the one who is Israel's Messiah, Servant of God and the Son of David, give rise to a split in Israel and the coming into being of the disciple's community."⁶²⁷

Agreeing with Luz's narrative approach, we shall proceed to the exegesis of Matt 9,27-31 focusing on the Christological rather than ecclesiological significance of this story of Matthew. Before we do so, we will take a closer look at the function of the story and its context.

As already mentioned above, the story of the healing of the two blind men is located within the composition of other miracle stories in Matt 8-9. The narrative composition of these two chapters begins with the healing of the leper after Jesus' descent from the mountain (Matt 8,1-4) and is followed by Jesus' coming into Capernaum (8,5) where he heals the centurion's servant (8,5-13) and praises the centurion's faith (8,10-12).

After entering Peter's house, Jesus heals his mother-in-law (8,14-15). In the same evening, he casts out spirits from many demon-possessed and heals all the sick (8,16), thus fulfilling Isa 53,4 (Matt 8,17). Wanting to escape from the crowds which gathered around him, Jesus crosses to the other side of the lake, calming a storm on the way over (8,23-27), where he heals two demoniacs and

⁶²⁴ Burger, "Jesu Taten nach Matthäus 8 und 9," 272-287. Kingsbury, "Observations on the 'Miracle Chapters' of Matthew 8-9," 559-573.

⁶²⁵ Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 223-226.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, 226.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, 231. Similar position is held also by Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:196.

is then asked to withdraw (8,28-34). Jesus returns to his own town where he heals the paralytic. This healing culminates in a conflict with the scribes, which leads to a declaration of the authority of the Son of Man to forgive sins, whereupon Jesus receives the acclamation of the crowds (9,1-8).

Afterwards, Jesus passes the tax booth, calls Matthew, and goes to the dinner in (Matthew's, Peter's, his own?) house, where he encounters the Pharisees (9,9-13) and John's disciples (9,14-17).⁶²⁸ From there, Jesus is called into the home of the leader of the synagogue where he raises the man's daughter from the dead (9,18-26). Jesus also heals a woman suffering from a hemorrhage on the way to the leader of the synagogue's home (9,20-22). The last pericope is enclosed with the notice (Matt 9,26) that "the report of this went through all that district."

Immediately afterwards – i.e., after the leaving of the house of the synagogue leader, Matthew narrates the story of the two blind men (9,27-31). The blind men approach Jesus with their plea for healing, calling "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" (9,27). After Jesus heals them (9,27-31), a demon possessed person is brought to him and healed as well (9,32-34). These healings result in the crowds' acclamation of Jesus. But the healings also cause the Pharisees to accuse Jesus of being linked to the prince of demons (9,33-34). The intensive narrative of chapters 8 and 9 ends with a summary in 9,35, which creates an inclusion to Matt 4,23.

All these narrations occur in one geographical area, Capernaum (with one "excursus" on the opposite shore), and are presented intentionally in successive order – evoking an impression of the continuous healing ministry of Jesus (due to the particular stories and general summaries such as 8,16; 9,35), while stressing the growth of his fame (9,26; 9,31).

Within the composition of the whole Gospel, the miracle narratives exemplify the character of Jesus' mission in Israel for Israel, which till now

⁶²⁸ The discussion with the Pharisees and John's disciples fits well thematically but the location is out of synch. One can hardly imagine Pharisees and John's disciples to be present at a dinner with sinners and tax collectors. Is it possible that the scene took place before the house? I suppose Matthew may have not noticed this small incongruity.

was only presented in the form of a summary in 4,23-25. These texts also recount various types of reactions to Jesus' ministry and to his person.

Thus it is reported, how Jesus' actions (which are to be understood as a manifestation of his words recorded in Matt 5-7) give rise to questions about his identity (8,27), authority (9,1-8) and the source of his powers (9,33-34) among the people of Israel and also give rise to the conflict between the Messiah of Israel, the Son of David, the Son and Servant of God and the Pharisees (9,34). In these two chapters, Matthew, similarly as in the first two, foreshadows important themes which will dominate his later narratives. As expressed by Davies and Allison: "Matt 5-7 (the words of Jesus), 8-9 (the deeds of Jesus), and 10 (the words and deeds of the disciples) largely record an overture, chapters 11 and 12 a response."⁶²⁹

Before we approach the exegesis of Matt 9,27-31, a discussion concerning the sources and structure of this pericope must occur. While the strategic significance of this pericope, within the composition of chapters 8-9, has generally been recognized,⁶³⁰ its origin (sources) is a matter of discussion.

Several commentators⁶³¹ have argued for an possible independent oral tradition lying behind Matt 9,27-31. The majority of scholars,⁶³² however, conclude that Matt 9,27-31 is a doublet to Matt 20,29-34, based primarily on the Bartimaeus story from Mark 10,46-52, supplied by the help of fragments from other healing stories (i.a., Mark 1,43), and linked to the preceding healing stories, reported in Matt 8-9, by usage of various catch-words, phrases and themes.

The opening words recall the calling of Matthew from Matt 9,9; the two blind men recall the two demoniacs from Matt 8,28 who also cry and say; the setting of the healing scene in the house recalls Matt 8,14 and 9,23; the silence

⁶²⁹ Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:5.

⁶³⁰ Luz, Matthew, 2:48. Cf. Novakovic, Messiah, 81; Thompson, "Reflections on the Composition of Matt 8,1-9,34," 365-388; Versepul, "The Davidic Messiah and Matthew's Jewish Christianity," 109-110.

⁶³¹ E.g., Hagner, Matthew, 1:252.

⁶³² E.g., Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:133; Gundry, Matthew, 176-179; Luz, Matthew, 2:46-47; Harrington, Matthew, 133.

command recalls the healing of leper in Matt 8,4; the question of Jesus' ability to heal recalls Matt 8,2, the healing through a touch recalls Matt 8,3 and 8,15, etc.⁶³³

The similarities between Matt 9,27-31 and Mark 10,46-52 are thematic: the motif of the healing of the blind, the plea for mercy including the address "Son of David", the fact that the healing does not occur immediately, a reference to the faith of the blind. There are also several important changes such as: duplication of the blind, the setting of the scene in the house instead of on a road side, and the absence of the crowd, etc. These changes, however, can be ascribed to Matthews' reworking and re-setting of the Markan story.

Direct verbal agreements are few and Matthew took liberties in formulating the text. According to Davies and Allison, "it seems probable that the Markan episode has served Matthew as the inspiration for 9,27-31."⁶³⁴

We may conclude that in its present form and setting, the story of the two blind men is undoubtedly a product of Matthew's critical and redactional work. The reasons for Matthew's inclusion of the text at the end of the cycle of miracle stories in chapters 8 and 9 are obvious. He needed an instance of a healing of a blind person before the Baptist's question in Matt 11,3-6.⁶³⁵ Secondly, he wanted to place the entire cycle into a Davidic framework⁶³⁶ due to the usage of the title Son of David at its end.

⁶³³ Nolland summarizes: "It looks as though Matthew, broadly basing himself on the tradition behind 20:29-34, has taken the opportunity to formulate an account that draws together motifs from the range of healing accounts and related materials that he has presented throughout chaps. 8-9. He needs an instance of bringing sight to the blind to prepare for 11:5, but as he draws towards the end of this section it suits him to sound again many of the notes that have sounded through the section as he moves things towards a climax." Nolland, *Matthew*, 400. Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:46-47.

⁶³⁴ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:133. Similarly Luz, *Matthew*, 2:46; Burger, *Jesus als Davidsson*, 74-77; Gundry, *Matthew*, 176.

⁶³⁵ Also admitted by Hagner who states: "It is possible, though by no means certain (contra Fuchs; Gibbs), that Matthew has generated this story on the model of the Markan story he uses in 20:29-34 in order to represent the many instances of the blind being healed by Jesus (cf. 15:30-31) and in order to have an example of this prior to the sending out of the twelve (chap. 10) and prior especially to the response to the disciples of John the Baptist (11:5)." Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:252.

⁶³⁶ Cf. Novakovic, *Messiah*, 81; Versepunt, "The Role and Meaning of the 'Son of God' Title in Matthew's Gospel," 534.

Concerning the form and structure, the pericope is modeled as a typical healing story: starting with a plea of two blind men (9,27); Jesus' question regarding their faith and their answer (9,28); the healing of the blind men (9,29-30a); the silence command (9,30b) and its violation with consequences (9,31). Gundry noted a high degree of parallelism, concerning the movements and actions of Jesus and the blind men, between Matt 9,27-28 and 9,29-30.⁶³⁷

As noted above, the story of the healing of two blind men closely follows the previous narrative, creating the impression of a continuous healing ministry of Jesus. The close link to the previous stories is achieved with words *καὶ παράγοντι ἐκεῖθεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ* (and as Jesus went from there). These words not only connect the pericope with the previous one, but in combination with *ἠκολούθησαν [αὐτῷ]* also recall the Calling of Matthew in Matt 9,9, alluding once again to the theme of following (cf. Matt 8,1.23).

With a bit of imagination, we can imagine a scene in which Jesus, whose reputation in the meanwhile spread,⁶³⁸ after the healing of various individuals and resurrecting a dead girl (9,18-26), leaves the house of the ruler and is followed by two crying blind men (*δύο τυφλοὶ κρᾶζοντες καὶ λέγοντες*) calling out *ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὸς Δαυὶδ* (Have mercy on us, Son of David!).

This is the first instance of three (Matt 9,27-31; 15,21-28; 20,29-34) in Matthew's Gospel, where the address Son of David is applied to Jesus within the context of healing, in the plea for mercy (*ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς / με*) – i.e., before the miracle of healing actually takes place.⁶³⁹

As we have already noted above, it is no mere coincidence that Matthew has placed the story of the two blind men at the end of the miracle stories of chapters 8-9. By doing so, he placed the entire cycle into a Davidic framework

⁶³⁷ Gundry, Matthew, 176-177. More transparently by Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:134.

⁶³⁸ Obviously Matthew did not have any problem with the fact, that there is no distance between the actual healing and spreading of Jesus' reputation. His point is not to provide a precise chronological scheme of Jesus' ministry, but rather to represent Jesus as compassionate Messiah who heals every disease and whose deeds (including healings and exorcisms) and person became widely known among his contemporaries, evoking various reactions.

⁶³⁹ The only instance, where the plea *ἐλέησον* is not connected with the address Son of David, but with the address *κύριε*, can be found in Matt 17,15.

and he also managed to create the impression that “the Davidic title somehow sums up the experience of Jesus as a healer in the preceding episodes.”⁶⁴⁰ When Matthew lets the two blind men follow Jesus crying out ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὸς Δαυίδ, he does not only allow them to “confess Jesus’ messianic identity before Peter does,”⁶⁴¹ alluding i.a., to the theme of spiritual insight of the blind and a proper reaction towards the Messiah,⁶⁴² but he also alludes to Jesus’ ability to heal in a manner reminiscent of (comparable with) Solomon.

It is a well known fact, that the Davidic Messiah was not expected to heal.⁶⁴³ Yet, Matthew intentionally uses the address Son of David (although grammatically it is in a non articular form, the designation is used in an absolute sense – i.e., as a title, similarly as in the case of *Pss. Sol.* 17) as an appropriate designation of Jesus in a broadly based healing context.

As we have demonstrated in chapter two – the designation Son of David could have referred in the first century C.E. not only to the Messiah, but also to Solomon, who was known as a mighty exorcist and healer, or to a Solomon-like figure that possessed exorcistic and healing powers comparable with Solomon’s.

Although the Solomonic allusion has often been neglected⁶⁴⁴ while the Messianic meaning of the title has been widely recognized,⁶⁴⁵ there is a reason why it should be further explored. It is not my intention to decide here whether the Solomon as exorcist tradition was absorbed into Christianity long before Mark 10,46-52 was written, as suggested by Smith,⁶⁴⁶ or whether the

⁶⁴⁰ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 81. Similarly Luz, who writes: “It is significant that the title ‘Son of David’ first occurs at the end of the miracle cycle of Matthew 8-9. The evangelist first *tells* how Jesus heals ‘in the holy nation’ (4:23); only then does he have the blind call Jesus the Son of David. Thus for him chaps. 8 and 9 *tell* who the Son of David is.” Luz, *Matthew*, 2:48.

⁶⁴¹ Keener, *Matthew*, 306.

⁶⁴² Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:48. On the significance of blindness in Matthew’s portraying of Jesus as Son of David, see Gibbs, “Purpose and Pattern in Matthew’s Use of the Title ‘Son of David’,” 446-464, esp. 451-453.

⁶⁴³ Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology*, 253-254; Burger, *Jesus als Davidsson*, 44. Differently recently Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 292-296.

⁶⁴⁴ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:47-48; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:253; Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 305.

⁶⁴⁵ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:48; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:253; Keener, *Matthew*, 306; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:135; Nolland, *Matthew*, 400.

⁶⁴⁶ Smith, “The Son of David Tradition in Mark’s Gospel,” 538.

“pre-Matthean tradition (*namely Mark 10,46-52*) already linked Jesus’ healing ministry with his status as David’s son.”⁶⁴⁷ Whether “the isolated allusion to the Son of David as a Solomonic miracle worker in the Bartimaeus story is most probably not a product of Christian theology but a relict of how some Palestinian Jews with infirmities actually looked upon *Jesus*” as held by Meier,⁶⁴⁸ or rather “by allusion to Scripture and popular tradition (*which associate Solomon – the son of David with powers of healing, exorcism, magic and miracle*), Matthew gradually builds a picture of Jesus as an authentic healer in Israel’s tradition with access to the amplitude of divine power,” as suggested by Saldarini.⁶⁴⁹ For now I will focus on the way in which Matthew, aware of the Solomonic tradition, incorporated the cry from Bartimaeus story (Mark 10,46-52) into his narrative in order to present Jesus, at least partly, in the light of the Solomonic traditions.

We have already repeatedly stated that the address “Son of David” in Matthew is almost exclusively applied to Jesus within the context of healing.⁶⁵⁰ It is no mere coincidence that Matthew uses the cry at the end of the cycle of miracle stories. Although, Matthew could have theoretically, in his redaction of Mark 10,46-52, omitted the title Son of David (υἱὸς Δαυίδ / υἱὲ Δαυίδ) and only retain the address Rabbi (ῥαββουνί – cf. Mark 10,51) or substitute it with the address Lord (κύριε), he did not do so.

In fact, Matthew considered it acceptable (proper) to let Jesus be “beseeched for mercy exactly in his capacity as the Son of David.”⁶⁵¹ Matthew even multiplied the usage of the title within the healing context (cf. Matt 12,22-24; 15,21-28; 20,29-34; 21,14-16). By doing so, he has underlined the link between the healing of the two blind men and previous healing stories, making the address υἱὸς Δαυίδ a confession of Jesus’ messiahship on the one hand, and an

⁶⁴⁷ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:136.

⁶⁴⁸ Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:690. *Italics mine.*

⁶⁴⁹ Saldarini, *Christian-Jewish Community*, 180.

⁶⁵⁰ Cf. Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 392-410.

⁶⁵¹ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 81.

acknowledgement of his powers (demonstrated within the healings and exorcism portrayed in chapters 8-9) as a healer on the other hand.

It is no mere coincidence, that Matthew changed Jesus' question τί σοι θέλεις ποιήσω (What do you want me to do for you?) from Mark 10,51 into a question of confidence in his power and authority: πιστεύετε ὅτι δύναμαι τοῦτο ποιῆσαι (Do you believe that I am able to do this?) in Matt 9,28. Gundry has rightly recognized that "the primary emphasis rests on Jesus' ability rather than on the blind men's faith."⁶⁵²

Nor is it a mere coincidence that "previously Jesus has recognized faith and responded to the faith that he has observed; here and only here he take the initiative in probing belief and calling for its verbal expression."⁶⁵³ Jesus' question, in Matthew's context, acquires a variety of meanings.

Firstly – it serves as a direct response to the address Son of David within the plea for mercy. By raising this question, Matthew lets Jesus ask the two blind men not only whether they, in their desire for help, recognize Jesus' identity, but also whether they acknowledge his ability to heal them – i.e., whether he, as (the) Son of David, possesses the powers to cure their blindness. Such a question is relevant with regard to the Solomon as exorcist and healer tradition. Secondly – the question about Jesus' power to heal resounds in the petition of the leper who asks Jesus κύριε, ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαι με καθαρῖσαι (Matt 8,2). The link is achieved with the usage of the same word (δύναμαι).

At the same time, the question about Jesus' power connects the pericope thematically with Matt 9,32-34 as well as 12,22-24, where the same issues regarding the source of Jesus' healing powers appear.

Thirdly, the question about the blind men's confidence in Jesus' healing ability can be understood as a question of faith. Thus Matthew, once again, recalls previous healing stories where faith played an important role (cf. Matt 8,2; 8,10; 8,13; 8,26; 9,2; 9,18; 9,22).⁶⁵⁴ At the same time, he systematically opposes the accusation, held not only by Jesus', but also by

⁶⁵² Gundry, Matthew, 178.

⁶⁵³ Nolland, Matthew, 401.

⁶⁵⁴ In fact, almost all persons in the previous narrative were healed because of someone's faith.

Matthew's contemporary opponents, that Jesus was a magician, who used demonic powers in his healings and exorcisms. An accusation, which finds its first expression in the very next pericope in Matt 9,32-34 (cf. 10,25; 12,24.27).⁶⁵⁵

It is also noteworthy, that Matthew not only changed Jesus' question from a simple "What do you want me to do" into a question of confidence in his ability as well as a question of his identity, omitting the actual question of the subject of the beseeched mercy – i.e., receiving sight (ἵνα ἀναβλέψω – cf. Mark 10,51). Matthew thus stressed the petition for mercy together with the used address Son of David. He also replaced the following address in the answer of the blind from ῥαββουνί into κύριε. By doing so, he emphasized that the blind men not only recognized Jesus' powers and ability to help them, but also his "superior status in a general matter,"⁶⁵⁶ and his willingness to help. In other words, it is "a confession of faith in Jesus as God's messianic agent but not necessarily belief in Jesus' deity."⁶⁵⁷ Besides the address, κύριε recalls not only the previous healing of the leper (Matt 8,1-4), but also binds the story with the two following healing stories, in which Jesus also is addressed as Son of David and Lord (Matt 15,21-28; 20,29-34).

The connection lies not only in the usage of the same titles and in the theme of "no-accounts" approaching Jesus, but also "... in the firm belief that Jesus, Son of David, possesses the authority to heal *them*... All address him as 'Lord', i.e., as one who wields divine authority (9:28; 15:25, 27; 20:30-31, 33). And all surmount obstacles either to reach him or to induce him to heal (9:27-28; 15:23-37; 20:31)."⁶⁵⁸

Matthew 9,29 records a positive response by Jesus to the blind men's address "υἱὸς Δαυίδ" as well as to their confidence that he, as the Son of David

⁶⁵⁵ For more on this theme, see Stanton, "Jesus of Nazareth," 164-180; idem, *Gospel*, 171-180.

⁶⁵⁶ Byrskog, *Jesus the Only Teacher*, 277.

⁶⁵⁷ Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:198.

⁶⁵⁸ Kingsbury, "The Title 'Son of David' in Matthew's Gospel," 599. *Italics mine*.

and Lord, possesses the ability and power to heal their blindness. The response does not only consist of the act of healing (by touch), but also of Jesus' comment: "According to your faith, let it be done to you." Within the present context, Jesus' reaction has several meanings.

Firstly, it underscores the legitimacy of the two blind men's faith expressed in their cry (9,27) and confirmed in their answer *ναὶ κύριε* to Jesus' question (Matt 9,28).

Secondly, it demonstrates that the two blind men acted properly not only in their addressing Jesus as "Son of David", but also in their petition for his mercy – for Jesus, as the Son of David, has the power and ability to help them, and he mercifully uses it for their benefit – by healing them by touching their eyes. The merciful character of Jesus, as well as his healing ability, is thus stressed.

Thirdly, Jesus' *λογιον κατὰ τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν γενηθήτω ὑμῖν* connects the episode with the previous ones – resembling not only the healing of the centurions' servant in Matt 8,13 (by similar wording), but also other healing stories. This link is based on the common theme of faith in healing.

Finally, the note about the healing technique (by touch) recalls previous healings (Matt 8,3; 8,15; 9,20; 9,25). It is taken from Mark's healing of the blind man in Bethsaida (Mark 8,22-26) – a story which Matthew possibly omits because of its double-phased healing.

Matthew 9,30-31 contains a final note about the immediate effect of Jesus' healing (*καὶ ἠνεώχθησαν αὐτῶν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί*)⁶⁵⁹ together with Jesus' strict command, taken from another Markan episode (Mark 1,43-45), not to tell anyone about it (*ὁρᾶτε μηδεὶς γινωσκέτω*). A command which is, however, immediately violated (Matt 9,31).

The purpose of the silence command, and the report of its violation, is not to call attention to the disobedience of the two healed blind men, but rather it emphasizes Jesus' role as a meek and humble healing Messiah, the Son of

⁶⁵⁹ Matt 9,30a (And their eyes were opened) alludes Isa 35,5a (Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened).

David, who does not seek popularity and self propagation (cf. 12,16), but who becomes famed for what he does (Matt 4,23-25; 8,27; 9,26). Jesus' acts are simply too amazing to be kept secret. As Luz, in a concise manner, expressed, "*Matthew thus makes clear that the Son of David is not a marginal figure in Israel, and he prepares for the summary description of the crowd's reaction in 9:33.*"⁶⁶⁰

Summary:

In the pericope of the healing of the two blind men (Matt 9,27-31), Matthew uses for the first time the title (the) Son of David, as an address of Jesus within the plea of healing. Within our analysis, we have postulated that this title has more than a messianic significance for Matthew and that it sums up the healing ministry of Jesus as recorded in previous narratives (Matt 8-9).

We have suggested that behind the address "Son of David, have mercy on us" there may be an allusion to Solomon, son of David, the mighty exorcist and healer.⁶⁶¹ The allusion is based on the similarity of the context (healing) in which the designation Son of David is used. It is also linked to Jesus' question to the blind in regard to whether they believe that he as υἱὸς Δαυίδ possess the power, ability and authority to heal them. A question which is closely linked to a similar question regarding Jesus' authority and the source of his powers, which has already been (8,27) and yet will be (9,32-34; 12,22-32; 13,54; 21,23-27) the issue of controversies in Matthew's narrative.

The accuracy of the Solomonic allusion is confirmed by Matthew's words "According to your faith, let it be done to you," which accompany the healing act. These words, put on the lips of Jesus, express Jesus' approval of the blind men's faith in his abilities as Son of David on the one hand, and his approval of the regular usage of the address Son of David (υἱὸς Δαυίδ) and Lord (κύριος) within their plea for healing on the other hand.

⁶⁶⁰ Luz, Matthew, 2:49. *Italics mine.*

⁶⁶¹ Within our analysis of the Solomon as exorcist tradition we have noted that almost identical phrase for mercy βασιλεῦ Σολομῶν υἱὸς Δαυείδ, ἐλέησόν με τὸ γέρας is used in *T. Sol.* 20,1. There it is applied as a plea for justice and not for healing.

3.3. The Healing of the Deaf-Mute Demoniac (Matt 9,32-34)

Another allusion to the Solomon as exorcist tradition may be found in the last healing story of chapters 8 and 9, which detail the healing of the deaf-mute demoniac (Matt 9,32-34).

Text:

³² Αὐτῶν δὲ ἐξερχομένων ἰδοὺ προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ ἄνθρωπον κωφὸν δαιμονιζόμενον.

³³ καὶ ἐκβληθέντος τοῦ δαιμονίου ἐλάλησεν ὁ κωφός. καὶ ἐθαύμασαν οἱ ὄχλοι λέγοντες· οὐδέποτε ἐφάνη οὕτως ἐν τῷ Ἰσραήλ.

³⁴ οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἔλεγον· ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια.

Translation:

³² As they were going away behold, a demon-possessed man who was deaf-mute was brought to him.

³³ And when the demon was cast out, the deaf-mute spoke. And the crowds marveled saying, “Never has anything like this been seen in Israel!”

³⁴ But the Pharisees said, “By the prince of the demons he casts out the demons.”

The story of the healing of the deaf-mute demoniac, similarly as the previous one, is closely linked to the previous part(s), and simultaneously it serves as a bridge to what follows (12,22-32). This close connection is achieved due to common topics such as exorcism (cf. Matt 8,16; 8,28-34; 12,22-24), the source of Jesus’ powers (Matt 8,27; 12,22-32; 13,54; 21,23-27), reports of various reactions to Jesus (Matt 8-9; 12,22-24) and expressions regarding his significance (12,23). Another link is the common wording shared by the narratives. Some of the shared words include: δαιμονίζομαι (cf. Matt 4,24; 8,16; 8,28; 8,33; 12,22; 15,22), ἰδοὺ (cf. Matt 8,2; 8,29; 9,2; 9,18; 9,20; 12,10; 15,22; 20,30, etc.); ἐκβάλλω (cf. Matt 8,16; 12,24; 12,26-28; 17,19); θαυμάζω (cf. Matt 8,27; 15,31), etc.

The narrative is another of Matthew's doublets, paralleled in Matt 12,22-24. In both passages a demon-possessed deaf-mute is brought to Jesus and healed. The crowds are astonished, and react positively to Jesus' act of healing, while the Pharisees accuse Jesus of using demonic powers to perform his healings. The differences between the two narratives are relatively few.

In Matt 12,22-24 the man, whom Jesus heals, is both deaf-mute and blind. The healing is described with the use of the verb θεραπεύω rather than with a reference to the casting out of the demon (cf. 12,22 with 9,33). The result of the healing is that the man is enabled to see as well as to speak (cf. 12,22 with 9,33); the crowds are amazed (ἐξίστημι – Matt 12,23) instead of astonished (θαυμάζω – 9,33) and ask, "Is not this the Son of David?" instead of saying "Never has anything like this been seen in Israel." And, finally, the comment by the Pharisees is worded in a slightly different way, employing the name Beelzebul (12,24).

Concerning the sources, the story seems to be based on Q 11,14-15. The reaction of the crowds (Matt 9,33) is a Matthean formulation probably inspired by the earlier omitted Mark 2,12. The accusation of the Pharisees (Matt 9,34) is in verbal agreement with Mark 3,22.

The structure of this short pericope is: after the minimal presentation of the need of the deaf-mute demoniac (9,32), and even briefer report of his healing (9,33), two antagonistic reactions on Jesus are recorded (9,33a-9,34).

As already indicated, the story once again closely follows the previous healing narrative. The smooth transition from the first narrative to the second is achieved with the usage of the genitive absolute αὐτῶν δὲ ἐξερχομένων (as they were going away). The healing of the two blind men is followed by a short report of the bringing of the deaf-mute demoniac (Matt 9,32). The main focus of the narrative is the twofold reaction towards Jesus. Matthew provides his readers with only basic information, relying to some degree on the reader to fill in the gaps himself.

Firstly, it is reported that the deaf-mute man was brought (προσήνεγκαν) to Jesus. The plural form of the verb refers to the initiative of others – who bring

the deaf-mute to Jesus and ask (instead of the deaf-mute) for Jesus' intervention. This reminds us of other healing stories in which other people bring the sick and demon-possessed to Jesus in order to get healed them (cf. Matt 4,24; 8,16; 9,2; 12,22; 14,35). Because neither a petition nor the faith of these persons is expressed, the readers are left to fill in the details themselves.

The deaf-mute is said to be demon possessed (δαμονιζόμενος). This is important because "though in 4:24 Matthew uses the language of healing in a summary statement in relation (also) to those who are demon possessed, here he introduces the idea of a specific affliction resulting from demon possession (cf. 12:22; 17:15)."⁶⁶² This reminds us of the close connection between demons and illness which we observed in our analysis of *T. Sol.* and *Ant.* 8,42-49; on this basis we have postulated the premise that Solomon was not only known as a mighty exorcist, but also as a healer.

It is no mere coincidence that Matthew has placed the healing of the deaf-mute due exorcism directly after the healing of the two blind men, who addressed Jesus as Son of David in their plea for healing. Is it possible that Matthew was alluding, at least indirectly, to the Solomonic tradition? One should not exclude this option, although it has to be admitted that this allusion is more apparent in the second version of the story, namely in Matt 12,22-24, resp. 12,42, where the connection between healing (exorcism) and the designation ὁ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ is closer. The intended audience would only note the allusion retroactively, after a second reading of Matthew's Gospel. Matthew, once again, sets the stage for a conflict, which he will repeat and resolve later.

The precise translation of the affliction is ambiguous. Κωφός "is literally 'blunt' or 'dull' and is applied to people whose capacity to communicate with others is severely compromised because they are either deaf or mute or both."⁶⁶³ The third possible translation is probably the most suitable (deaf-mute) because Matt 9,33 and 12,22 refer to the ability of the healed man to speak

⁶⁶² Nolland, Matthew, 403.

⁶⁶³ Ibid., 403.

(ἐλάλησεν ὁ κωφός) and Matt 11,5 (whose foreshadowing this particular story is) says that “the deaf hear” (κωφοὶ ἀκούουσιν).

The exorcism, itself, is only mentioned in the genitive absolute καὶ ἐκβληθέντος τοῦ δαιμονίου. No particular details, techniques or words are mentioned. The reader has even to infer from the context that Jesus was responsible for the exorcism. The wording differs from Matt 12,22-24, where the word θεραπεύω is used instead of ἐκβάλλω, and is intentionally adapted in order to match the accusation of the Pharisees that Jesus casts out (ἐκβάλλει) demons with the help of the prince of the demons (Matt 9,34).

Even the result of the exorcism – the gaining of speech by the afflicted person, is minimally reported. The main focus of the text is the positive reaction of the crowds (9,33b) and the negative reaction of the Pharisees (9,34). While the amazed crowds say “Never has anything like this been seen in Israel!”; the Pharisees, Jesus’ main opponents in the Gospel of Matthew, claim: “By the prince of the demons he casts out the demons.”

In the acclamation of the crowds, prepared by the indications of the spread of Jesus’ reputation in Matt 9,26 and 9,31, the pericope as well as the cycle of chapters 8 and 9 come to their climax. Davies and Allison have rightly observed that the words of the crowds “probably refer not to the miracle just worked but to the whole series of miracles Matthew has recounted.”⁶⁶⁴

However, according to my view, these words allude not only to the particular miracles reported in Matt 8-9, but they may also be a comment on the way in which Jesus, as the Son of David (i.e., as the Messiah and as a healer and exorcist like Solomon), performed the miracles. Namely by a word (even at a distance) or by a touch – i.e., in a way greater than Solomon (12,42) or a contemporary Jewish exorcist (12,27-28), who might have used Solomonic techniques – such as incantations, and roots prescribed by him (cf. *Ant.* 8,45-49).

But the verse is not only concerned with the way in which Jesus heals, but first of all with the fact itself that he heals. In referencing Israel, Matthew not only recalls the history of the Holy nation, in which many miracles took place,

⁶⁶⁴ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:139.

but also stresses that Jesus is Israel's Messiah – i.e., the Messiah from Israel, in Israel, for Israel. The reader is already informed that the healing ministry of the Messiah is in accordance with Scriptures (Matt 8,16-17).⁶⁶⁵ (A point which will be emphasized in Matt 11,3-5). Matthew even strengthens his point by stressing the uniqueness of Jesus' healings within the context of the history of salvation. In the genealogy, Matthew already stressed that Jesus is the "telos" of this history (1,2-17), that he is a unique Son of God and Son of David (1,18-25), the messianic king (2,1-12). Now, through the lips of the crowds, Matthew stresses that in and with Jesus something new comes, which surpasses the experiences of the past.⁶⁶⁶

In the second version of this story, Matthew clearly demonstrates that Jesus' unique exorcisms and healings surpass even those of Solomon.⁶⁶⁷ What is expressed here "only" implicitly (9,33), will be expressed explicitly in Matt 12,42 .

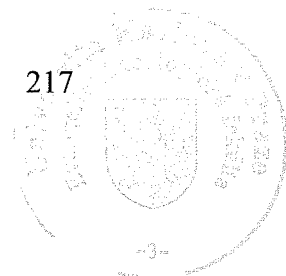
While the role of the crowds in Matt 9,33 is positive,⁶⁶⁸ the role and reaction of the Pharisees is diametrically opposite to the crowds. The Pharisees do not deny that Jesus performed miracles, they reject the positive nature of his

⁶⁶⁵ As pertinently expressed by Davies and Allison: "By constantly citing and alluding to the Scriptures, the evangelist attempts to show that Jesus is the Messiah, the true fulfillment, in letter and spirit, of the oracles of God." Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:141.

⁶⁶⁶ The acclamation of the crowds is reminiscent of an interesting text found in the Qumran; namely 4Q521 2 II and IV. The text creates a closest parallel to Matt 11,2-6 and Matt 9,33 and speaks about the time of the Messiah (4Q521 2 II and IV, 1-15), in which "the glorious things that have not taken place the Lord will do as he s[aid], for he will heal the wounded and give life to the dead, he will preach good news to the poor ones and [sat]isfy the [weak] ones, he will lead those who have been cast out and enrich the hungry ones." (4Q521 2 II and IV, 11-13). The similarity between 4Q521 2 II and IV, 11 and Matt 9,33 lies in the idea that within the time of the occurrence of the Messiah, marvelous acts will take place as never before. The difference, however, is that while Matthew has the healing acts performed by Jesus, the Son of David, the Messiah, in 4Q521 they are clearly ascribed to God himself without any further specifications of the character of the Messiah or his role in these events. Thus the Qumran text is of little help for the purpose of our study. For the text, translation, and survey of possible interpretations of 4Q521 and its relevance to Matthew's Gospel, as well as a further bibliography, see Novakovic, Messiah, 169-179.

⁶⁶⁷ This becomes clearer within the exegesis of the parallel section (Matt 12,22-24; 12,42) – see further.

⁶⁶⁸ Although they "... are not yet disciples, but they are given the function of registering how an 'unprejudiced' observer might experience the events in question." Nolland, Matthew, 403.



healings. In contrary to the crowds, the Pharisees attribute Jesus' exorcisms and healing to magic, regarding them as deeds performed in the name of the prince of demons. The weight of their accusation is decisive.⁶⁶⁹ The hostile attitude of the Pharisees towards Jesus, growing in chapter nine (9,11), is now expressed, with full force, publicly.⁶⁷⁰ From now on, the conflict with the Pharisees will quickly escalate as the narrative of the Gospel proceeds (cf. 12,2; 12,10; 12,14; 12,24; ... 22,15).⁶⁷¹

The Pharisees' accusation is not commented on here. Matthew will focus on it later (12,22-32, resp. 12,22-45). For now Matthew employs the accusation, and conflict, to mark the beginning of a deep chasm between Jesus and the Pharisees, and to anticipate similar experiences of the disciples (i.e., of Matthew's community⁶⁷²): εἰ τὸν οἰκοδεσπότην Βεελζεβοὺλ ἐπεκάλεσαν, πόσω μᾶλλον τοὺς οἰκιακοὺς αὐτοῦ (If they have called the master of the house 'Beelzebul', how much more the members of his household? – Matt 10,25b). Once again, Matthew moves his narration forwards while alluding to important themes which will later come to the forefront of his narrative.

The whole cycle comes to its end with a concluding summary in Matt 9,35: Καὶ περιῆγεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὰς πόλεις πάσας καὶ τὰς κώμας διδάσκων ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν. (And Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness).

This verse is almost identical with Matt 4,23 and is intended to enclose the whole section of chapters 5-9. This verse serves "as a summarizing inclusio in relation to 4:23-25. In between these two miracle summary passages, Matthew

⁶⁶⁹ The full weight of such an accusation will be evaluated within the analysis of Matt 12,22-24.

⁶⁷⁰ Luz sees the reaction of the Pharisees as the anticipation of the final split between the Church and Israel and of final rejection of Jesus. Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 226-231.

⁶⁷¹ The central role of the conflict in the Matthew's plot was pointed out by Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 3.

⁶⁷² That the accusation is for Matthew not a matter of the past, but presence has been stressed by Stanton. Stanton, *Gospel*, 171-180.

has given examples of the powerful, authoritative words (chaps. 5-7) and deeds (chaps. 8-9) of the Messiah.”⁶⁷³ Jesus’ ministry, presented in the previous chapters, consisting of preaching, teaching and healing,⁶⁷⁴ is freshly summarized. The reader knows now, what the message of the kingdom is (Matt 5-7), how the Messiah, Son of David, heals in Israel (Matt 8-9) in accordance with the Scriptures (8,17). The reader also learns that the activities of the Messiah of Israel lead to a conflict between him and the Pharisees (9,32-34) – a conflict, which escalates.

Summary:

Within our analysis of the first version of the healing of the deaf-mute demoniac (Matt 9,32-34), we have suggested that there may be an indirect but implicit allusion to Solomon in the acclamation of the crowds in Matt 9,33. When Matthew has the crowds say that “never has anything like this been seen in Israel” he lets them confess Jesus’ uniqueness as a healer in Israel’s history, thus implying that Jesus surpasses the famous figures of the past, such as Moses, Elijah, Elisha or even Solomon. Simultaneously, Matthew might have made a comment on the extension of Jesus’ healing and exorcistic activity, as well as on manner in which Jesus, as the Son of David, the Messiah and healer and exorcist patterned after Solomon (Matt 9,27-31), performed his healings and exorcisms (by word or touch) in Israel (Matt 8-9).

This allusion is rather “obscured” and the reader would be able to catch it only after reading Matt 12,22-24 and 12,42, where the acclamation of the crowds, in Matt 9,33 still ambiguous (general), is further concretized (12,23) and explicitly (in Matt 9,33 only implicitly – due to the theme and context) related to Solomon (12,23.42), comparing Jesus’ and Solomon’s healings and exorcisms, powers and wisdom (12,42).

⁶⁷³ Hagner, Matthew, 1:259.

⁶⁷⁴ In his article “Therapeutic Son of David,” Duling suggested that Matthew understands Jesus’ exorcisms as part of his widely based therapeutic activity. Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 392-410.

3.4. The Healing of the Blind and Deaf-Mute Demoniac (Matt 12,22-24) and the Sign of Jonah (Matt 12,42)

The healing of the blind and deaf-mute demoniac is the next pericope in Matthew's Gospel, where the title Son of David occurs, this time on the lips of the crowds who are starting to inquire for Jesus' identity.

Text:

²² Τότε προσηνήχθη αὐτῷ δαιμονιζόμενος τυφλὸς καὶ κωφός, καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτόν, ὥστε τὸν κωφὸν λαλεῖν καὶ βλέπειν.

²³ καὶ ἐξίσταντο πάντες οἱ ὄχλοι καὶ ἔλεγον· μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς Δαυίδ;

²⁴ οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἀκούσαντες εἶπον· οὗτος οὐκ ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ Βεελζεβούλ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων.

Translation:

²² Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and deaf-mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the deaf-mute spoke and saw.

²³ And all the crowds were amazed and said: 'Can this be the Son of David?'

²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard it they said: "This one casts the demons out by Beelzebul, the prince of the demons!"

As in the previous two passages, the setting also plays an important role. The healing of the blind and deaf-mute demoniac is set within the narrative block of Matt 11,2-12,50. If we look at the content of chapters 11 and 12 of Matthew's Gospel, which, as the majority of commentators agree, are structurally and thematically related,⁶⁷⁵ we can see that these two chapters share several themes which were prominent in previous sections as well.

In the previous exegesis, we postulated that the purpose of chapters 5-9 was to present Jesus as the Messiah of the word (5-7) and the Messiah of the deeds (8-9). In chapters 8 and 9, Matthew has created an image of a continuous healing ministry of Jesus, which led to a conflict between him and the

⁶⁷⁵ Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:233-234; Gundry, *Matthew*, 203-204; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:177. Although the commentators agree on the thematic connection between chapters 11 and 12, they are divided on what the actual division of the particular blocks should be. Cf. Novakovic, *Messiah*, 81, n. 16.

Pharisees on the one hand, and which gave rise to questions about Jesus' authority (9,1-8), identity (8,27) and the source of his power (9,33-34) on the other hand.

And exactly these topics are also prominent in chapters 11 and 12 of Matthew's Gospel, together with the themes of persecution, opposition and rejection of Jesus (and his disciples) which are alluded to and anticipated in the missionary discourse (Matt 10,1-11,1). Put in different words, chapters 11 and 12 are concerned with Israel's response to her Messiah, a response which, however, is rather negative on the part of Israel's leaders.

Thus chapters 11 and 12 start with John the Baptist's question about Jesus' messianic identity (11,2-6). A question, which is answered with references to Jesus' healings (Matt 8-9) and preaching (Matt 5-7). The answer is followed by Jesus' comment on the identity of John the Baptist (11,7-15) and concluded with a report of the rejection of both of them by Israel's leaders (11,16-19). A final reference to wisdom, which is justified by her deeds, concludes this pericope.⁶⁷⁶ The next pericope contains the promise of woe to unrepentant cities (11,20-24) and re-alludes to the theme of Jesus' rejection, while introducing the new theme of judgment. This theme of judgment is paralleled in Matt 12,36-45.

The following pericope (Matt 11,25-30) represents an assurance that despite the rejection Jesus truly is the gentle Son of God (11,27), the humble Messiah (11,29-30), who calls for discipleship and brings eschatological deliverance (11,28-30). This is not a positive reaction in a strict sense (the words are inserted in Jesus' mouth), but rather an invitation to follow. The importance of this pericope lies among others in the underlining of the gentle and humble character of Jesus. Exactly this theme, alluded already in previous chapters due to the secrecy motif (cf. comment on Matt 9,29-31), will reoccur in Matthew 12,15-21 in the Isaianic servant motif (especially 12,19-20),⁶⁷⁷ and it will be contrasted with the behavior of Jesus' opponents.

⁶⁷⁶ I will come to the wisdom motif within the analysis of Matt 12,42 where the theme reoccurs.

⁶⁷⁷ As will reoccur the theme of God's election (11,27; cf. 12,18).

The theme of conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees, already present in Matt 9,9-13 and intensified at the end of chapter nine (9,32-34), forcefully re-emerges at the beginning of chapter 12 and intensifies as the chapter continues. The first attack is aimed against Jesus' disciples who were picking grain on Sabbath (12,1-8). Jesus deflects the attack of the Pharisees for the violation of the Sabbath by making a comparative reference to David's actions (in 12,3-4), and the priest's service (12,5). He postulates the principle that there is something greater than the temple (12,6-7),⁶⁷⁸ and ends the dispute with the claim, that "the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath" (12,8). Matthew's Jesus, in this pericope, claims not only the authority of the Son of Man but, with the reference to David, Matthew also wants the reader to view Jesus as having the same authority as David did. That this interpretation is a possibility is supported by the context, namely by the question of the crowds in Matt 12,23 whether Jesus might be the Son of David.

The conflict with the Pharisees, over the following of Sabbath laws, continues in the next pericope. In the healing of the man with withered hand pericope (12,9-14), the hostility against Jesus escalates. The Pharisees, trying to entrap Jesus in order to bring charges against him, ask him whether one is allowed to heal on the Sabbath (12,10). Jesus replies with a question (12,11), which assumes that human life is more valuable than that of a sheep. Jesus also advances the principle, that "it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath," (12,12) and heals the man with withered hand (12,13). The reaction of the Pharisees (12,14) is decisive: they "went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him." The flames of conflict, ignited in chapter 9, are now starting to glow.

⁶⁷⁸ It is a matter of discussion how the words τοῦ ἱεροῦ μείζον ἐστὶν ὧδε should be interpreted. While Luz interprets μείζον as referring to mercy (Luz, Matthew, 2:181-182), Hagner understands μείζον as referring to "the wonderful things the Gospel has been describing to this point" including "the presence of God in the person and work of Jesus." (Hagner, Matthew, 1:330). Davies and Allison, as well as Nolland, think of Jesus (Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:314; Nolland, Matthew, 484). Although Luz's suggestion is interesting, I think that the Christological interpretation is not accidental and was intended by Matthew. It fits into the immediate context: Jesus is greater than David (12,3-5) and acts with the authority of the Son of Man (12,8); but also fits in the larger context of chapter twelve (12,23; 12,41-42). However, according to my point of view, Jesus alludes not only to his person, but also to his merciful ministry in Israel for Israel, a ministry which included healing and exorcisms (cf. the sign of Jonah pericope in Matt 12,38-42).

From now on, there will be no discussions between the Pharisees and Jesus which would have any other goal than to destroy Jesus.⁶⁷⁹

In the next pericope (Matt 12,15-21), Jesus reacts to the decision of the Pharisees to destroy him with a withdrawal from the scene. He is followed by a great crowd which he heals (12,15), forbidding them to tell anyone about the miracle healing (12,16). Matthew is intentionally re-alluding here not only to the theme of the crowds following Jesus (cf. Matt 4,25; 8,1)⁶⁸⁰ and the theme of Jesus' healing ministry (cf. Matt 8-9; 11,2-6), but also to the theme of Jesus' humbleness and his intention not to seek popularity and self-propagation (cf. Matt 9,30-31).

Matthew adds a fulfillment quotation from Isa 42,1-4 which sums up for Matthew the mission and the character of the Messiah (12,18-20; cf. 8,17) and simultaneously foreshadows the conflict in the following narrative where Jesus' identity, authority, and the source of his powers (12,18) again will become a matter of controversy (12,22-37). A controversy, which will be resolved with a reference to the Spirit (12,28) and ended with a warning about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (12,31-32).

Also important to Matthew is the theme of judgment (12,18) which links this pericope with the previous one (11,20-24) as well as the following one (12,36-37; 12,41-42). Even the theme of salvation of the Gentiles (12,21), which was important enough to Matthew to appear in the first line of his Gospel (1,1 – υἱὸς Ἀβραάμ) and will reappear in the last lines (28,18-20), is indirectly referenced in Matt 12,41-42.

It is at this point, i.e., after Jesus' withdrawal and healing of all from the crowds, where Matthew begins his narration of the healing of a blind and deaf-mute demoniac (12,22-24).

⁶⁷⁹ The Greek word ἀπόλλυμι should not be translated as to kill or to assassinate, as some English translations do (New International Version, New English Translation.) A better translation would be "to destroy," because the Pharisees are not (yet) planning a physical liquidation of Jesus but rather are attempting to discredit him in public, depriving him of his influence and reputation (12,22-37; 12,38-42).

⁶⁸⁰ By following Jesus, the crowds contrast the Pharisees who have decided not to follow him, but to destroy him. The same theme, i.e., the twofold reaction towards Jesus, will reoccur in the next pericope in Matt 12,22-24.

The narrative, as already noted in the previous chapter, has its parallel in the healing of the deaf-mute demoniac (Matt 9,32-34) and is based on the same source, namely Q 11,14-15 and possibly also on Mark 3,22.⁶⁸¹ The link to the previous version of the story (Matt 9,32-34) is based more on content and less on wording.⁶⁸² In the previous exegesis, we have already noted several significant differences between the two versions and we will discuss the most important ones below.

The content, in both texts, is concerned with Jesus' healing of a demon possessed man which evokes a positive reaction from the crowds and leads to the Pharisees' accusation that Jesus was in league with Beelzebul.

The structure of this pericope is the same as in Matt 9,32-34: after a brief presentation of the need of the blind and deaf-mute demoniac (12,22a), and an even briefer report of his healing (12,22b), two antagonistic reactions towards Jesus are recorded (12,23-24).

However, the function of this pericope is different in Matt 12,22-24 than it was in Matt 9,32-34. In Matthew 9,32-34, the story of the healing of a deaf-mute demoniac served, together with Matt 9,27-31 and Matt 9,35, as a climax of a series of miracle stories reported in chapters 8 and 9, representing two opposite reactions on the healing ministry of the Israel's Davidic Messiah and a first climax in the developing conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees. The purpose of Matt 12,22-24 is a bit different, namely to "provide an occasion for an accusation that Jesus casts out demons by Beelzebul"⁶⁸³ in order to introduce the Beelzebul controversy with the goal to reject the accusation of Jesus from being a sorcerer and magician, an accusation, which has been left unmentioned in the preceding version of this pericope (Matt 9,32-34; cf. 10,25) and which will be the issue now (12,25-37; resp. 12,25-45).

⁶⁸¹ Several interpreters assume that Matthew connected Mark 3,22-30 with the Q-material preserved in Luke 11,14-23, but followed the Q order. Cf. Burger, *Jesus als Davidsohn*, 77; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:199; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:332. Since, however, the story of the deaf-mute demoniac in Matt 9,32-34 is closer to Luke 11,14-15 than the version in Matt 12,22-24, Burger believes that Matthew first produced 9,32-34 by redacting the Q material, and then created 12,22-24 by redacting his own version in chapter 9. Cf. Burger, *Jesus als Davidsohn*, 77.

⁶⁸² Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:199, n. 19.

⁶⁸³ Gundry, *Matthew*, 230.

Matt 12,22-24 is thus an introduction and simultaneously a cause of the following conflict. A conflict, which started with the merciful healings and exorcisms of the messianic Son of David (Matt 8-9), and which have been intensified in the previous two chapters of Matthew's Gospel. But let us now finally turn to the analysis of Matt 12,22-24.

Matthew begins his healing narrative in the place, where he interrupted his text by incorporating a fulfillment quotation in 12,16 – after Jesus' withdrawal from the Pharisees and the healings of the crowd. The usage of his favorite word τότε connects this pericope with the previous one, and allows his readers to see the coming conflict (12,22-37) as a continuation and escalation of the previous one (12,1-14).⁶⁸⁴ Thus Matthew creates the image of continuity, as if all these events (12,1-50) took place on the same day.

As in the previous version of this story (9,32-34), Matthew briefly reports the bringing of the demoniac to Jesus (not to be found in Q 11,14) and his immediate healing (Matt 12,22). No particular details are given, no petition of those who brought the possessed-one is mentioned, nor is made any comment on their faith. The description is as brief as possible in order to draw one's attention to the twofold reaction of the crowds and the Pharisees.

There are, however, two significant changes in Matt 12,22 in comparison to the previous version of this story (Matt 9,32-34) and the original sources (Q 11,14-15; Mark 3,22). Firstly, the demon-possessed person is not only deaf-mute, but also blind (τυφλός). The blindness of the demon possessed person means that Matthew deliberately merged⁶⁸⁵ the healing of the two blind men (Matt 9,27-31) and the first version of the twofold reaction to Jesus' healing (exorcism) of a deaf-mute (9,32-34). Thus, the central point of the narrative is the source of Jesus' exorcistic powers and its relationship to his identity as the

⁶⁸⁴ Contra Luz, *Matthew*, 2:202: "The narrator begins a new unit that has no recognizable connection to the preceding story."

⁶⁸⁵ Cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 231; Burger, *Jesus als Davidsohn*, 78: "Das Motiv der Blindheit hat Matthäus offenbar aus 9,27-31 herübergenommen, nachdem er schon in seinem Wunderzyklus Blinden- und Stummenheilung nahe zueinander gerückt hat."

Son of David. In the healing of the two blind men (9,27-31), Matthew allowed the blind to recognize Jesus' messianic identity and his ability to heal in his capacity of Son of David. Now he intends to let the crowds, in a similar context as in Matt 9,32-34, express in the form of an inquiring question, what the blind men have already recognized: namely that Jesus might be the Messiah, the Son of David, who heals and exorcizes in a manner reminiscent of Solomon and who is in possession of exorcistic and healing powers comparable with those of Solomon. Matthew thus created an analogy between the blind, who "see" and recognize who Jesus is, before being healed, and the crowds, who, after experiencing healings (12,15) and witnessing the healing of the blind and deaf-mute demoniac (12,22), start to suspect Jesus' true identity (12,23).

The second main change in the story is that, instead of speaking of casting out of the demon (ἐκβάλλειν) as in Matt 9,33, Matthew uses his favorite word θεραπεύειν and speaks thus about healing. By doing this, he not only recalls Matt 12,15 which results in an even closer link between the healing of the blind and deaf-mute demoniac and the previous pericope, but Matthew also incorporates the following exorcism⁶⁸⁶ within the broader context of Jesus' healing ministry (cf. Matt 4,23-24).⁶⁸⁷ This is not unusual, since we have seen that also Josephus in *Ant.* 8,46 explicitly calls Solomon's technique against demons, incantations and exorcistic practices as a kind of healing (θεραπεία) and as an example of such a healing he introduces Eleazar's miracle (of exorcism) in *Ant.* 8,46-49.

One result of the healing in Matthew is that the blind and deaf-mute (Matthew forgot to mention the man's blindness in 12,22b) is able to speak and see. The second result is the reaction evoked by the healing: "And all the crowds were amazed and said: 'Can this be the Son of David?'" (Matt 12,23).

⁶⁸⁶ That the healing of the blind and deaf-mute demoniac is understood as an exorcism, is obvious from the reaction of the Pharisees in 12,24 and from the following controversy. Besides, as in 9,32 and 17,14-21, the malady has its source in demon possession.

⁶⁸⁷ On this theme, see Duling, "Therapeutic Son of David," 392-410; Paffenroth, "Jesus as Anointed and Healing Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew," 547-554. Cf. Trunk, *Der messianische Heiler*, 236-239.

The healing of the demon possessed blind and deaf-mute demoniac amazes the crowds, similarly as in 9,33. In comparison with Matt 9,33 and Q 11,14, Matthew makes again several important changes: firstly he changes the marveling of the crowds (ἐθαύμασαν) – Matt 9,33; Q 11,14 – into astonishment (ἐξίσταντο – hapaxlegomenon in Matthew's Gospel, possibly taken from Mark 2,12 or from the omitted charge of Jesus' insanity in Mark 3,20-21 and applied positively⁶⁸⁸, emphasizing the moment of surprise and unexpectedness).⁶⁸⁹

Secondly, Matthew adds "all the crowds" (πάντες οἱ ὄχλοι) while his sources only have "the crowds" (οἱ ὄχλοι) – cf. Matt 9,33; Luke 11,14. By doing this he clearly identifies the crowds with those who were following Jesus (καὶ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ [ὄχλοι] πολλοί) and who were also healed by him (καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτοὺς πάντας), in Matt 12,15. This identification is further underlined by the usage of the definite article (οἱ ὄχλοι). Matthew thus escalates the story not only what the intensity, but also what the extensity concerns.

In Matt 9,27-31, the two blind men recognized Jesus as the healing Son of David, acknowledging his ability to heal in a manner reminiscent of Solomon, and the crowds marveled at the uniqueness of Jesus' healings and exorcisms after witnessing the exorcism of a deaf-mute (9,32-33). Now Matthew lets Jesus heal all the crowds (12,15) and then, after witnessing the healing of the blind and deaf-mute demoniac (12,22 – intended possibly as a climax?), he lets all of the crowds ask, whether Jesus may be the Son of David (12,23), intensifying not only the reaction of the crowds (cf. Matt 9,33), but also the exorcistic/healing setting of the scene and, thus also, the usage and meaning (namely the Solomonic one) of the title Son of David. And exactly against this background we are supposed to understand the question of all the crowds μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς Δαυίδ; a question which has no parallel in any of Matthew's sources and thus comes clearly from his own hand.

⁶⁸⁸ Gundry, *Matthew*, 231.

⁶⁸⁹ According to BDAG ἐξίστημι can mean amongst other things "be amazed, be astonished, of the feeling of astonishment mingled w. fear, caused by events which are miraculous, extraordinary, or difficult to understand." Cf. "ἐξίστημι," BDAG, 350.

Although according to the rules of Greek grammar, μήτι is normally used in a question where a negative⁶⁹⁰ or at most an open⁶⁹¹ answer is expected, there can be no doubt that Matthew intended the question of the crowds to be answered positively.⁶⁹² This is underlined by the negative reaction of the Pharisees (12,24), which is in contrast to the crowds' question.⁶⁹³

The question, formulated with the help of the word μήτι, still expresses some uncertainty by the crowds. Their reaction to Jesus' healings and exorcisms, in comparison to Matt 9,33, is intensified, but they still do not fully recognize Jesus' true identity. The full recognition will only come with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (21,9). Even there, few will fully understand the true nature of Jesus' messiahship.

The designation, "ὁ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ", is used in its titular form and "Matthew inserts the motif here to carry forward his conflation of the stories of the blind men and deaf-mute and keep his readers from forgetting Jesus' identity as the Davidic Messiah."⁶⁹⁴ This is certainly true, but as I have tried to show, Matthew inserts the designation, the Son of David, not only because of its messianic connotations, which are confirmed in the following controversy by the reference to the Spirit⁶⁹⁵ and the presence of the kingdom of God (12,28); but also because of the Solomon as exorcist tradition which he, as we have argued above, alludes⁶⁹⁶ – among others exactly by the conflation of the two healing stories (Matt 9,27-31 and 9,32-34), which Gundry mentions, and by tightening of the healing/exorcistic context with the title Son of David. It is therefore not "otiose to appeal to Jewish belief in Solomon, David's son, as

⁶⁹⁰ Blass and Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar*, 220, § 427.

⁶⁹¹ Cf. "μήτι," BDAG, 649: "Also in questions in which the questioner is in doubt concerning the answer, perhaps."

⁶⁹² Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:202, n. 53; Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 118; Loader, "Son of David, Blindness, Possession, and Duality in Matthew," 573.

⁶⁹³ Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:202, n. 53.

⁶⁹⁴ Gundry, *Matthew*, 231.

⁶⁹⁵ Within our analysis of the Davidic tradition in chapter 2.2., we have demonstrated that the empowerment by the Spirit, based on Isa 11,1-4, is one of the crucial characteristics of the Messianic Son of David. At this point, Matthew consciously and systematically (cf. Matt 1,18,20; 3,16; 12,18; 12,28; 12,31-32) follows the contemporary Jewish expectations presenting Jesus as the bearer of the Spirit of God.

⁶⁹⁶ Cf. Lövestam, "Jésus fils de David chez les Synoptiques," 97-109.

a master of exorcism"⁶⁹⁷ but contrariwise. Actually the reaction of the Pharisees, in the form of an accusation of Jesus from being in league with Beelzebul, gains on its meaning in the light of the Solomon as exorcist tradition. In their attack, the Pharisees not only challenge Jesus' messianic identity, and his empowerment by the Spirit, but they reject the idea that Jesus could exorcize demons in a manner reminiscent of Solomon, i.e., that he would be in possession of Solomonic powers. From their point of view, Jesus' healings and exorcism are a product of demonic powers (12,24) and nothing else.

If we admit that Matthew's crowds (at the level of his story, not at the historical level!⁶⁹⁸) could be asking not only whether Jesus might be the Davidic Messiah, but also whether he "were healing in the name of Solomon, or even better, if he were Solomon,"⁶⁹⁹ or better formulated whether he was healing in a manner reminiscent of Solomon, being endowed with Solomonic powers, then the negative response of the Pharisees would mean a rejection of both of these options: of Jesus' messiahship as well as of his resemblance to Solomon.⁷⁰⁰

But even if we would want to renounce such an aspect of the Pharisaic charge, we can not overlook a further allusion to Solomon in Matt 12,42 – in the sign of Jonah pericope, which is a direct continuation of the Beelzebul controversy (contextual as well as contentual). An allusion, which is intentionally (in contrast to Luke 11,31-32) made as the point of the Jonah's sign pericope and which is based on the juxtaposition between Solomon and Jesus – namely his person, ministry, which included healings and exorcisms,

⁶⁹⁷ Gundry, *Matthew*, 231.

⁶⁹⁸ This error makes Chae in his dealing with the text as well as in his dealing with the Solomon as exorcist tradition. Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 310-313.

⁶⁹⁹ Fisher, "Can This Be the Son of David?," 90-91. I have certain reservations regarding the formulation "if he were Solomon."

⁷⁰⁰ Chae's claim, that "the Solomon tradition as an option fails to explain why the Pharisees turned desperate and why they resorted to wickedly slandering Jesus" does not convince me and is based on unconscious historicizing. Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 311.

and wisdom (cf. 11,19 and 11,2-6).⁷⁰¹ There is no reason to regard the Solomon as exorcist tradition as “otiose” in this place.⁷⁰²

The reaction of the Pharisees (12,24), as already mentioned, is diametrically opposite to the positive reaction of the crowds. Their accusation “this one casts the demons out by Beelzebul, the prince of the demons” is not an immediate reaction on the healing, respectively exorcism itself, but rather a reaction to a question from the crowds, which start to ask, whether Jesus could be the Son of David.⁷⁰³ A reaction evoked by their experience with Jesus’ healings and exorcisms.

I think one should be cautious, unlike Chae, in postulating that the question of the crowds was addressed to the Pharisees, who as the shepherds of the crowds “must decide whether to approve or refute what the crowd witnessed”⁷⁰⁴ namely whether Jesus is the eschatological Davidic shepherd. Chae, wishing to see here his shepherd motif, goes simply far beyond what the text is actually saying. The Pharisees are only reacting to what they have just heard (ἀκούσαντες).

Their appearance on the stage is not explained, but apparently the reader is supposed to think of the same group of Pharisees as from Matt 12,14, which has plotted to destroy Jesus. In fact, their accusation, paralleled in 9,34 and 10,25, that Jesus casts out demons with Beelzebul’s aid is intended to destroy Jesus’ reputation in public.

And thus while Matthew’s crowds are able to ascribe the powerful healings and exorcism on account of Jesus’ resemblance to Solomon, the Pharisees can not: “Since the Pharisees cannot deny the powerful deeds of Jesus and since they cannot admit he performs them by the power of God (cf. v 28), their only

apparent recourse is to attribute them to the power of the devil.”⁷⁰⁵ The weight of this accusation is heavy since, in Jewish tradition, sorcery and magic were capital offenses (cf. *b. Sanh.* 67a).⁷⁰⁶ The aim of this accusation is to deprive Jesus of his influence and to discredit him in public.⁷⁰⁷ It is evident that this accusation goes back to Jesus’ lifetime, since the Christians would hardly fabricate such a tale. Matthew’s endeavor to deflect the threefold charges (9,32-34; 10,25; 12,22-24) and to deprive Jesus’ exorcisms of any magical elements⁷⁰⁸ speaks in favor of the claim that the accusation was still actual in the time when Matthew’s Gospel was written.⁷⁰⁹

Jesus is accused of using demonic skills to cure illnesses. The wording of the Pharisaic charge is slightly changed from Matt 9,34 and Q 11,15. One change is the reformulation of the accusation into a form which closely parallels the reaction of the crowds (οὐτός – οὐτός; μήτι – εἰ μὴ) in order to underline the contrast. Another change is the identification of the prince of the demons with Beelzebul (a name taken from Matt 10,25).

Although the original meaning of the name Beelzebul (Lord of Heavens, Lord of the flies, Lord of the house) as well as its different forms are discussed,⁷¹⁰ its significance in Matthew’s Gospel is apparent: “Aus Mt 12,26-27 ergibt sich, daß im Mt Beelzebul und Satan ein und dieselbe

⁷⁰⁵ Hagner, Matthew, 1:342.

⁷⁰⁶ Cf. Meier, Matthew, 134; Smith, Jesus the Magician, 21-80.

⁷⁰⁷ Cf. Eve, who notes: “The one Gospel pericope where sorcery accusations are most plainly in view is the Beelzebul controversy, which presents almost a paradigm case of authorities trying to discredit a potentially dangerous upstart by accusing him of what, in a Jewish context, would count as sorcery (performing superhuman feats through an agency opposed to God).” Eve, *The Jewish Context of Jesus’ Miracles*, 368, cf. *ibid.*, 370.

⁷⁰⁸ Cf. Trunk, *Der messianische Heiler*, 230: “Der Vorwurf des Bündnisses mit dem Dämonenfürsten Beelzebul enthält die Unterstellung, Jesus bediene sich bei seinen Exorzismen illegitimer Mittel. Mt widmet der Zurückweisung dieses Vorwurfs in 12,22-37 viel Aufmerksamkeit. Die Mt Bearbeitung der Wunderüberlieferung, die restriktive Behandlung der Exorzismustradition und die Verwendung der Schriftzitate sind weitere Indizien für die Richtigkeit der Vermutung, daß Mt Jesus gegen den Verdacht verteidigen will, er habe seine Wunder mit illegitimen Mitteln und mit Hilfe von Magie gewirkt.”

⁷⁰⁹ Cf. Stanton, “Jesus of Nazareth,” 164-180; *idem*, *Gospel*, 171-180. The similar accusation can be found also in later Jewish sources such as Justin, *Dial.* 69,7; *b. Sanh.* 43a.

⁷¹⁰ Cf. Foerster, “Βεελζεβοὺλ,” *TDNT* 1:605-606; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:96-97; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:195-196.

⁷⁰¹ This is how I understand the words καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Σολομῶνος ᾧδε. For πλείον, see above. Detail analysis will be given in the next exegesis.

⁷⁰² Cf. Carter who also appeals to the tradition of Solomon the miracle worker. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 271.

⁷⁰³ This can be seen with the usage of οὐτός in the reply of the Pharisees, which is a direct reaction to μήτι οὐτός ἐστίν in the crowds’ question.

⁷⁰⁴ Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 310.

Gestalt sind. In Mt 4,1-11 wird eben diese Gestalt als ‚diabolos‘ bezeichnet; denn nach Mt 4,10 ist der ‚diabolos‘ der ‚Satan‘.⁷¹¹ Jesus is thus not accused of using illegitimate/illicit powers, but as Luz has rightly recognized:

“His opponents see at work in the figure of Jesus the devil himself, whose rule Jesus saw broken by the coming of the kingdom of God (cf. v. 28-29)! Thus labeled, Jesus’ exorcisms evoke fear instead of liberating. His opponents say no to Jesus with the devil’s help, that is, with the help of the greatest possible ‘metaphysical’ power. Now no more bridges can be built.”⁷¹²

The Pharisees’ claim clearly implies that Jesus’ extraordinary healings and exorcisms are nothing more than the result of demonic powers (and not result of the Spirit empowerment or his resemblance to Solomon), acts of a black magician and sorcerer who is in league with Beelzebul, the prince of the demons – Satan himself.

In the text that follows (Matt 12,25-37), Matthew builds a rhetorically sophisticated defense in which Jesus firstly uncovers the illogicality (Matt 12,25-26) as well as the inconsequence (Matt 12,27) of the Pharisaic charge. Then after interpreting his own exorcism, in the light of the empowerment by the Spirit of God and presence of the Kingdom of God (12,28), Jesus accuses the Pharisees of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (12,30-32), unmasking their hypocrisy and deprivation (12,33-35), and warns them of the last Judgment, where even words, not just deeds matter (12,36-37).

In the following dispute about the Sign of Jonah (12,38-42),⁷¹³ which is a continuation of the Beelzebul controversy, Jesus refuses the demand of some of the Pharisees and scribes to present a special sign. This “special” sign would

⁷¹¹ Rese, “Jesus und die Dämonen im Matthäusevangelium,” 471, n. 32.

⁷¹² Luz, Matthew, 2:203.

⁷¹³ The Sign of Jonah is another from Matthew’s doublets (12,38-42; 16,1-4). It is based mainly on Luke 11,16 and Luke 11,29-32 and Mark 8,11-12, however, Matthew uses his sources quite freely: changing Luke’s order (12,41-42), adding his own interpretation of the sign of Jonah (12,40) and connecting the pericope with the story of the return of the unclean spirit (12,43-44) due to the addition of a summary (12,45). Cf. Luz, Matthew, 2:213-216; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:351-353. For a full treatment of the pericope, see Dvořáček, “Znamení proroka Jonáše,” 39-52.

undoubtedly prove, that he is not in a league with Beelzebul, while revealing his messianic identity, and would add “God’s signature” to his miracles (12,38). Jesus replies to the Pharisees with a half-ironic reference to the sign of Jonah (12,39) whose meaning, apart from Matthew’s insertion of a reference to Jesus’ death and resurrection (12,40), is in the immediate context (Beelzebul controversy) interpreted within two similar examples enclosed by the words *καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Ἰωνᾶ ὧδε* (12,41) and *καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Σολομῶνος ὧδε* (12,42). Both of these examples are set into slightly caricature depiction of the last Judgment and both texts share the same purpose: to contrast the reaction of the Gentiles of the past with the reaction of Jesus’ contemporaries and to emphasize Jesus’ importance in the history of salvation.

The first example explains what Jesus meant with the sign of Jonah reference: namely Jonah’s preaching to men of Nineveh (12,41b); setting a sharp contrast between the reaction of the Ninevites, for whom the person and preaching of Jonah were sufficient signs which moved them to repent; and the reaction of Jesus’ contemporaries, who have experienced the preaching and miracles of the one, who is greater than Jonah, and did not believe nor repent. Jesus thus tells his opponents that no other “special” sign will be given to them, expect his extraordinary person and ministry (which included teaching, preaching and healing – cf. Matt 4,23; 9,35)⁷¹⁴ which they have already experienced and rejected.

In the following example Matthew’s narrative follows the same pattern, contrasting the reaction of the queen of the South (= Queen of Sheba) who “came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon” and responded appropriately (Cf. 1 Kgs 10,1-10); with the reaction of Jesus’ contemporaries, who experienced Jesus’ wisdom, but did not respond in the proper way, although in Jesus⁷¹⁵ there is something greater than Solomon (*καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Σολομῶνος ὧδε* – 12,42). In what respect is Jesus (his person and

⁷¹⁴ The neuter *πλείον* refers here thus to the totality of Christ event, similarly as *μεῖζόν* in Matt 12,6.

⁷¹⁵ Within line of 12,6 and 12,41 there can be no doubt that the neuter *πλείον* refers to Jesus’ person and ministry in their totality (and thus not only to his teaching). As Jesus is greater than the Temple, and the prophet Jonah, so is he greater than Solomon.

ministry) greater than Solomon? The answer is included in the example of the queen of the South: namely in his wisdom.⁷¹⁶ The question is, however, in which way? The answer lies in the partial contrast (and similarities) between Solomon and Jesus.

While in the Jewish tradition, Solomon was considered the prototype of a wise man (cf. 1 Kgs 5,9-14; 1 Kgs 10,1-10; Wis 7,15-22; *Ant.* 8,42-49; etc.) who in his wisdom “surpassed the ancients, and even the Egyptians” (*Ant.* 8,42); for Matthew, Jesus is not only the wisest man of all, but he is the incarnation⁷¹⁷ of Wisdom itself (cf. Matt 2,11;⁷¹⁸ 11,19; 23,34), thus he is more than Solomon (12,42).

But the “metaphysical” aspect is not the only one in which Jesus surpasses Solomon. We have already indicated that the words, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ᾧδε do not only refer in Matthew’s immediate context to Jesus’ person, but also to his preaching and teaching – which are to be understood as manifestations of his superior wisdom. This is most apparent in the case of Matt 13,54 (but cf. also Matt 7,28), where the Nazarenes marvel at Jesus’ wisdom, which was previously demonstrated in Jesus’ parables⁷¹⁹ (Matt 13,1-52) and his teaching in their synagogue (13,54), and which (the wisdom) is due context presented as wisdom surpassing that of Solomon, as rightly observed by Green.⁷²⁰

⁷¹⁶ For the motif of surpassing wisdom, see also Green, “Solomon the Son of David in Matthaean Typology,” 228-229.

⁷¹⁷ On the Wisdom Christology in Matthew, see Deutsch, *Lady Wisdom, Jesus, and the Sages*. For one extreme position which claims that wisdom Christology is the major Matthaean theme, see Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology; Law; Burnett, The Testament of Jesus-Sophia*. For another extreme which denies that Jesus is identified with wisdom at least once in Matt 11,19, see Johnson, “Reflections on a Wisdom Approach to Matthew’s Christology,” 44-64.

⁷¹⁸ The idea of incarnated wisdom is expressed here indirectly, in the motif of the magi, representatives of Gentile wisdom, who seek Jesus – the king of the Jews, who is wisdom itself. As we have already noted in the exegesis of Matt 2,11 (see there) there is a direct link between Matt 2,11 and Matt 12,42 and a direct parallel between Solomon and Jesus in both of these texts, based on the motif of wisdom, pilgrimage of a Gentile ruler, honoring, and the motif of proper reaction to Jesus.

⁷¹⁹ Matthew intentionally uses the word παραβολή in Matt 13,3 in order to evoke 1 Kgs 5,12 (καὶ ἐλάλησεν Σαλωμων τρισχιλίας παραβολάς καὶ ἦσαν ὄδαὶ αὐτοῦ πεντακισχίλια) and thus to allude to Solomon.

⁷²⁰ Cf. Green, “Solomon the Son of David in Matthaean Typology,” 228.

Finally, we have argued that πλεῖον in Matt 12,41 and 12,42 refers not only to Jesus’ person and teaching but also to his deeds, which include his healings and exorcisms. And we have seen that it was especially Jesus’ healing and exorcistic activity which led to his recognition as the Messianic Son of David, who possesses healing and exorcistic powers comparable with those of Solomon, son of David (9,27-31; 12,22-24); while simultaneously evoking offence (11,6; cf. 13,54-58) and conflict with the Pharisees (Matt 8-9; 11-12). A conflict, which escalated in their accusation of Jesus’ use of magic, sorcery and satanic powers (12,22-24); an accusation to which the sign of Jonah pericope is afterpiece.

And exactly these deeds, the deeds of the Messiah (11,2-6), are identified with the deeds of Wisdom in Matt 11,19.

“In Mt 11,19 Matthew changes the probable original Q saying, ‘Wisdom is justified by all her children’ (found in Luke 7:35) to ‘Wisdom is justified by her deeds’ (11:19). The insertion of ‘deeds’ is a reference to the ‘deeds of the Messiah,’ cited by Jesus in answer to John the Baptist at the beginning of the chapter (11:2). These deeds include both the teachings and miracles found in chapters 5-9 and they implicitly identify Jesus with the Messiah and with wisdom.”⁷²¹

And thus when Matthew’s Jesus says “something greater than Solomon is here,” he alludes not only to his own person and teaching, but also to his miraculous deeds, namely his healings and exorcisms, which are the deeds of wisdom and which surpass the healings and exorcisms of Solomon (9,33).⁷²² At this point, Matthew is following the Solomon as exorcist tradition, which, as we have shown in chapter two, saw Solomon’s exorcistic knowledge and powers (and thus also his healings and exorcisms) as a part of his great wisdom.⁷²³ As expressed already by Chilton:

⁷²¹ Saldarini, *Christian-Jewish Community*, 183. Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:149-150; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:311; Gundry, *Matthew*, 213; Keener, *Matthew*, 343; Meier, *Matthew*, 124; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:264-265. Contrary Nolland, *Matthew*, 464.

⁷²² Cf. Lövestam, “Jésus fils de David chez les Synoptiques,” 103-105; Deutsch, *Lady Wisdom, Jesus, and the Sages*, 60-63.

⁷²³ Let us remember first of all Josephus’ *Ant.* 8,42-49 where he intentionally narrates the Eleazar miracle story in order to reveal the great understanding and wisdom of Solomon,

“Solomon’s wisdom included his healing and exorcistic craft so that this saying coheres well with the understanding that the address ‘David’s son’ was used of Jesus because he was considered to be of Davidic descent and to be possessed of powers comparable with Solomon’s.”⁷²⁴

Thus when Jesus says *καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ὧδέ* he is thinking of wisdom, which includes his person, teaching, preaching, and also healings and exorcisms reminiscent of and comparable to Solomon, the mighty exorcist and wise man, whom he surpasses.

At the level of the story Matthew 12,42 represents an assurance, that the crowds (12,22-23), as well as the two blind men (9,27-31), were right in their opinion, that Jesus could be the Son of David and that he possesses exorcistic/healing powers similar to Solomon’s.⁷²⁵ This may be a reason why Matthew intentionally switched Luke’s order and made Matt 12,42 as the crux of the Jonah sign pericope and Beelzebul controversy.

Summary:

Within our analysis of Matt 12,22-24 we have seen that Matthew, by making the deaf-mute demoniac blind, has strengthened the connection between Jesus’ ability to heal, his identity as the Son of David and the source of his powers – making these three issues the centre of the Beelzebul controversy.

“so that all might know the greatness of his nature and his closeness to God, and so that the king’s preeminence in every sort of virtue should not be hidden from any of those beneath the sun” (*Ant.* 8,49). Peter M. Head fails to observe this connection when he claims that “in Matthew 12.42 it is Solomon’s wisdom rather than his healing or exorcistic reputation that is specified.” Head, *Christology*, 183.

⁷²⁴ Chilton, “Jesus ben David,” 99. Cf. Meier’s (unnecessarily) more careful formulation: “The wisdom of Solomon might include his powers to perform miracles, especially exorcisms.” Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:737.

⁷²⁵ I can not agree with Chae’s objection against the Solomon as exorcist hypothesis that: “The strongest objection may be that the name Solomon might be associated with his wisdom but not with healing in Matthew’s Gospel (12:24; cf. 1:6,6:29)...” because of Matt 12,42, where, as we have seen, the reference to Solomon is used to recall Jesus’ healings and exorcisms and to suggest his superior status over Solomon, generally (at the level of wisdom) as well as particularly (at the level of exorcistic powers as a part of the shared wisdom). Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 289.

In our analysis we have postulated that Matthew’s question *μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς Δαυίδ* asked by the crowds and set into an exorcistic context is to be understood not only in Messianic context, but also within the framework of the Solomon as exorcist and healer tradition.

The meaning of the question is not only whether Jesus might be the Messiah, but also whether he might heal and exorcize in a manner reminiscent of Solomon, being in possession of powers comparable with those of David’s famous son. The reaction of the Pharisees represents then a direct opposition to both of these options. For the Pharisees, Jesus is not the Messiah, nor he does possess Solomonic healing and exorcistic powers, but he is a magician, deceiver and sorcerer allied to the devil himself.

In the text that follows, Matthew opposes the accusation of the Pharisees and suggests that Jesus heals not only with the power of the Spirit, transcending thus contemporary Jewish exorcists (12,28), but that his exorcisms and healings surpass also those of Solomon (12,42; cf. 9,33); as his powers, healings and exorcism, so his teaching (as a part of his superior wisdom) and in fact his whole person surpass Solomon.

3.5. The Healing of the Canaanite Woman’s Daughter (Matt 15,21-28)

The healing of the Canaanite woman’s daughter (Matt 15,21-28) is the next pericope after Matt 9,27-31 which uses the designation Son of David in reference to Jesus. As in Matt 9,27-31, the title is used within a plea for mercy for an exorcism (healing) and serves thus as an expression of faith and confidence in Jesus’ ability to heal and exorcise in his capacity of the Son of David on the one hand, and as recognition of Jesus’ messianic identity on the other hand.⁷²⁶ Also in this text, the designation *υἱὸς Δαυίδ* is linked to the *κύριος* title and it has the same meaning as we have noted in Matt 9,27-31. There is, however, one difference between Matt 15,21-28 and Matt 9,27-31, namely the cry, *ἐλέησόν με, κύριε υἱὸς Δαυίδ* comes from a Gentile woman.

⁷²⁶ It is to be assumed that Matthew is consistent in his usage of the title *υἱὸς Δαυίδ* in his Gospel and that he would not contradict himself.

Before we analyze further similarities and differences between Matt 15,21-28 and Matt 9,27-31 (and other stories), and ponder the meaning of this pericope within Matthew's Gospel, let us have a closer look at the text, the setting of the pericope within the narrative context, its genre, sources and structure.

Text:

²¹ Καὶ ἐξελθὼν ἐκεῖθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὰ μέρη Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος.

²² καὶ ἰδοὺ γυνὴ Χαναναία ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρίων ἐκείνων ἐξεληθοῦσα ἔκραζεν λέγουσα· ἐλέησόν με, κύριε υἱὸς Δαυίδ· ἡ θυγάτηρ μου κακῶς δαιμονίζεται.

²³ ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῇ λόγον. καὶ προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἠρώτουν αὐτὸν λέγοντες· ἀπόλυσον αὐτήν, ὅτι κράζει ὄπισθεν ἡμῶν.

²⁴ ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· οὐκ ἀπεστάλην εἰ μὴ εἰς τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἀπολωλότα οἴκου Ἰσραήλ.

²⁵ ἡ δὲ ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγουσα· κύριε, βοήθει μοι.

²⁶ ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· οὐκ ἔστιν καλὸν λαβεῖν τὸν ἄρτον τῶν τέκνων καὶ βαλεῖν τοῖς κυναρίοις.

²⁷ ἡ δὲ εἶπεν· ναὶ κύριε, καὶ γὰρ τὰ κυνάρια ἐσθίει ἀπὸ τῶν ψιχίων τῶν πιπτόντων ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῶν κυρίων αὐτῶν.

²⁸ τότε ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῇ· ὦ γύναι, μεγάλη σου ἡ πίστις· γεννηθήτω σοι ὡς θέλεις. καὶ ἰάθη ἡ θυγάτηρ αὐτῆς ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας ἐκείνης.

Translation:

²¹ And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

²² And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is badly demon-possessed!"

²³ But he did not answer her a word. His disciples came and asked him saying, "Send her away, because she is crying out after us."

²⁴ But he answered and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

²⁵ But she came and prostrating herself before him she said, "Lord, help me!"

²⁶ But he answered and said, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

²⁷ But she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

²⁸ Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done to you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that hour.

The healing of the daughter of the Canaanite woman (Matt 15,21-28) is part of a larger narrative block (13,53-16,20). Its topics closely follow themes which, as we have seen in previous exegeses, were already prominent in previous chapters of Matthew's Gospel: namely the question of Jesus' identity, authority and the source of his powers (13,54-56; 14,1; 14,33; 15,31; 16,1-4; 16,13-20). Also included are themes of conflict (15,1-20; 16,1-4; 16,5-12), opposition (13,57-58), persecution (14,1-12 as a foreshadowing of Jesus' own destiny), rejection (13,54-58), and, last but not least, the themes of faith (13,58; 14,31; 15,21-28; 16,1-4; 16,16), mercy, compassion (14,13-21; 14,34-36; 15,29-31; 15,32-39), healing (14,14; 14,34-36; 15,21-28; 15,29-31) and the proper reaction to Jesus (14,32; 15,21-28; 15,31; 16,16).

Matthew follows Mark,⁷²⁷ and after presenting the wisdom of Jesus (demonstrated in his parables in the third discourse – Matt 13,1-52) which surpasses the wisdom of Solomon (12,42), he continues his narrative with a report of Jesus' rejection in Nazareth (13,53-58) and his withdrawal from Herod's territory (14,13) after having learned about the death of John the Baptist (14,1-12). On his way, Jesus is followed by a large crowd (14,13b) which he together with his disciples miraculously feeds (14,15-21), after he first healed the sick ones amongst them (14,14). After the night "adventure" on the Galilean sea (14,22-33) which leads to the disciples' recognition of Jesus as the Son of God (14,33), Jesus lands at Gennesareth. After being recognized by the people, the sick are brought to him and are healed with a touch from the edge of Jesus' cloak (14,34-36). This is followed by a disputation between

⁷²⁷ Cf. Matt 13,53-16,20 with Mark 6,1-8,30. Matthew omits Mark 6,7-13 which he has already used in Matt 10,1-15 and replaces Mark 7,31-37 with a healing summary (Matt 15,29-31), but otherwise he strictly follows Mark's sequential order.

Jesus and his challengers from the Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem about the tradition of the elders and a controversy of clean and unclean (15,1-20). This debate results in the third withdrawal by Jesus (cf. 12,15; 14,13) – this time into Gentile territory, where the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter takes place.

Our story (15,21-28) is then followed by another healing summary (15,29-31), another feeding story (15,32-39), another conflict with the Pharisees and Sadducees who demand (again – cf. 12,38-42) a sign from Jesus (16,1-4), which is followed by Jesus' warnings against their teaching (16,5-12). The last three pericopes create a kind of parallelism to the previous ones (14,13-21; 14,34-36; 15,1-20). The narrative block ends with Peter's declaration in which the disciple recognizes Jesus' messianic identity (16,13-20).

Concerning the sources, we have already indicated that Matthew follows Mark's order here. As the majority of commentators agree,⁷²⁸ the pericope of the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter, which has no parallel in Luke, is based primarily on Mark 7,24-30.⁷²⁹ Matthew however freely edited his source, changing not only the setting of the scene, from a house to an open area (cf. Mark 7,24), but also its wording,⁷³⁰ structure and partially its genre (form).

Although the story retains several aspects of "Fernheilung"⁷³¹ and belongs thus amongst other miracle healing stories, "yet the focus here is not on the healing"⁷³² itself, but rather on the persistent request and faith of the Gentile

⁷²⁸ Cf. Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:542-543; Hagner, Matthew, 2:439; Luz, Matthew, 2:336; Nolland, Matthew, 631.

⁷²⁹ The narrative, in its Matthean wording, intentionally recalls some previous healing narratives (mainly Matt 9,27-31 and 8,5-13) and instructions to the disciples in Matt 10,5-6; but these cross-references are result of Matthew's theological and editorial work and not a matter of used sources.

⁷³⁰ Fewer than 40 words of Mark's 130 are shared with Matthew 15,21-28 (140 words). Cf. Beare, Matthew, 340; Luz, Matthew, 2:336, n. 5. Hagner, Matthew, 2:439-440. For a detailed redactional analysis, see Gundry, Matthew, 309-317. In the following exegesis some of the most important changes relevant to the topic of this dissertation will be noted.

⁷³¹ As noted by Trunk, Der messianische Heiler, 142-143.

⁷³² Hagner, Matthew, 2:439.

woman, expressed in the dialogue. The miracle serves thus primarily as a narrative framework (cf. Matt 12,22-24).

The central role of the dialogue in this story is reflected and confirmed in the structural division of the pericope. As Davies and Allison noted, this pericope "is made up of four dyadic units, each of which consists in turn of words addressed to Jesus and followed by his reaction."⁷³³ In the first unit (scene), the Canaanite woman comes to Jesus and asks for help (15,22). Jesus does not answer her (ὁ δὲ + ἀποκρίνομαι) with a word (15,23). In the next scene the disciples ask Jesus to send the woman away (15,23b) and he replies (ὁ δὲ + ἀποκρίνομαι) that he is sent only for the lost sheep of Israel (15,24). In the third scene, the woman kneels before Jesus and repeats her plea for help (15,25). Jesus replies (ὁ δὲ + ἀποκρίνομαι) to disciples, rather than to her directly, saying that "it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs" (15,26). In the fourth scene, the woman acknowledges Jesus' answer but notes, that "even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table" (15,27). Her answer moves Jesus to respond (τότε + ἀποκρίνομαι) to her directly, and he praises her faith and grants her request (15,28a). The story ends with a brief report about the actual miracle (15,28b). Let us have a closer look at Matthew's version of the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter and at some of his major changes against the Markan "Vorlage".

After reporting Jesus' withdrawal into the Gentile territory (district of Tyre and Sidon) and resetting Mark's stage from a house (Mark 7,24b) into a public place (Matt 15,21)⁷³⁴ Matthew, partially omitting and partially reworking Mark's more descriptive exposition (Mark 7,24a-26), introduces with a dramatic καὶ ἴδου the Gentile woman on the scene and allows her, much more elegantly than Mark, to approach Jesus, and to express directly her need⁷³⁵ in the form of a constant (imperfect) cry: ἐλέησόν με, κύριε υἱὸς Δαυὶδ. A cry unparalleled in Mark's version of the story.

⁷³³ Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:541.

⁷³⁴ "Der gemeinsame Aufenthalt in einem Haus mit einer Heidin wäre eine Mißachtung jüdischer Reinheitsbestimmungen." Trunk, Der messianische Heiler, 148.

⁷³⁵ Cf. Luz, Matthew, 2:337.

By letting the Gentile woman address Jesus as the Son of David and Lord, Matthew not only connects this pericope with the healing of the two blind men (9,27-31; 20,29-34),⁷³⁶ but he also re-alludes to his theme of “no-accounts”⁷³⁷ recognizing Jesus’ true identity.

By designating Mark’s Greek Syrophenician woman as Canaanite, i.e., as a member of a nation of bitter enemies of Israel, Matthew strengthens the contrast between the faith of the woman, expressed in her petition,⁷³⁸ and the general disbelief of Israel’s leaders (9,34; 12,24; 12,38-42; 15,1-20; 16,1-4), the lack of belief of his disciple (14,29-31) and his fellow citizens (13,54-58). For Matthew it is important not only to show that “this Canaanite woman publicly acknowledged Jesus’ identity before the disciples who wished her to leave had done so (16:16),”⁷³⁹ but also to demonstrate the paradox that even the Gentile woman is able to see and understand what Israel (namely her leaders) is not. Even a representative from the bitterest enemies of God’s people is able to recognize Jesus’ messianic identity, his superiority, and his ability to heal and is able to approach and beseech him for mercy (15,23).

In her persistent cry “she uses a liturgical phrase to pray Have mercy on me (9:27; 9:13 [consistent with God’s will]; 12:7; Pss 6:2; 27:7; 30:10). She calls Jesus Lord (as only disciples do; see 8:2, 6, 24) in recognition of his authority over demons (cf. 4:1-11; 17:15), and son of David, as do the two blind men (see 9:27-28; 20:30). The latter title recognizes Jesus’ link with Israelite and Davidic rule, ideally on behalf of the broken (cf. Ps 72), as well as his miracle-working power (see 9:27).”⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁶ Although the influence of Mark 10:47-48 on Matthew is evident, it is to be supposed that, since Matthew has used Mark’s cry already in Matt 9,27 (ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὸς Δαυίδ) and since he uses almost the same formulation in 15,22 as there, resp. as in Matt 20,30 (ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, κύριε, υἱὸς Δαυίδ) rather than Mark’s (υἱὸς Δαυίδ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με); Matthew inserted the cry into this pericope from his own version of the healing of the two blind men (that means among others in the precise same meaning in which he has already used it in 9,27-31 and in which he uses it in the doublet in 20,29-34 – i.e., in its messianic as well as Solomonic meaning) – rather than directly from Mark 10,47-48.

⁷³⁷ Cf. Kingsbury, “The Title ‘Son of David’ in Matthew’s Gospel,” 599, 601.

⁷³⁸ It is surely not without significance that the Canaanite woman is the first woman in Matthew’s Gospel to speak.

⁷³⁹ Keener, Matthew, 418, see also 415.

⁷⁴⁰ Carter, Matthew and the Margins, 322.

Although her cry is formulated as a petition of mercy for herself (ἐλέησόν με), her request actually concerns her demon possessed daughter.⁷⁴¹ Thus, her plea is a request for exorcism, a request which intentionally employs the address, Son of David, in the same way as it was employed in Matt 9,27-31.

The difference is, that while in Matt 9,27-31 the designation Son of David with its Solomonic connotations was used within the plea for healing in order to allude to Jesus’ healing abilities and powers, now it is used in the plea for exorcism. The allusion to the Solomon as exorcist tradition is not weakened by Matthew’s omission of Mark’s 7,26b καὶ ἠρώτα αὐτὸν ἵνα τὸ δαιμόνιον ἐκβάλῃ ἐκ τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς (She asked him to cast the demon out of her daughter). On the contrary, for Matthew the plea ἐλέησόν με, κύριε υἱὸς Δαυίδ together with the characterization of the daughter’s suffering: ἡ θυγάτηρ μου κακῶς δαιμονίζεται are sufficient for expressing the woman’s request for an exorcism for her daughter.⁷⁴²

The Solomonic allusion is not the only reason why Matthew has the Canaanite woman cry out:

“By addressing him as ‘Son of David’ the gentile woman expresses that she is turning to the Messiah of Israel who has already healed many among his suffering people. Thus she knows that Jesus is sent to Israel; and her faith is seen precisely (*but not exclusively*) in the fact that she nevertheless cries out to him.”⁷⁴³

In her cry one hears the themes of faith, proper reaction to Jesus and confidence in his exorcistic/healing powers once again (as in Matt 9,27-31).

Unlike Matt 9,27-31, Jesus does not respond to her cry and faith by granting her request, but with silence (15,23) and reasoned denial, stressing the

⁷⁴¹ Matthew has changed Mark’s εἶχεν τὸ θυγάτριον αὐτῆς πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον (Mark 7,25) into ἡ θυγάτηρ μου κακῶς δαιμονίζεται. Rese noted: “... Die Formulierung ‘böse von einem Dämon besessen’ in Matt 15,12 stärker ist als das ‘hatte einen unreinen Geist’ in Mk 7,25.” Rese, “Jesus und die Dämonen im Matthäusevangelium,” 471, n. 35.

⁷⁴² Cf. Matt 9,27 where the object of the blind’s men petition is also missing.

⁷⁴³ Luz, Matthew, 2:339, *italics mine*. Cf. Gundry, Matthew, 311.

limitation of his mission to Israel (15,24).⁷⁴⁴ And although the woman repeats (with different words,⁷⁴⁵ however, retaining the address κύριε⁷⁴⁶) and intensifies her request, prostrating herself before Jesus (15,25),⁷⁴⁷ she (still not being addressed directly) is refused with even harsher words (15,26) which put her faith into ordeal. And only after her surprising acknowledgement (ναὶ κύριε⁷⁴⁸) of her inferior status amongst the house dogs, and Israel's supremacy in the history of salvation (15,27), as well as her firm belief, that "Jesus has so much power (= *bread*) that he will have more than enough left over from what Israel does not need or want,"⁷⁴⁹ Jesus is moved⁷⁵⁰ by the persistence of her faith and her arguments, to grant her request.

It is only in Matt 15,28, when Jesus for the first time speaks directly to the woman (ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῇ), praising the greatness of her faith (ὦ γύναι, μεγάλη σου ἡ πίστις). She is the second Gentile person in Matthew's Gospel whose faith has been exalted by Jesus,⁷⁵¹ and the only one whose faith is

⁷⁴⁴ As expressed by Carter: "Jesus' declaration affirms God's election of Israel, God's faithfulness to God's covenant purposes, Israel's priority in those purposes, Jesus' identity as commissioned by God, and Jesus' persistence in mission to Israel despite the hostility of the religious leaders and the noncommitted interest of the crowds." Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 323.

⁷⁴⁵ Which are however again formulated into the language of the Psalms. Cf. LXX Ps 43,27; 69,6; 78,9; 108,26; etc.

⁷⁴⁶ The title is also used in a petition for help in Matt 8,2; 8,6.8 (Gentile!); 14,30; 17,15; 20,30-31.

⁷⁴⁷ The motif of prostrating connects this pericope with other healing stories (cf. Matt 8,2 and 9,18) but also (more importantly) with the magi from the east who, being Gentiles, also recognized Jesus' true identity and worshiped him (cf. Matt 2,2.11). Jesus is also honored with prostration when recognized as the Son of God (14,33), the resurrected one (28,9.17) and as the messianic king (20,20).

⁷⁴⁸ Cf. Matt 9,28. This is third time that the woman has addressed Jesus with κύριε. Even when she is arguing with Jesus, she still acknowledges his superior status.

⁷⁴⁹ Keener, *Matthew*, 418. *Italics mine*.

⁷⁵⁰ The initial ὦ γύναι in Matt 15,28 according to BDAG expresses emotion. Cf. "ὦ," BDAG, 208-209.

⁷⁵¹ The first one is the centurion, in Matt 8,5-13. The parallel between Matt 8,5-13 and 15,21-28 is remarkable. "Both pericopae are about Jesus encountering a despised Gentile... In both the Gentile comes to Jesus and asks for the healing of his or her child. In both the supplicants call Jesus 'Lord'. In both the focus is not on the healing itself but the preceding conversation, which in each instance contains a general statement by Jesus about Israel. In addition, both passages record initial hesitation on the part of Jesus..., relate that the Gentile won Jesus over by surprising words demonstrating great faith, and recount that the healings, accomplished from a distance, transpired 'from that hour'." Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:558.

referred to as μεγάλη. "Her persistence in the face of Jesus' obstructions, her challenge to ethic, gender, religious, political, and economical barriers, her reliance on his power, and her recognition of his authority over demons comprise her faith."⁷⁵² Her faith, together with the centurion's one, is a contrast to the little faith of the disciples (8,26; 14,31), the lack of faith of Nazarenes (13,58), as well as the disbelief of the Pharisees (9,34; 12,24; 12,38-42; 16,1-4; etc.).

The link to the faith of the centurion is further strengthened by Jesus' words γενηθήτω σοι ὡς θέλεις. καὶ ἰάθη ἡ θυγάτηρ αὐτῆς ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας ἐκείνης. (Matt 15,28: Let it be done to you as you wish. And her daughter was healed from that hour) which closely parallel to Matt 8,13: ὕπαγε, ὡς ἐπίστευσας γενηθήτω σοι. καὶ ἰάθη ὁ παῖς [αὐτοῦ] ἐν τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐκείνῃ. (Go; let it be done to you as you have believed. And the servant was healed at that hour.). The words, γενηθήτω + personal pronoun, represent a further link to Matt 9,28 (κατὰ τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν γενηθήτω ὑμῖν), underlining again the close connection between these two pericopes (Matt 15,21-28 and Matt 9,27-31), as already indicated.

The exorcism itself is not described. Matthew replaced Mark's (Mark 7,29-30) ἐξελέλυθεν ἐκ τῆς θυγατρὸς σου τὸ δαιμόνιον (the demon came out of your daughter), as well as his concluding comment εὔρεν τὸ παιδίον βεβλημένον ἐπὶ τὴν κλίνην καὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον ἐξεληλυθός (and she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone), with a statement about the immediate healing of the daughter (15,28b). The reason for this change may not be a desire, on Matthew's part, to "shift the focus from an exorcism to healing" as Duling thinks,⁷⁵³ but an attempt to allude to the healing of the centurion's servant – among others by similar wording – as already indicated. This argument is supported by Gundry's conclusion:

⁷⁵² Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 324-325.

⁷⁵³ Duling, "Therapeutic Son of David," 402. Cf. Trunk, *Der messianische Heiler*, 149, 151.

“Thus even the statement of healing has the purpose of emphasizing the faith of Gentiles; it is a reminder of an earlier story concerning such faith.”⁷⁵⁴

If the text is understood in this way, there is no reason to conclude that in Matt 15,27-28 “... an exorcistic account becomes a story of a more general healing”⁷⁵⁵ in which “the emphasis is shifted from the possession toward the illness caused by demon.”⁷⁵⁶ Nor is there any reason to focus on the lack of typical exorcistic motifs,⁷⁵⁷ simply because of the fact that “Da es sich um eine Fernheilung handelt, können die Motive eines Kampfes zwischen Dämon und Exorzist nicht wie gewohnt zur Geltung kommen.”⁷⁵⁸ And similarly, that “there is no trace of any exorcism ritual”⁷⁵⁹ is certainly true, however, it should be noted that the same is true for Mark.

And thus it can be claimed, that despite the final statement concerning the healing of the Canaanite woman’s daughter (15,28), the petition, inserted in the mouth of the Canaanite woman, on Jesus is a petition for exorcism in which the address ἐλέησόν με, κύριε υἱὸς Δαυίδ gains on its Solomonic, as well as messianic⁷⁶⁰ meaning. It is an expression of the belief, of the Gentile woman, that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah of Israel who possesses healing and exorcistic powers reminiscent of Solomon which can be used in driving out a demon from her daughter.

Summary:

In the healing of the Canaanite woman’s daughter (15,21-28), Matthew uses, for the second time, the designation Son of David with regards to Jesus in form of an address. Similarly as in Matt 9,27-31, the title is linked to the κύριος title and is used within the plea for mercy, serving as an expression of faith and

confidence in Jesus’ ability to exorcise in a manner reminiscent of Solomon as well as recognition of Jesus’ messianic identity.

By granting the woman’s request, Jesus (here, unlike in Matt 9,27-31, only at the end of the narrative – i.e., in 15,28) approves of the regular usage of the address Son of David and Lord within the plea for exorcism. In his praising of the Canaanite woman’s faith, Jesus praises i.a., her faith in his abilities as the Son of David.

The first main difference, in comparison with Matt 9,27-31, is that in Matt 15,21-28, the cry for mercy is inserted into the mouth of a Gentile woman.⁷⁶¹ By doing so, Matthew contrasts her faith with the lack of faith Jesus encounters in Israel (resp. in confrontation with Israel’s leaders), intensifying thus the plot of his narrative (even a Gentile woman, unlike Israel’s leaders, is able to recognize Jesus’ true identity), and increasing the gap between the people who should recognize Jesus and do not; and those who should not and do. The second change is that in Matt 15,21-28, the cry ἐλέησόν με, κύριε υἱὸς Δαυίδ ἢ θυγάτηρ μου κακῶς δαιμονίζεται is not a cry for healing, as in Matt 9,27-31 or Matt 20,29-34, but a cry for the exorcism of a demon. The third difference is that the woman is alone, she is not blind⁷⁶² nor is she asking for mercy for herself, but for her daughter.

In this story, Matthew thus strengthens the image of the exorcistic/healing Son of David, the Messiah, who is sent primarily to Israel (15,24-26), but whose mission exceptionally affects Gentiles (cf. 8,5-13), who turn to have a stronger faith and better recognition skills than many in Israel. Simultaneously, Matthew also alludes to his favorite theme of the Gentile mission, and other themes such as faith, reaction to Jesus, as mentioned above.

⁷⁶¹ The historicity of the narrative is questionable, cf. Meier’s reservations (Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:660-661) with Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 314. Yet, whatever the answer may be, it should be noted, that Matthew, as in 9,27-31, inserts in the woman’s mouth something, what she could have actually said. On a “historical” level, Jesus’ reputation as an exorcist was probably wide spread and, as we have argued, so was the reputation of Solomon, the son of David – even amongst the Gentiles. Besides, the Canaanite woman, from a neighboring land, would have known who David and Solomon were and what to expect from the Son of David. But decisive, for purposes of our study, is this however not.

⁷⁶² Matt 15,21-28 is the only case, out of three, where the cry ἐλέησόν με, (κύριε) υἱὸς Δαυίδ is applied to Jesus not by a blind person (contrary to Matt 9,27-31; 20,29-34). In Matt 17,15, which would be the second case, the designation υἱὸς Δαυίδ is not used.

⁷⁵⁴ Gundry, *Matthew*, 317.

⁷⁵⁵ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 83.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁷⁵⁷ Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:659; Novakovic, *Messiah*, 105.

⁷⁵⁸ Trunk, *Der messianische Heiler*, 143.

⁷⁵⁹ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:556.

⁷⁶⁰ The Son of David as the Messiah of Israel who expands his dominion over nations is consistent with the image of the Davidic Messiah which we observed in exegesis of *Pss. Sol.* 17.

In doing so, Matthew is consistent in his usage of the title the Son of David, as we have observed it in previous exegesis.

3.6. The Healing of the Two Blind Men (Matt 20,29-34)

The healing of the two blind men (Matt 20,29-34) is the next pericope, after Matt 9,27-31 and 15,21-28, which contains the designation Son of David in the form of an address, in reference to Jesus. This address, as in Matthew's previous version of this story (Matt 9,27-31), comes from two blind men who, while crying out ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, κύριε, υἱὸς Δαυίδ (Matt 20,30-31 – cf. 9,27), ask the passing by Jesus for the mercy of healing, and are healed by his touch (Matt 20,34 – cf. 9,29).

The main differences, in comparison to Matt 9,27-31, are the following: the scene takes place, as in Mark 10,46-52, on the side of the road from Jericho and not in the house as in Matt 9,27-31. It is not the blind men's faith but rather Jesus' compassion which is stressed (cf. Matt 20,34 with 9,28-29). The blind men, like the Canaanite woman, have to surmount obstacles to reach Jesus and have to repeat their cry (20,30-31). The healing is not accompanied with Jesus' words (cf. 20,34 with 9,29), and the silence command (9,31), which would be meaningless at this point of Matthew's story, is missing in Matt 20,29-34.

Text:

²⁹ Καὶ ἐκπορευομένων αὐτῶν ἀπὸ Ἰεριχῶ ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ ὄχλος πολὺς.

³⁰ καὶ ἰδοὺ δύο τυφλοὶ καθήμενοι παρὰ τὴν ὁδὸν ἀκούσαντες ὅτι Ἰησοῦς παράγει, ἔκραξαν λέγοντες· ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, [κύριε,] υἱὸς Δαυίδ.

³¹ ὁ δὲ ὄχλος ἐπετίμησεν αὐτοῖς ἵνα σιωπήσωσιν· οἱ δὲ μείζον ἔκραξαν λέγοντες· ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, κύριε, υἱὸς Δαυίδ.

³² καὶ σταῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐφώνησεν αὐτοὺς καὶ εἶπεν· τί θέλετε ποιήσω ὑμῖν;

³³ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· κύριε, ἵνα ἀνοιγῶσιν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἡμῶν.

³⁴ σπλαγχνισθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἥψατο τῶν ὀμμάτων αὐτῶν, καὶ εὐθέως ἀνέβλεψαν καὶ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ.

Translation:

²⁹ And as they were going out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him.

³⁰ And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out and said, "Have mercy on us, [Lord]⁷⁶³, Son of David!"

³¹ But the crowd rebuked them that they should be silent. But they cried out all the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, Lord⁷⁶⁴, Son of David."

³² Jesus stopped, called them, and said, "What do you want me to do for you?"

³³ They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened."

³⁴ Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

As in the previous passages, the setting in the context plays an important role for the understanding of the text and therefore we shall turn our attention to this matter now. Within Matthew's narrative composition, the healing of the two blind men (20,29-34) is placed at the end of a narrative block (19,1-20,34), which records events that took place after Jesus has left Galilee and made his way to Jerusalem. The block begins with a report of Jesus' healing of the crowds (Matt 19,2 – cf. 12,15; 14,14; 15,30); it continues with an account of various reactions to Jesus (a negative reaction of the Pharisees in Matt 19,3-12; a positive reaction of the parents who bring their children to Jesus, contrasted with the reaction of the disciples in 19,13-15; the question of the rich young man in 19,16-22; the request of James' and John's mother in 20,20-23) and with his continuous teaching of the disciples (19,10-12; 19,14; 19,23-30; 20,1-16; 20,24-28), including the third prediction of suffering (20,17-19).

This narrative block is immediately followed by reports of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem (21,1-11) and his healing in the temple

⁷⁶³ It is uncertain whether the first cry of the two blind men includes the address κύριε or not. The address is preserved in P^{45vid}, C, W, f¹ TR sy^{p,h} sa^{ms} but is missing in κ, D, Θ, f¹³. A final decision concerning the original text can not be made.

⁷⁶⁴ B D L Z Θ κ f¹³ lat sy^p sa^{mss} bo have the word order κύριε ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς "Lord, have mercy on us" which is rather secondary. Cf. Luz, Matthew, 2:548, n. 1. Differently Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:107, n. 23.

(21,14-16) where he is hailed by the crowds (21,9) and even by the children (21,14) as the Son of David, which leads to the escalation of the conflict between him and Israel's religious leaders (21,15-16; 21,23-22,46).

It is exactly at this point – i.e., at the end of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and before his triumphant entry into the city, where Matthew, following Mark 10,46-52, resp. Mark 10,1-11, narrates the story of the two blind men, who approach Jesus crying ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, [κύριε,] υἱὸς Δαυίδ, acknowledging thus once more⁷⁶⁵ Jesus' messianic identity and simultaneously his (Solomon-like) healing ability. As summarized by Hagner:

“The present passage thus at once rounds out the preceding main section of the Gospel and serves as a transition to the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem and the events to occur there. The present miracle has the effect of confirming the messianic identity of Jesus as the Son of David. With sovereign power he brings sight to the blind, and they respond by following him in discipleship – all this in strong contrast to the way he will be received by the Jerusalem authorities.”⁷⁶⁶

The importance of this passage lies not only in its transition function but also in its summarizing one. In the exegesis of Matt 9,27-31 we have concluded that the title Son of David, used there for the first time in a form of an address, placed the entire miracle cycle of chapters 8 and 9 into a Davidic framework and that it somehow “sums up the experience of Jesus as a healer in the preceding episodes.”⁷⁶⁷ The same is also true here, only on a larger scale.

“It is likely that some kind of bracketing effect is intended: 9:27-31 summed up in itself the healing ministry of chaps. 8-9, and 20:30-34 is the last pre-Jerusalem healing *and* apart from the summary statement in Mt 21,14 (which again involves healing of the blind) this is *also* the last healing account of the Gospel. Given the thread of Son of David references between, Matthew perhaps intends to emphasize that Jesus' healing ministry

⁷⁶⁵ It is unnecessary to point out again that the cry here shares the same meaning as in the previous version of this story (9,27-31) as well as in Matt 15,21-28 and in Matt 12,22-24 (in the form of a question) and that Matthew is consistent in his usage of the cry.

⁷⁶⁶ Hagner, Matthew, 2:584-585. Hagner however denies the relevance of the Solomon as exorcist and healer tradition for this passage. Cf. Luz, Matthew, 2:548.

⁷⁶⁷ Novakovic, Messiah, 81

has been an exercise of his role as the messianic Son of David and has been recognized as such by, among others, the physically blind but spiritually insightful.”⁷⁶⁸ “Hence the scene functions as a summary healing which recalls important features of Jesus' previous miracles.”⁷⁶⁹

Concerning the sources, Matt 20,29-34, as well as Matt 9,27-31, is based primarily on Mark 10,46-52 – the healing of the blind beggar Bartimaeus, but it has also been influenced by Mark's healing of the blind man in Bethsaida (Mark 8,22-26; omitted by Matthew), where the motif of healing by touch (ἄπτω – cf. Mark 8,22) and return of sight (ἀναβλέπω – cf. Mark 8,24) also are present.

The present pericope besides bears traces of assimilation (in wording⁷⁷⁰) to the previous version of this story – namely to Matt 9,27-31. Similarly as Matt 9,27-31, also Matt 20,29-34 differs from Mark's version (Mark 10,46-52) on several important points⁷⁷¹ such as: the doubling of the blind; reformulation of the blind men's cry from υἱὸς Δαυίδ, ἐλέησόν με (Mark 10,47-48) into ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, [κύριε,] υἱὸς Δαυίδ⁷⁷² (Matt 20,30-31); changing the blind men's address of Jesus from ῥαββουνί (Mark 10,51) into κύριε (Matt 20,33), and finally Matthew's omission of Mark's reference to the blind men's faith (Mark 10,52: ὕπαγε, ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε) and its replacement with a reference to Jesus' compassion (σπλαγχνισθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς) in Matt 20,34.

The structure of this pericope is quite simple; in its centre lies the twofold cry ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, [κύριε,] υἱὸς Δαυίδ (Matt 20,30-31) followed by the reaction of the crowd (20,31a) and Jesus (20,32.34). Matt 20,29 sets the scene and Matt 20,34 encloses it with a report of the healing and following.

⁷⁶⁸ Nolland, Matthew, 828. *Italics mine*. Cf. with Davies and Allison, who speak about an inclusio here. Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:109.

⁷⁶⁹ Carter, Matthew and the Margins, 407.

⁷⁷⁰ Cf. Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:109.

⁷⁷¹ For an enumeration of all the differences between Matt 20,29-34 and Mark 10,46-52, see Gundry, Matthew, 404-406; Hagner, Matthew, 2:585-586.

⁷⁷² According to the Blass and Debrunner, Matthew's nominative υἱὸς Δαυίδ represents the semitized vocative nominative. Blass and Debrunner, A Greek Grammar, 81-82, § 147.

Thus, this pericope can be divided into two main scenes: in the first one (Matt 20,29-30) the two blind men cry out for mercy (20,30) to Jesus,⁷⁷³ who, followed by a crowd (20,29), passes by. In their cry ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, [κύριε,] υἱὸς Δαυὶδ they, similarly as the two blind men in Matt 9,27-31 and the Canaanite woman in 15,21-28, express their desperation and need, their faith in Jesus' messianic identity (which will be stressed in the next pericope in Matt 21,9) as well as in his ability to heal, based on his resemblance with Solomon⁷⁷⁴ (stressed in 21,14-15). And, last but not least, they express also their faith in Jesus' mercy and compassion. They, the no-accounts, the marginal nobodies, the blind "address Jesus with two titles of respect in contrast to the mother of James and John, who uses none (20:21),"⁷⁷⁵ expressing their need, subordination and dependence.

The blind men are rebuked by the crowd and ordered to be silent (20,31a). The crowd reacts here as the disciples did in Matt 15,23 and 19,13, providing obstacles to those who want to approach Jesus.⁷⁷⁶ The crowd's opposition results in repetition and intensification of the blind men's cry⁷⁷⁷ which causes Jesus to stop, calling directly to them (unlike Mark 10,49) and asking what they want (20,32).

Jesus' question τί θέλετε ποιήσω ὑμῖν (20,32) "expresses his own readiness to serve (cf. v. 28)..."⁷⁷⁸ and provides "an opportunity for the blind men to express their faith through their request. Thus although this pericope does not

⁷⁷³ Matthew has omitted Mark's Ναζαρητός (Mark 10,47) because "der Davidide Jesus ist nach Matthäus in Bethlehem geboren." Burger, Jesus als Davidsohn, 74.

⁷⁷⁴ See the exegesis of Matt 9,27-31. Cf. Carter, Matthew and the Margins, 409.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid., 409. Cf. Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:110.

⁷⁷⁶ The reason for the crowd's rebuke is not given. It can hardly be due to the usage of the title Son of David by the two blind men, as the crowds will hail Jesus by the same title in the next pericope. On the motif of opposition in healing stories, see Theissen, Miracle Stories, 56-57.

⁷⁷⁷ Matt 20,31b creates thus on the one hand a parallelism to 20,30, and on the other hand it connects the pericope with the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter (15,21-28) where the theme of persistence in faith in spite of obstacles is prominent. Other links are the similarity of context (plea for healing/exorcism), the usage of the same titles (υἱὸς Δαυὶδ and κύριος), the role of faith (not stressed directly in Matt 20,29-34, however still present), the repetition of the cry for help (although in different words) and the theme of Jesus' mercy.

⁷⁷⁸ Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:108.

stress faith as does the similar story in 9:28 (or the parallel in Mark 10:52), it is clearly implied in the request ἵνα ἀνοιγῶσιν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἡμῶν"⁷⁷⁹ and strengthened by the usage of the address κύριε (instead of Mark's ῥαββουνι)⁷⁸⁰ in the third petition (20,33); an address which once again underlines the superior status of Jesus.

The answer of the two blind men (and thus their persisting faith) moves Jesus to compassion (σπλαγχνισθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς) and he heals them by touching their eyes (20,34). By changing Mark's ὑπάγε, ἢ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε (Mark 10,52) into σπλαγχνισθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Matthew has shifted the focus from the faith of the two blind men – i.e., from a motif which has been stressed already in the previous version of this story in Matt 9,27-31 but which however does not cease to be important here;⁷⁸¹ to Jesus' compassion, which has been demonstrated in Jesus' whole ministry (cf. 9,36; 14,14; 15,32), especially in his healings and exorcisms (9,27-31; 15,21-28; 17,14-21).

In doing this, Matthew intended to stress once more (cf. comment on 9,29), before Jesus' entry in Jerusalem, that Jesus is not the political warlike Messiah, but a humble, meek, merciful messianic king, the Son of David, who not only possesses the exorcistic/healing powers reminiscent of Solomon's ones, but who is also ready to use them on behalf of his people, when beseeched for mercy.⁷⁸² In his compassionate healing of the two blind men, Jesus reacts in accordance with the words of a Psalm ascribed to Solomon – namely Ps 72,12-13: "For he will rescue the needy who calls to him, and the poor who has no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death."⁷⁸³

⁷⁷⁹ Hagner, Matthew, 2:587-588.

⁷⁸⁰ Mark 10,51, cf. Matt 9,28 and the threefold usage of the title κύριος in Matt 15,22; 15,25 and 15,27.

⁷⁸¹ Contra Duling, who claims "The blind men are healed, however, not because of their 'faith', as in Mark, but because of Jesus' 'compassion'." Duling, "Therapeutic Son of David," 404.

⁷⁸² Exactly these two points Matthew will stress again in the two following stories – in Jesus' entry to Jerusalem (21,1-11) and in the healing in the temple (21,12-17).

⁷⁸³ Although Matthew does not quote Ps 72,12-13 on this place the possible association on the side of his readers should not be excluded.

The healing, itself, is reported as being immediate. The fact, that Jesus heals the two blind men, represents, similarly as in the case of Matt 9,27-31, Jesus' approval of the blind men's faith in his healing abilities in his capacity of the Son of David, as well as the accuracy of the usage of the title Son of David and Lord within their plea for mercy of healing.⁷⁸⁴

The healing is achieved by Jesus' touching the blind men's eyes. Surprisingly, no accompanying words by Jesus are mentioned (cf. Matt 9,29). May it be that Matthew wanted to stress amongst other things "the power of Jesus' touch"⁷⁸⁵ – i.e., the extraordinary of his healings? Is Luz correct in his claim, that "the climax of the story is that Jesus heals by touch (ἄπτω) without saying anything"?⁷⁸⁶

I think that this is a possible option, although I would argue that this is not the only climax of our story. In Matt 9,33, Matthew stressed the uniqueness of Jesus' healing activity in the history of Israel and, as we have suggested, he may also have thought this with regard to the way in which Jesus healed and exorcized. In Matt 12,42, as we have concluded, Matthew has stressed Jesus' superiority over Solomon in wisdom, which included his healings and exorcisms, and thus placed Jesus' miraculous healings above those of Solomon. Therefore it is not impossible that he would include this idea also here. In fact, this theme works well at this juncture because Matthew in this story intentionally re-alludes to the main themes (such as the theme of faith, compassion, Jesus' power and ability to heal and exorcize reminiscent of and comparable with Solomon, themes of obstacles, proper reaction, etc.) which were already prominent in previous healing stories. Especially in the narratives where the designation Son of David was used (9,27-31; 12,22-24; 15,21-28;).

The result of this healing is that the two blind men are able to see and follow Jesus (20,34). The motif of following on the one hand re-alludes to the

⁷⁸⁴ Cf. Chilton, "Jesus ben David," 101.

⁷⁸⁵ Nolland, Matthew, 829.

⁷⁸⁶ Luz, Matthew, 2:549.

beginning of the narrative block where the crowds also followed Jesus and were healed (Matt 19,1-2 – cf. Matt 12,15; 14,13-14),⁷⁸⁷ on the other hand it represents an exemplary reaction to Jesus' mercy – namely discipleship.

Summary:

The healing of the two blind men in Matt 20,29-34 is a further healing story which applies the designation Son of David within a plea for mercy. As in Matt 9,27-31 and 15,21-28, Matthew connects the title υἱὸς Δαυίδ with κύριος title, emphasizing their interrelation. Here too the title υἱὸς Δαυίδ serves as an expression of faith and confidence in Jesus' ability to heal and as recognition of Jesus' messianic identity. As well, by granting the two blind men's request, Jesus approves the regular usage of the address Son of David and Lord within the plea for healing.

Chae refutes the relevance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition for the interpretation of Matt 20,29-34 on behalf of his shepherd tradition, by pointing out that "Solomon was not known as a healer, nor was he known for compassion."⁷⁸⁸ However, his first objection loses its force in the light of our findings in chapter 2 where we demonstrated that: it is not adequate to the way of thinking in antiquity to stress too much the difference between healing and exorcism; in *T. Sol.* 18 various diseases are caused by demons (including blindness);⁷⁸⁹ and Solomon was known not only as an exorcist, but also as a healer.

Concerning the compassion of Solomon, Chae is only partially right. Solomon was truly not primarily known for his compassion, but for his wisdom and wealth. However, in Psalm 72, ascribed to Solomon (72,1), compassion belongs to the character of the king (Ps 72,12-13). If we assume that the words of the Psalm originally referred to Solomon, then it can be hardly claimed, that "besides its weak link with Jesus' healing activity, the figure of Solomon completely lacks the compassionate and messianic features of Jesus as the Son

⁷⁸⁷ Here is the order reversed – the blind men are first healed and only then they follow Jesus.

⁷⁸⁸ Chae, Davidic Shepherd, 319. Similarly Gundry, Mark, 600-601.

⁷⁸⁹ Cf. Charlesworth, "The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus," 81-82.

of David in Matt 20:30-31.⁷⁹⁰ The link between Jesus' and Solomon's healing activity is far from weak (cf. Matt 12,42). Nor can Solomon's lack of compassion be taken for granted. If nothing else, then in *T. Sol.* 20,1, Solomon is asked for mercy with an almost similar phrase as Jesus in Matthew's Gospel: βασιλεῦ Σολομῶν υἱὸς Δαυεὶδ, ἐλέησόν με τὸ γέρας. Does he really lack any compassion?

There are further similarities between Matt 9,27-31 and Matt 20,29-34, namely their summary function. Matt 20,29-34 serves as a kind of summary which sums up and simultaneously, by various catchwords and similar themes, recalls Jesus' whole healing ministry, re-stressing first of all its merciful character (20,34) and its uniqueness. By drawing attention to Jesus' compassion rather than to the blind men's faith (at least directly), Matthew stresses once again that Jesus, the Son of David, possesses not only the healing powers like Solomon, but that he is also ready to use these powers on behalf of his people when asked for mercy. Thus the merciful character⁷⁹¹ of the Davidic Messiah comes to the forefront. Finally, Matthew once again re-alludes to the theme of those, who, although physically blind, can see and recognize what others (namely Israel's leaders) can not – the true identity of Jesus. These blind men also react properly to Jesus, unlike other sighted fold (20,34). Thus in this text, blindness has also, but not only, a metaphorical significance.⁷⁹²

3.7. The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem and the Healing of the Blind and the Lame in the Temple (Matt 21,1-17)

The triumphant entry into Jerusalem (21,1-11) and the healing of the blind and the lame in the temple (21,12-17) are the next narratives, brought together by Matthew in a single episode in which the designation the Son of David, once

⁷⁹⁰ Chae, Davidic Shepherd, 319.

⁷⁹¹ Cf. Müller's expression: "Jesus is, so to say, God's mercy in person." Müller, "Figure of Jesus in Matthew," 172.

⁷⁹² Cf. Luz, Matthew, 2:549; Gibbs, "Purpose and Pattern in Matthew's Use of the Title 'Son of David'," 451-453; Suhl, "Der Davidsson im Matthäus Evangelium," 80; Loader, "Son of David, Blindness, Possession, and Duality in Matthew," 570-585.

again in its titular form, is applied to Jesus – in the first case by the accompanying crowds (21,9), in the second one by the children in the temple (21,15). In the first instance, Matthew presents Jesus (but not exclusively) as the royal Messiah. In the second instance, he stresses, for the last time, Jesus' merciful character (demonstrated in his healings) and his resemblance to Solomon. At this point this episode thematically, as well as verbally,⁷⁹³ closely follows the episode of the healing of the two blind men (20,29-34).

Text:

¹ Καὶ ὅτε ἤγγισαν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ ἦλθον εἰς Βηθφαγὴ εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν, τότε Ἰησοῦς ἀπέστειλεν δύο μαθητὰς

² λέγων αὐτοῖς· πορεύεσθε εἰς τὴν κώμην τὴν κατέναντι ὑμῶν, καὶ εὐθέως εὐρήσετε ὄνον δεδεμένην καὶ πῶλον μετ' αὐτῆς· λύσαντες ἀγάγετέ μοι.

³ καὶ ἐάν τις ὑμῖν εἴπη τι, ἐρεῖτε ὅτι ὁ κύριος αὐτῶν χρεῖαν ἔχει· εὐθὺς δὲ ἀποστελεῖ αὐτούς.

⁴ τοῦτο δὲ γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος·

⁵ εἶπατε τῇ θυγατρὶ Σιών· ἰδοὺ ὁ βασιλεὺς σου ἔρχεται σοιπραῦς καὶ ἐπιβεβηκῶς ἐπὶ ὄνον καὶ ἐπὶ πῶλον υἱὸν ὑποζυγίου.

⁶ πορευθέντες δὲ οἱ μαθηταὶ καὶ ποιήσαντες καθὼς συνέταξεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς

⁷ ἤγαγον τὴν ὄνον καὶ τὸν πῶλον καὶ ἐπέθηκαν ἐπ' αὐτῶν τὰ ἱμάτια, καὶ ἐπεκάθισεν ἐπάνω αὐτῶν.

⁸ ὁ δὲ πλεῖστος ὄχλος ἔστρωσαν ἑαυτῶν τὰ ἱμάτια ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ἄλλοι δὲ ἔκοπτον κλάδους ἀπὸ τῶν δένδρων καὶ ἐστρώννουν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ.

⁹ οἱ δὲ ὄχλοι οἱ προάγοντες αὐτὸν καὶ οἱ ἀκολουθοῦντες ἔκραζον λέγοντες· ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ· εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου· ὡσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.

¹⁰ Καὶ εἰσελθόντος αὐτοῦ εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἐσείσθη πᾶσα ἡ πόλις λέγουσα· τίς ἐστιν οὗτος;

¹¹ οἱ δὲ ὄχλοι ἔλεγον· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ προφήτης Ἰησοῦς ὁ ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ τῆς Γαλιλαίας.

⁷⁹³ For verbal links between Matt 21,1-17 and 20,39-34, see Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:113.

¹² Καὶ εἰσῆλθεν Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὸ ἱερόν καὶ ἐξέβαλεν πάντας τοὺς πωλοῦντας καὶ ἀγοράζοντας ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, καὶ τὰς τραπέζας τῶν κολλυβιστῶν κατέστρεψεν καὶ τὰς καθέδρας τῶν πωλούντων τὰς περιστεράς,

¹³ καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· γέγραπται· ὁ οἶκός μου οἶκος προσευχῆς κληθήσεται, ὑμεῖς δὲ αὐτὸν ποιεῖτε σπήλαιον ληστῶν.

¹⁴ καὶ προσῆλθον αὐτῷ τυφλοὶ καὶ χωλοὶ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτούς.

¹⁵ ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς τὰ θαυμάσια ἃ ἐποίησεν καὶ τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς κράζοντας ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ λέγοντας· ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ, ἠγανάκτησαν

¹⁶ καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ἀκούεις τί οὗτοι λέγουσιν; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτοῖς· ναί. οὐδέποτε ἀνέγνωτε ὅτι ἐκ στόματος νηπίων καὶ θηλαζόντων κατηρτίσω αἶνον;

¹⁷ καὶ καταλιπὼν αὐτοὺς ἐξῆλθεν ἔξω τῆς πόλεως εἰς Βηθανίαν καὶ ἠύλισθη ἐκεῖ.

Translation:

¹ And when they came near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,

² saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me.

³ And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say that the Lord needs them. And he will immediately send them.”

⁴ This took place in order that it would be fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet, saying,

⁵ “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, gentle and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them.

⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt and placed the garments on them, and he sat on them.

⁸ A very large crowd spread their garments on the road and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

⁹ And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting “Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”

¹⁰ And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?”

¹¹ And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.”

¹² And Jesus entered the temple and cast out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves.

¹³ And he said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you are turning it into a den of robbers!”

¹⁴ And blind and lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant,

¹⁶ and said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read that ‘Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise?’”

¹⁷ And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

As indicated in previous exegesis, Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem (21,1-11) and his healing of the blind and the lame in the temple (21,12-17) closely follow the healing of the two blind men in Matt 20,29-34, which represents a summary of Jesus’ healing ministry, and simultaneously serves as a transition to the Jerusalem episode.

Thus with Matt 21,1-17, the fifth narrative block of Matthew’s Gospel (21,1-22,46) begins. At the same time, Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem (21,1-11) and his healing of the blind and the lame (21,12-17) create “an important dividing point in the Gospel. The Galilean ministry has come to an end, and the journey to Jerusalem has been completed. Now all that remains

are the events, the deeds and teaching in Jerusalem, that are preliminary to the goal and climax of the entire Gospel narrative.”⁷⁹⁴

With Matt 21,1-17, the final encounter between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders begins – in the heart of Israel’s religious centre, in Jerusalem and its temple. This encounter is intensified by a series of controversies starting with the clearing of the temple (Matt 21,12-13); the acceptance of praise from children after the healing of the blind and the lame (21,14-16). It escalates in the questioning of Jesus’ authority (21,23-27); in questions concerning paying taxes (22,15-22), the resurrection (22,23-33), the greatest commandment (22,34-40), and finally, in the question about David’s Son (22,41-46); and in Jesus’ parables of the two sons (21,28-32), the wicked tenants (21,33-46) and the wedding banquet (22,1-14); finally in Jesus’ castigation of the Scribes and Pharisees (21,1-36). The conflict will escalate into a plot planned by the chief priests, and the elders of the people, to kill Jesus (26,3-5). A plot, which will be successful (26,47-27,56).

Concerning the sources, Matt 21,1-17 is based primarily on Mark 11,1-11 and Mark 11,15-19. Matthew does not feel compelled to closely follow his sources and makes several important changes in his text.⁷⁹⁵ First of all, Matthew linked the triumphant entry (21,1-9) with the temple clearing (21,12-13), two events originally separated in Mark’s Gospel by the cursing of the fig tree pericope (Mark 11,12-14), into one episode taking place on the same day. Further, Matthew filled the gap between Matt 21,1-9 and 21,12-13 with the insertion of a transitional scene (21,10-11), which has no parallel in Mark or Luke. He also added a scene of where the healing of the blind and the lame occurs (21,14-16) – also without any direct parallel in the Synoptics – after the temple cleansing. This ensures that the healing scene is the climax of the whole episode of Matt 21,1-17.

Another important change is the addition of the fulfillment quotation from Zech 9,9 (resp. Isa 62,11 + Zech 9,9) into Matt 21,4-5 and the sequential doubling of Mark’s colt (11,2) into a donkey and a colt (Matt 21,2). Matthew’s

⁷⁹⁴ Hagner, Matthew, 2:591.

⁷⁹⁵ For detailed analysis of Matthew’s changes, see Luz, Matthew, 3:4-7; Gundry, Matthew, 406-415; Hagner, Matthew, 2:591-593; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:113, 134.

doubling of the colt was not due to his ignorance of the rules of Hebrew poetry as Burger thinks,⁷⁹⁶ but due to a desire to demonstrate that Jesus literally fulfills an Old Testament prophecy.⁷⁹⁷

Besides, Matthew changed the acclamation of the crowds from Mark’s ὡσαννά· εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου· εὐλογημένη ἡ ἐρχομένη βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Δαυίδ· ὡσαννά ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις. (Mark 11,9-10) into ὡσαννά τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ· εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου· ὡσαννά ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις (Matt 21,9). In doing this he switched the focus of the text from “the coming kingdom of our father David” to the coming of the Son of David (the designation is used in titular form), i.e., from the too narrow political level to the Christological one, from the Davidic kingdom to the person of Jesus, the messianic Son of David; to his importance and role.

That the title the Son of David, and its connotations, are important for Matthew more than the motif of the Davidic kingdom is even more apparent in Matt 21,15 where Matthew lets the children, who witnessed Jesus’ healing of the blind and the lame, repeat the cry ὡσαννά τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ – re-alluding and re-summarizing once more the healing ministry of Jesus, the Son of David, the messianic king (21,9) and healer like Solomon (21,15).

Concerning the structure, the episode can be divided into several scenes. In the first scene, Jesus approaches Jerusalem and instructs (on the basis of his miraculous foreknowledge) two of his disciples to bring him a donkey and a colt from the nearby village (21,1-3). In commandeering the animals the Lord⁷⁹⁸ Jesus exercises his royal right,⁷⁹⁹ demonstrating his authority as the Messianic king, who has, like Adam in paradise, authority over animals (Gen 1,26-30)⁸⁰⁰ and nature (cf. Matt 8,23-27; 14,25-33).

⁷⁹⁶ Burger, Jesus als Davidsohn, 84-85.

⁷⁹⁷ Cf. Novakovic, Messiah, 86. For other possible explanations, see *ibid.*, n. 30; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:120-121.

⁷⁹⁸ The title ὁ κύριος is used as self designation of Jesus.

⁷⁹⁹ “Kings and their delegated representatives had the power of impressment, or angaria, over property or labor (see 5:41; 27:32).” Carter, Matthew and the Margins, 415.

⁸⁰⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 415-416; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:117.

Matthew further informs his readers that “this took place in order that it would be fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet”, quoting, unlike Mark and Luke (but cf. John 12,15), the messianic prophecy from Zech 9,9,⁸⁰¹ slightly modified by Isa 62,11 LXX.⁸⁰² By adding this quotation, Matthew again stresses (cf. Matt 2,2) that Jesus is the true Messianic king, the Son of David who was about to come, but simultaneously, he demonstrates (due to the quotation and animals’ selection) that Jesus is not a political Messiah or a warrior or conqueror,⁸⁰³ who would come to liberate and purify Jerusalem from its enemies (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17), but that he is a humble, gentle, and meek (πραῦς) king of Israel who “did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (20,28).

“That Jesus rides on a donkey and on the colt of a donkey, *and not on the war horse*, is to be understood as an expression of his kindness, peaceableness, and gentleness,”⁸⁰⁴ which Matthew previously stressed in Jesus’ healings, exorcisms and in Jesus’ own words (cf. Matt 11,29). The fact, that Jesus rides sitting on the donkey (21,7) – on the animal of meekness, burden, and peace, has however two more meanings. Firstly, it brings to the forefront Jesus’ resemblance to David’s son, Solomon, who rode sitting on David’s mule to be anointed king in Gihon (1 Kgs 1,32-40).⁸⁰⁵ The resemblance is based not only on the similarity of the motifs, but also on the verbal agreement between Matt 21,7 (ἐπεκάθισεν) and 1 Kgs 1,38.44 (ἐπεκάθισαν). Secondly, the fact that Jesus

⁸⁰¹ That this text was understood by rabbis as being messianic is attested to in *b. Sanh.* 98a; *Gen. Rab.* 75,6.

⁸⁰² Matthew replaced Zechariah’s introductory phrase “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!” with a similar phrase from Isa 62,11 “Say to the daughter of Zion” in order to adapt the quotation into his narrative framework of Matt 21,1-11 and to stress a twofold reaction regarding Jesus. While the following crowds recognize Jesus as the king, the Son of David (21,8-9), Jerusalem and its citizens do not, nor do they welcome the coming king. Paradoxically, the inhabitants of Jerusalem must be told by the crowds that the king is coming (21,10-11). The city does not rejoice from his coming, but is shaken (ἐσεισθη) – cf. Matt 2,3. That Matthew skips Zechariah’s (Zech 9,9 LXX) description of the coming king as δίκαιος καὶ σώζων αὐτόν is rather surprising. Could it be that “the words are omitted perhaps to focus on the humility of Jesus” as Hagner thinks? Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:594. Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:119.

⁸⁰³ Cf. our analysis of the “classical royal messianic expectations” in chapter 2.2.

⁸⁰⁴ Luz, *Matthew*, 3:8. *Italics mine*.

⁸⁰⁵ Cf. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 414; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:117, 123.

does not approach the city on foot, as a normal pilgrim would do, but rides, “reflects his extraordinary status: *it is* the king who sits (cf. 19.28: καθίζω + ἐπὶ; 20.21: καθίζω).”⁸⁰⁶

Jesus is followed by a very large crowd⁸⁰⁷ which spreads garments before his feet on the road, thus recognizing Jesus’ authority,⁸⁰⁸ glorifying him and simultaneously expressing their own submission to the coming king (21,8). Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road⁸⁰⁹ in order to pay homage to Jesus: “In a similar way it was customary with the visit of kings or of other high persons to cover the streets with branches or to throw flowers at the visitors. Thus the portrayal is reminiscent of the jubilation at the entry of secular rulers.”⁸¹⁰ “The double reference to the road/way recalls 20:30, in which this king, son of David, heals the blind and offers new life to the marginal.”⁸¹¹

The crowds surround Jesus and celebrate his arrival with the cry ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ, εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου ὡσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις; hailing him as the royal Davidic Messiah. In their cry (taken partly from the messianic Psalm 118,25-26)⁸¹² they join⁸¹³ the two blind men (20,29-34;⁸¹⁴ 9,27-31), as well as the Canaanite woman (15,21-28), who have recognized Jesus as Israel’s Messiah, the Son of David, and addressed him as

⁸⁰⁶ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:123. *Italics mine*.

⁸⁰⁷ Matthew has replaced Mark’s καὶ πολλοὶ (Mark 11,8) with ὁ δὲ πλείστος ὄχλος (Matt 21,8).

⁸⁰⁸ Cf. 2 Kgs 9,12-13; Josephus, *Ant.* 9,111; Plutarch, *Cat. Min.* 12,1.

⁸⁰⁹ For branches as part of a celebration/procession, see 1 Macc 13,51; 2 Macc 10,7. Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 3:9, n. 55.

⁸¹⁰ Luz, *Matthew*, 3:9. On the similarities between Jesus’ entry and a Roman triumph, see Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 414.

⁸¹¹ Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 417.

⁸¹² For messianic interpretation of Ps 118, see *Midr. Ps.* 118 (§22) = 244a in Str-B 1:850.

⁸¹³ I have certain reservations regarding Nolland’s claim that “impressed by their healing, Matthew’s crowds have taken up on the insight of the blind people in 20:30-31.” Nolland, *Matthew*, 838.

⁸¹⁴ The importance of the link between 20,29-34 and 21,1-9 is underlined by overlapping vocabulary. Cf. δύο (20,30 – 21,1); υἱὸς Δαυίδ (20,30 – 21,9); ὁδός (20,30 – 21,8); κύριος (20,30 – 21,3), etc. See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:113.

such. What the crowds only assumed in 12,22-24, they express now with certainty. Jesus is the Son of David.

The reader of Matthew's Gospel knows already, that Jesus is not a political or war-like Messiah, but a humble and merciful king, the Son of David whose activity is first of all that of healing (9,29-31; 12,22-24; 15,21-28; 20,29-34). It is this activity of the Davidic Messiah which will be re-stressed in the scene of Jesus' healing in the temple (21,14-16) where the cry ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυὶδ will be repeated by the children.

For now however, the stress of the text is Jesus' royal identity, authority and character. This does not mean that one should exclude any possible associations with the Solomon as exorcist tradition in Matt 21,9! Although the main focus of this passage lies without question on the royal messianism, there is an allusion to Solomon in Matt 21,7 (to 1 Kgs 1,34.40), and more importantly, Jesus was asked for mercy of healing in his capacity of the Son of David in the previous pericope (20,29-34), and he will be recognized as the Son of David after healing the blind and the lame in the temple in the following text (21,14-17). As a result, I find it difficult to limit the Son of David title, in Matt 21,9, only to royal messianic expectations and to exclude any Solomonic allusion.

Jesus, the Son of David (21,9) and Lord (21,3) enters Jerusalem and "although the king rides into the city humbly upon the lowly colt of an ass, the crowds bring him into the city with a public demonstration befitting a king."⁸¹⁵ The city, however, does not recognize or welcome this king, but is shaken (Matt 21,10 cf. Matt 2,3) and asks who Jesus is (τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος – Matt 21,10)? The crowds who followed Jesus⁸¹⁶ answer the question with words οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ προφήτης Ἰησοῦς ὁ ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ τῆς Γαλιλαίας (21,11).

⁸¹⁵ Hagner, Matthew, 2:595.

⁸¹⁶ Contra Nolland who identifies οἱ δὲ ὄχλοι as the Jerusalem crowds. Nolland, Matthew, 840. Similarly Hagner, Matthew, 2:596.

Their answer is not incorrect or inappropriate. It does not betray a lack of understanding by the crowds, as Kingsbury⁸¹⁷ or Novakovic⁸¹⁸ think. The answer signifies also more than just a positive statement.⁸¹⁹ Rather it is a further expression of Jesus' importance: "Jesus has just performed a prophetic sign action which contrasts God's empire and Jesus the meek king with imperial militarism and tyranny. He will perform further sign action in 21:12-17, 18-22. And Jesus called himself a prophet in 13:57."⁸²⁰ And now he enters the city which has a reputation for killing prophets (23,37). And thus although Jesus' prophethood may lack prominence elsewhere in the first Gospel, the inclusivism of Matthew's Christology leaves room for it.⁸²¹ Luz rightly notes:

"The answer of the crowds leaves open the question whether the crowds, after their acclamation of v. 9, are thinking of the eschatological prophet whom people expected on the basis of Deut 18:15 or, as in 14:5 and 16:14 (cf. 21:26, 46), of a regular prophet, namely, the well-known prophet from Nazareth."⁸²²

The answer of the crowd is, however, correct. Besides, one could ask, what the other answer could be. It is nonsense to assume, that "prophet" is used as an explanation for the title Son of David. In the first century C.E. the Son of David was a well established title with clear connotations, so it would not be necessary to explain it. The answer of the crowd is the only plausible one for the question about the identity⁸²³ of the one, who just came to Jerusalem and was hailed as the messianic Son of David. If we add that Jesus was believed to be a prophet (16,14), and he himself, at least on one occasion, designated himself as a prophet (13,57), the intelligibility of the crowd's answer is

⁸¹⁷ Kingsbury, "The Title 'Son of David' in Matthew's Gospel," 600. Kingsbury generally sees the role of the crowds as a negative: the crowds together with Israel's leaders do not see the truth and they do not recognize Jesus as Messiah. (Cf. *ibid.*, 599-601.)

⁸¹⁸ Novakovic, Messiah, 90.

⁸¹⁹ Luz, Matthew, 3:10.

⁸²⁰ Carter, Matthew and the Margins, 417.

⁸²¹ Gundry, Matthew, 412.

⁸²² Luz, Matthew, 3:10. *Italics mine.*

⁸²³ Cf. Konradt, Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium, 106.

plausible. The reaction of the crowd is in sharp contrast to the reaction of the Holy city and its inhabitants.

Immediately after the triumphant entry Jesus goes directly to the temple where, acting with extraordinary authority, he performs a prophetic symbolic act,⁸²⁴ accompanied by words from the Scriptures (combination of Isa 56,7 and Jer 7,11). He drives out the merchants and money changers (21,12-13), declaring judgment and “divine disfavor”⁸²⁵ over the temple and those who control it.

This first act of disruption is followed by a second one when the blind and the lame come to Jesus in the temple, just as they did in Galilee (11,5; 15,30-31; for the blind see: 9,27-31; 12,22-24; 20,29-34), and he, “the Son of David, who always healed the sick among the people, heals them also, and he does it in the center of Israel, in the temple.”⁸²⁶ It is the last time that Jesus heals in Matthew’s Gospel and it is also the only (Mark has none) positive miracle performed by Jesus in Jerusalem. As Kingsbury rightly concluded, “Matthew intends this scene (21:14-16), the final time in the Gospel that Jesus acts in his capacity as the Son of David, to ‘sum up’ in a climactic way his ministry of healing.”⁸²⁷ His conclusion is further supported by Paffenroth’s observation that the omitting of any reference to Jesus’ teaching on the first day in Jerusalem ensured that “Jesus’ time in the temple has been transformed by Matthew into the climax of Jesus’ healing ministry.”⁸²⁸

In his healing of the blind and the lame, Jesus, the Son of David, is contrasted⁸²⁹ with King David, who according to 2 Sam 5,8⁸³⁰ killed the hated

⁸²⁴ On the resemblance of Jesus’ act with exorcism, see Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 418-419.

⁸²⁵ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:134. On the various interpretations of Jesus’ act, see Luz, *Matthew*, 3:10-12; Keener, *Matthew*, 495-501.

⁸²⁶ Luz, *Matthew*, 3:12.

⁸²⁷ Kingsbury, “The Title ‘Son of David’ in Matthew’s Gospel,” 598.

⁸²⁸ Paffenroth, “Jesus as Anointed and Healing Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew,” 550.

⁸²⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 553; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:140; Gundry, *Matthew*, 413; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 420.

blind and lame in an attack on Jerusalem and those who were not killed were forbidden from entering the temple.⁸³¹ Jesus’ merciful (cf. 20,29-34) character is stressed again – this time in sharp contrast to the character and the deeds of David. The merciful and meek king Messiah, the Son of David, thus heals in the center of Jewish purity those who are impure and who should not even be there (cf. 1QSa II, 8-9; 1QM VII, 4-6; *m. Hag.* 1,1).⁸³² “The King’s patronage and benefactions are directed to those who have need of his mercy and compassion, despite purity rules and the center of purity. As such, he is also fictively the Son of the Great King, the representative of God.”⁸³³

And as such, i.e., as the Davidic Messiah but also as a healer of the Solomonic pattern, Jesus is recognized and acclaimed by the children in the temple, who, having witnessed Jesus’ healings, repeat the cry of the jubilating crowds (21,9) “ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ” (21,15).

In their reaction, the children are reminiscent of the crowds, who after having witnessed the healing of the blind, deaf-mute demoniac asked μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς Δαυίδ; (12,23) and whose identification of Jesus with the Son of David was also immediately refused by the religious leaders (in 12,24 by the Pharisees, in 21,15 by the chief priests and the scribes). The difference is that while in Matt 12,23 the crowds were somewhat unsure about the true identity of Jesus, the children⁸³⁴ in the temple, as the crowds before them (21,9), express their faith with certainty. In their acclamation, they join the no-accounts in Jewish society, who previously recognized Jesus’ messianic

⁸³⁰ 2 Sam 5,8 reads: And David said on that day, “Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack ‘the lame and the blind,’ who are hated by David’s soul.” Therefore it is said, “The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.”

⁸³¹ Trunk’s suggestion is: “Vermutlich entwickelte sich in der Wirkungsgeschichte de Textes (2 Sam 5,6-8) die Auffassung, daß die Blinden (und Lahmen) auch für den messianischen Davidsohn von besonderen Bedeutung seien und sich dieser in Konfrontation mit Jenen als der Messias erweisen würde.” Trunk’s hypothesis is interesting, unfortunately he does not provide any antique sources to support his thesis. Trunk, *Der messianische Heiler*, 62. *Italics mine.*

⁸³² Cf. Duling, “Plurisignificant ‘Son of David,’” 112-113. Differently Luz, *Matthew*, 3:13.

⁸³³ Duling, “Plurisignificant ‘Son of David,’” 112.

⁸³⁴ The words of the children were sometimes regarded as oracular. Cf. Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 14. 356E. See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:141, n. 53.

identity and his Solomon-like ability to heal (9,27-31; 12,22-24; 15,21-28; 20,29-34).

Simultaneously, in the cry of the children, the messianic (Davidic) as well as the Solomonic authority,⁸³⁵ with which Jesus acts in the temple (the prophetic has been stressed in 21,11-13), are re-stressed and most transparently brought together. And thus “near the end of the gospel, the two strands of Matthean messianism, the kingly and the healing, come together in the Temple, the seat of Israel’s government, where the healing Messiah cures the sick and is recognized by some of the people (21:15).”⁸³⁶

“Der Sohn Davids, dem hier zugejubelt wird, ist der barmherzige Wundertäter, und die aufseherregende Tempelreinigung dient allein dazu, seinem Handeln im Tempel Raum zu schaffen. Bezeichnenderweise entzündet sich der Zorn der Pharisäer nach der Darstellung des Matthäus nicht am gewaltsamen ersten Akt von Jesu Auftreten im Tempel, sondern am friedfertigen zweiten.”⁸³⁷

Jesus’ healing in the temple, similarly as his healings before (9,31-34; 12,22-24), evokes not only the children’s acclamation, but provokes also the negative reaction of the chief priests and the scribes (and not Pharisees as Burger wrongly writes). After witnessing his healing (wonders)⁸³⁸ and hearing the jubilation of the children, they become indignant and ask: “Do you hear what

⁸³⁵ Chilton, “Jesus ben David,” 102.

⁸³⁶ Saldarini, *Christian-Jewish Community*, 169-170. Cf. Chilton, “Jesus ben David,” 101: “Matthew (21.9, 15) presents the innovative acclamation ‘the son of David’ in order to express both the therapeutic and (more especially) the messianic side of Jesus’ mission...”

⁸³⁷ Burger, *Jesus als Davidssohn*, 87.

⁸³⁸ The word τὰ θαυμάσια is a hapax legomenon in NT. It is often used in the Old Testament with regards to the marvelous deeds of God, especially the Exodus miracle (Deut 34,12; Exod 3,20; etc.). This could be an allusion to Deut 34,12 where the same phrase τὰ θαυμάσια ἃ ἐποίησεν also occurs (cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:144). However rather than of Moses’ typology one could think on Jesus’ miracles in general, especially on his healings and exorcisms, which surpassed even those of Solomon (12,42), as the crowds noted “Never has anything like this been seen in Israel” (9,33) and the Nazarenes wondered “Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?” (13,54). This interpretation fits the context – firstly, because of the summarizing function of Matt 21,14-16, secondly, because of the immediately preceding healing (21,14) to which τὰ θαυμάσια undoubtedly refer to, and thirdly, because the source of Jesus’ authority and power (ἐξουσία) will be the issue of the next controversy (21,23-27).

these are saying?” They demand Jesus deny the acclamation of the children, and refuse to recognize him as God’s messianic agent, the Son of David.

To their surprise, Jesus does not deny the acclamation ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ, but accepts (ναί) it (for the third time in the linked set of Matt 20,30-31; 21,9; 21,15) as a proper one (as he accepted the designation Son of David before – cf. 9,27; 15,22; 20,30-31). He even defends the children with a contra question (21,16).

By quoting LXX Ps 8,3, Matthew’s Jesus turns the children’s acclamation into inspired praise approved by God which expresses God’s legitimation of Jesus as the healing messianic Son of David on the one hand, and on the other hand he exposes the lack of understanding of the scribes and high priests with regard to their own Scriptures (a theme which will re-occur in the Question about David’s Son in Matt 22,41-46). Unlike the children, who receive God’s revelation (cf. Matt 11,25), “the chief priests and scribes, beholding the wonders and hearing the children, remain spiritually blind, indignant and unbelieving.”⁸³⁹ As before (Matt 2,4-6), the scribes and high priests are unable to draw the right conclusions from their knowledge of the Scriptures. Jesus, having the last word, turns his back to the chief priests and scribes and leaves them (21,17). And they, unlike the two blind men (20,29-34), do not follow after him.

Conclusion:

Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem and his healing in the temple (Matt 21,1-17) represents an important turning point and the high point of Matthew’s narrative. Jesus finally arrives in Jerusalem, and he is publicly hailed by the crowds as the messianic king, the Son of David. Yet he does not arrive as a warrior or liberator, but in meekness, as a humble king and servant. In his arrival, Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Zechariah (Zech 9,9) and simultaneously he alludes to Solomon (1 Kgs 1,32-40) who rode on a mule to be anointed as a king.

⁸³⁹ Gibbs, “Purpose and Pattern in Matthew’s Use of the Title ‘Son of David’,” 460.

Jesus goes to the temple and heals the blind and the lame, who come to him,⁸⁴⁰ (21,14), as he did in his Galilean ministry (9,27-31; 12,22-24; 15,21-28) and near Jericho (20,29-34). Sequentially (similarly as in Matt 12,23) he is recognized as the Son of David, on the basis of his healing (i.e., after the actual miracle takes place – cf. Matt 12,22-24), by the children standing around him. He accepts publicly their acclamation as proper (similarly as he accepted the address Son of David already before as proper when asked for healing/exorcism – cf. 9,27-31; 15,21-28; publicly in 20,29-34) and declares it as God inspired praise (21,16). In the cry of the children, which is an echo of the messianic cry of the crowds, royal (21,9) as well as Solomonic traditions (21,7; esp. 21,15) about the Son of David are united.

Israel's Messiah is the Son of David who heals, even in the temple, in a manner reminiscent of Solomon. But he is also the Lord (21,3) and the king of Israel (21,5), and is greater than the temple (12,6), Jonah (12,41), and in his wisdom (which includes his healings and exorcisms) he is even greater than Solomon (12,42), the mighty exorcist, healer, sage and king.

And yet, the Son of David is a different type of king than one would expect on the basis of Jewish traditions. He is meek, lowly (11,29), gentle (21,5) and serving (20,28); a king who comes to Jerusalem not to conquer it or purge it of its enemies, but to die there (20,17-19) “and to give his life as a ransom for many” (20,28). His triumphant entry contains thus a paradox; he is recognized by the crowds and lowly ones as the Messiah, yet he is a meek Messiah. He is acclaimed as the king of Israel, but Jerusalem, the Holy city and capital of Israel, does not recognize or welcome its Messiah. In fact, its inhabitants are not even aware of who Jesus truly is (21,10). The chief priests and scribes, the religious leaders of Israel, remain, unlike the blind (9,27-31; 20,29-34; 21,14), spiritually blind, even when reading their own Scriptures (21,16; cf. 2,4-6).

⁸⁴⁰ Chae misses this point when he assumes that his Davidic shepherd in accordance with Ezek 34 gathers the outcasts in the temple (Chae, Davidic Shepherd, 320). In fact, Jesus is not gathering anyone, but the blind and the lame approach him (προσῆλθον αὐτῷ) in order to be healed. They are not brought back, as Chae thinks (ibid., 321-322). Nor can it be claimed that Jesus is restoring anything in the temple (except health). And one can speak only with a vivid imagination about the reversal of the exilic curses by Jesus in the temple (ibid., 321) and about the renovation “of the whole covenantal community.” (Ibid., 322.) Chae is simply overemphasizing his thesis in his analysis of Matt 21,14 (ibid., 319-323).

And thus they refuse to recognize Jesus as the Messianic Son of David (cf. 9,34; 12,24) even though they witnessed his miracles (21,15), and they are indignant about the children's praise ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ (21,15). Their rejection of Jesus is in sharp contrast to the children's (21,15) – the crowd's (21,9) acclamation. In the following controversies, including the Question about David's Son (22,41-46), which creates an inclusion to Matt 21,1-17,⁸⁴¹ the conflict between the high priests and scribes, and Israel's Messiah will further escalate and result, as the reader already knows (cf. Matt 16,21; 20,18), in Jesus' death.

3.8. The Question about David's Son (Matt 22,41-46)

The question about David's Son is the last pericope which concerns the Son of David. It differs from the previous pericopes in one point. The designation, the Son of David, is not used here to address Jesus, but occurs in the answer of the Pharisees to Jesus' controversial question, whose son is the Messiah.

Text:

⁴¹ Συνηγμένων δὲ τῶν Φαρισαίων ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς

⁴² λέγων· τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ περὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ; τίνος υἱὸς ἐστίν; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· τοῦ Δαυίδ.

⁴³ λέγει αὐτοῖς· πῶς οὖν Δαυὶδ ἐν πνεύματι καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον λέγων·

⁴⁴ εἶπεν κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου· κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν σου;

⁴⁵ εἰ οὖν Δαυὶδ καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον, πῶς υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστίν;

⁴⁶ καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο ἀποκριθῆναι αὐτῷ λόγον οὐδὲ ἐτόλμησέν τις ἀπ' ἐκείνης τῆς ἡμέρας ἐπερωτῆσαι αὐτὸν οὐκέτι.

Translation:

⁴¹ When the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them

⁴² and said, “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “David's (son).”

⁸⁴¹ Repschinski, The Controversy Stories, 188.

⁴³ He said to them, “In what sense (how) does then David in Spirit call him Lord, when he says

⁴⁴ ‘The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet’?

⁴⁵ If then David calls him Lord, in what sense is he his son?”

⁴⁶ And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Concerning the context, the question about David’s Son appears at the end of the fifth narrative block (21,1-22,46), which in series of controversies and parables details the final encounter between Jesus and Jewish religious leaders. The question about David’s Son (Matt 22,41-46) serves as a closure to this set, presenting Jesus as the ultimate victor in the debate. At the same time, this pericope, as indicated in the previous exegesis, creates an inclusion to Matt 21,1-17.⁸⁴² Since this passage is immediately followed by Jesus’ castigation of the Scribes and Pharisees (23,1-39), it can be understood not only as an enclosure of the previous debates, but also as a transition to the following discourse.

Concerning the sources, Matthew is based on Mark 12,35-37a and Mark 12,34. Matthew, however, is not tied to his sources, making once again several important changes. Matthew changed Mark’s monologue regarding the scribe’s view of the Messiah’s Davidic sonship (Mark 12,35) into a dialogue (Matt 22,41-43) between Jesus and the Pharisees. He also transformed Mark’s two questions (Mark 12,35.37), and one assertion (Mark 12,36) into two pairs of questions, concretizing the issue of the controversy by allowing Jesus to ask “Whose son is he?” (22,42) and “In what sense (how) does then David in Spirit call him Lord?”. He has also changed Mark’s πόθεν (how, why, in what way? – Mark 12,37) into πῶς (in what way? how? – Matt 22,45), toning down the possible meaning of surprise sometimes attached to πόθεν.⁸⁴³ He also replaced Mark’s verb λέγω (Mark 12,36.37) with καλέω (Matt 22,43.45), alluding to the

⁸⁴² Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 188.

⁸⁴³ Cf. “πόθεν,” BDAG, 838.

naming of Jesus in Matt 1,21.23.25. Finally, by moving Mark 12,34b, to the end of the question about David’s Son, instead of keeping it in its original place (i.e., as a conclusion of the controversy about the greatest commandment – Mark 12,28-34; Matt 22,34-40), Matthew presents Jesus as an ultimate victor of Jerusalem debates.

The structure of this pericope is simple. After a brief introduction (22,41), Jesus asks the Pharisees two questions (22,42a) which they answer in two words (22,42b). Jesus responds to them by quoting the Scripture (Ps 110,1) and by asking two more questions (22,43-45), which remain unanswered (22,46a) and which cause that no one dares to ask Jesus any more questions (22,46b).

After series of questions designated to entrap Jesus (Matt 21,23-27; 22,15-22; 22,34-40), which he managed to answer successfully, Jesus turns to his last, still gathered (22,41 cf. Matt 22,34) opponents – the Pharisees (22,15-22; 22,34-40). He takes the initiative “... and poses a question directed to the issue at the center of the controversies, his own person.”⁸⁴⁴

Although, Jesus’ question is introduced as one, he is actually asking the Pharisees two questions. Both questions center on the issue of Jesus’ identity, namely: “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?” “By making a separate question, ‘Whose son is he?’ Matthew sharpens the issue of to whom the Christ owes filial obedience and from whom he receives his sonship.”⁸⁴⁵ Although the question/s refer/s to the Messiah in the third person, Matthew’s readers already know that Jesus is the Messiah (1,1; 1,16-18; 2,4; 11,2; 16,16; 16,20) and understand that Jesus is asking the question/s about himself.

For the Pharisees, however, Jesus’ question is a general messianic question⁸⁴⁶ for which they have a traditional answer – τοῦ Δαυίδ.⁸⁴⁷ Once again, they, as representatives of Israel’s leaders, paradoxically say the truth

⁸⁴⁴ Luz, *Matthew*, 3:88. Cf. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 446.

⁸⁴⁵ Gibbs, “Purpose and Pattern in Matthew’s Use of the Title ‘Son of David,’” 461.

⁸⁴⁶ Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 3:88; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 446-447; Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 226.

⁸⁴⁷ On the Messiah as Son of David, see the exegesis of *Pss. Sol.* 17; 18; etc., in chapter 2.2.

(or part of the truth), which, however, the blind (9,27; 20,30-31), the crowds (12,23; 21,9), the Gentile woman (15,22), and even the children (21,15) recognized long before. As the chief priests and scribes before them (cf. 2,4-6; 21,15-16), the Pharisees are unable to draw the right conclusions from their knowledge, unwilling to identify Jesus as the Messiah of Israel, the Son of David. For them he is and remains a deceiver, magician and an agent of Beelzebub (9,34; 12,24).

In the next question (22,43-45), Matthew's Jesus will demonstrate, that they are not only unable to draw the right conclusions from their knowledge (similarly as high priests and scribes) but that they are also unable to understand and interpret their own Scriptures.

Since the answer of the Pharisees is partially right, Matthew's Jesus asks the Pharisees two further questions, based on Ps 110,1: If the Messiah is David's son, in what sense (how) can he be called by David (Ps 110,1) in the Spirit his Lord (22,43)? And similarly, if the Messiah is called David's lord (assuming that fathers do not call their sons lords), in what sense (how) can he be his son (22,45)?

In these two questions "Matthew then has Jesus make the argument that he has higher status than David and thus is more than his son. On the basis of Psalm 110, often cited in early Christian literature,⁸⁴⁸ Jesus is David's Lord, that is, superior to David in kingly authority. Matthew does not reject the claim that Jesus is son of David, but tries to relate it to the claim that Jesus is also Lord. He builds on the title 'son of David' in order to argue that Jesus has the ultimate authority in Israel's tradition. He implies, on the basis of Psalm 110, that if Jesus is David's Lord as well as son, then he is not adequately and fully described as David's son. Matthew implies that Jesus must be God's Son..."⁸⁴⁹

This does not mean that "Matthew emphatically lays aside the title 'Son of David' as inadequate in the face of recognition of Jesus as the Son of God

⁸⁴⁸ Cf. Mark 12,36; Luke 20,42-43; Acts 2,34-35; 1 Cor 15,25; Heb 1,3. For usages made of this passage, see Hay, Psalm 110 in Early Christianity.

⁸⁴⁹ Saldarini, Christian-Jewish Community, 170.

(xxii. 41-6),⁸⁵⁰ as Gibbs thinks, or that "... the divine sonship of Jesus the earthly Messiah 'outranks' his Davidic Sonship," as suggested by Kingsbury.⁸⁵¹

Saldarini rightly observed that "Matthew neither denies that Jesus is David's son⁸⁵² nor says explicitly that he is God's Son."⁸⁵³ For Matthew, as made apparent in chapter 1 (cf. Matt 1,18-25), Jesus is both – the true and unique Son of God⁸⁵⁴ and the true Son of David (adopted by Joseph into the Davidic line).⁸⁵⁵ As such "he completely fulfills the first two elements of Nathan's promise to David and therefore possesses both attributes expected of the Davidic Messiah."⁸⁵⁶ It could also be stated, that "He is David's son by virtue of his lineage, but more importantly, by virtue of his healing and shepherding his people. He is David's Lord by virtue of his unique relationship to God as God's obedient son (3:17; 17:5)."⁸⁵⁷ As the Lord – a title previously (although not exclusively) associated by Matthew with the designation Son of David in Matt 9,27-28; 15,22; 20,31, Jesus represents high authority and superiority.⁸⁵⁸

And thus "while the term son of David says something important about Jesus' God-given task of showing healing mercy, it does not fully (*in the uniqueness of Jesus*) express his identity as God's son, commissioned by God to manifest God's saving presence or empire. As Lord, Jesus represents God's authority (28:18). This identity and role the religious elite refuse to confess."⁸⁵⁹

⁸⁵⁰ Gibbs, "Purpose and Pattern in Matthew's Use of the Title 'Son of David'," 464. Cf. Jones, "Subverting the Textuality of Davidic Messianism," 269-270.

⁸⁵¹ Kingsbury, "The Title 'Son of David' in Matthew's Gospel," 596.

⁸⁵² Similarly Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3:254.

⁸⁵³ Saldarini, Christian-Jewish Community, 170. Cf. Burger, Jesus als Davidsohn, 89.

⁸⁵⁴ "At the very beginning Matthew had already told that the Son of David was the Son of God (1:18-25), and Scripture had foretold it (2:15). God himself had revealed it (3:17; 17:5; cf. 16:17), and the devil had tested it (4:3, 6). Jesus had spoken of it to the disciples (11:25-27), and Peter had confessed it (16:16)." Luz, Matthew, 3:90.

⁸⁵⁵ Cf. Novakovic, Messiah, 50, 62-63; on Matt 22,41-46, see *ibid.*, 54-63.

⁸⁵⁶ Novakovic, Messiah, 62.

⁸⁵⁷ Garland, Reading Matthew, 226.

⁸⁵⁸ "In general, those who address Jesus with petitions for help or mercy call him Lord, the traditional term for patron, for a powerful or authoritative person to whom one is subordinate, or for God. Implicit in the title is recognition of the power and authority of the person being addressed and the hope that power will be used for the benefit of the petitioner." Saldarini, Christian-Jewish Community, 188.

⁸⁵⁹ Carter, Matthew and the Margins, 448. *Italics mine.*

The religious leaders' refusal meant that "they have rejected not merely a human messianic claimant but the unique emissary of God, whom even David had called 'my lord.'"⁸⁶⁰ The religious leaders became blind not only to Israel's Messiah, but even to their own scriptures.⁸⁶¹ The inability of the Pharisees to answer Jesus' question concerning his identity is climatic and final in the narrative because they do not dare to ask him any more questions (22,46).

Conclusion:

In the question about David's Son (Matt 22,41-46), Jesus challenges the Pharisees, who have tested him with several questions, with a single question about the sonship of the Messiah. Yet the Pharisees are unable to answer – How the Messiah can be Son of David when David himself calls him lord? Jesus' question to the Pharisees is not a denial of his messiahship⁸⁶² or genealogical Davidic sonship⁸⁶³ but a further specification of Jesus' unique identity and role.

The reader of Matthew's Gospel already knows the answer: Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, is the true and unique Son of God and thus David's Lord, but at the same time he is also David's Son, the Messianic king, healer and exorcist of the Solomonic pattern. As the Son of David, Jesus is not only greater than David himself,⁸⁶⁴ but even greater than David's son Solomon, the mighty exorcist and healer. Jesus is not more than the Son of David because "he is the Son of David who has already come to heal, the therapeutic Son of David,"⁸⁶⁵ as Duling states,⁸⁶⁶ but in his healings and exorcisms Jesus, the humble and meek messianic Son of David, surpasses even the king Solomon, the mighty exorcist and healer (Matt 9,33; 12,42). And thus "Der salomonischen wie der herrscherlichen Davidsson-*Erwartung des Judentums gegenüber entsteht ein*

⁸⁶⁰ Hagner, Matthew, 2:651.

⁸⁶¹ Cf. Luz, Matthew, 3:90; idem, Studies in Matthew, 87; Repschinski, The Controversy Stories, 229.

⁸⁶² Chilton, "Jesus ben David," 101, 103, 105.

⁸⁶³ Bultmann, Theology of New Testament, 1:28.

⁸⁶⁴ Paffenroth, "Jesus as Anointed and Healing Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew," 553; Müller, "Figure of Jesus in Matthew," 169.

⁸⁶⁵ Duling, "Therapeutic Son of David," 410.

⁸⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 392-410, esp. 399-410; Duling, "Plurisignificant 'Son of David,'" 112-114.

Drittes: das bild eines niedrigkeitsköniglichen Helfers/Heilers davidischer Familienherkunft, der gerade in seiner Niedrigkeit mehr ist als David und Salomo und mit Recht als ‚Herr‘ (Kirios) bezeichnet wird."⁸⁶⁷ Matthew thus once again reminds his readers that the Messiah, his character, role, task and origin, are greater than expected⁸⁶⁸ and they can not be fully expressed in a single title.

3.9. Conclusion: Matthew's Portrayal of Jesus

Our analysis of Matthew's Gospel demonstrates that since the first verse of his Gospel, Matthew tries to present, sometimes with great pain (Matt 1,2-17; 1,18-25), Jesus as the true Messiah of Israel, the Son of David (υἱὸς Δαυίδ) who fulfills not only the promises given to David (2 Sam 7,12-16) and various other Old Testament prophecies (Gen 12,1-3; 17,1-7; 18,18; 22,17-18; 49,10; Mic 5,1; Isa 7,14; 11,1; 42,1-4; 53,4; 60,1-6; Ps 72; Zech 9,9), but in whom the history of salvation reaches its pinnacle (Matt 1,2-17).

From the first chapter of his Gospel (esp. Matt 1,21), Matthew makes it apparent that Jesus is a different type of Messiah than expected. Unlike the Davidic kings, Jesus is not adopted to be the son of God, contrarily – he is the Son of God who is adopted by Joseph, a son of David (Matt 1,20), into the Davidic line (1,18-25).⁸⁶⁹ Jesus is not the eschatological triumphant king who will liberate Jerusalem from foreign oppressors and destroy the irregular rules, as one familiar with the Jewish traditions (as presented in chapter 2.2.) would expect; but a meek, lowly (11,29), gentle (21,5), and serving (20,28) king, conceived (1,20) and filled with the Holy Spirit (3,16; 12,18), who comes to Jerusalem not to conquer, but to die there (20,17-19) "and to give his life as a ransom for many" (20,28). He is the one who "did not come to be served but to serve" (20,28) and whose task is to "save his people from their sins" (1,21) rather than from their political enemies.

⁸⁶⁷ Karrer, Der Gesalbte, 281-282.

⁸⁶⁸ Cf. Nolland, Matthew, 916-917.

⁸⁶⁹ "Matthew thus does not present Jesus as the Son of David who has been installed to the position of the Son of God by an act of divine adoption, but as the Son of God who became the Son of David by an act of human adoption." Novakovic, Messiah, 63.

The activity of this Messianic Son of David is first of all healing (Matt 9,27-31; 12,22-24; 15,21-28; 20,29-34; 21,14-16). Within our analysis of the texts, we saw that Matthew multiplied Mark's single usage of the designation Son of David within a healing context (in a cry for mercy and healing in Mark 10,46-52) and inserted the cry, and eventually the address/title Son of David into other healing/controversy stories (some of them have a summary function – as e.g., Matt 9,27-35; 20,29-34; 21,1-17) letting thus the blind (9,27-31; 20,29-34) and the Canaanite woman (15,21-28) ask Jesus for mercy of healing/exorcism exactly in his capacity as the Son of David on the one hand, and letting the by-standers recognize Jesus as the Son of David after having witnessed/experienced his merciful healings (12,22-24; 21,14-16) on the other hand.

We have suggested that such usage of the designation the Son of David is understandable in the light of the Solomon as exorcist tradition; since David's son Solomon was known in the first century C.E. as a mighty exorcist and healer, and the designation, son of David, could have referred to Solomon, or to a figure endowed with great exorcistic and healing powers reminiscent of those of Solomon, in the context of exorcism and healing.

Our analysis of Matthew's Gospel has shown that, apart from the similarity of the context in which the address Son of David is used – namely within healing or exorcism (9,27; 12,23; 15,22; 20,30; 20,31; 21,15), and apart from Matt 1,20-21, where there is an possible indirect allusion to Solomon in the link between Jesus' conception through the Spirit, which implicitly presupposes endowment by the Spirit (1,20), and his healing activity understandable on the basis of Matt 9,2-8 as a part of Jesus' saving ministry (1,21); the further direct allusion to the Solomon as exorcist/healer tradition can be seen in the inquiring question of Matthew's Jesus on the blind men πιστεύετε ὅτι δύναμαι τοῦτο ποιῆσαι (Matt 9,28).

The meaning of this question, which serves as a direct response to the address Son of David, is to determine whether the blind men believe that Jesus as the Son of David (i.e., in his capacity of the Son of David) possesses the ability, authority and power (reminiscent of/comparable to Solomon), to heal

them. The accuracy of this Solomonic allusion is confirmed by Matthew's words, stated by Jesus "According to your faith, let it be done to you" which accompany the healing act (Matt 9,29). This statement, at the level of the narrative, expresses Jesus' acceptance of the blind men's faith in his abilities as the Son of David, as well as his approval of the regular usage of the address the Son of David (υἱὸς Δαυίδ) and Lord (κύριος) within their plea for healing.

We have also suggested that there may be an implicit allusion to the Solomonic tradition in the acclamation of the crowds in Matt 9,33, and that their cry "Never has anything like this been seen in Israel!" may refer not only to the extension of Jesus' healing/exorcistic activity, but also to the manner in which Jesus, as the Son of David – i.e., as the Messiah, and as the healer and exorcist after the pattern of Solomon, performed healings and exorcisms (by word or touch) in Israel (Matt 8-9); namely in a way greater than Solomon (12,42). However, we concluded that the reader would only be able to understand this allusion after reading Matt 12,22-24, and 12,42.

Within the analysis of the healing of the blind and deaf-mute demoniac pericope (12,22-24) we have observed that, by letting the crowds ask μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς Δαυίδ (a question unparalleled in Matthew's sources), after being healed (12,15), and witnessing the healing (12,22-23) of a blind and deaf-mute demoniac (i.e., in an escalated exorcistic/healing context), Matthew deliberately brought into the central point the issue of the source of Jesus' exorcistic powers and its relation to his identity as the Son of David. Simultaneously Matthew allowed the crowds (at the level of his narrative) to express in a form of the inquiring question the fact, which the blind have already recognized: namely that Jesus may be the Messiah, the Son of David who heals and exorcizes in a manner reminiscent of Solomon.

We have therefore concluded that Matthew's question of the crowd is to be understood positively, and not only in the Messianic categories, but also within the framework of Solomon as exorcist and healer tradition. The reaction of the Pharisees (12,24) represents then a direct opposition to the crowds' beliefs. For the Pharisees, Jesus is not the Messiah nor does he possess Solomon's

healing/exorcistic powers – he is a magician, deceiver and sorcerer allied to devil himself.

The relevance of the Solomon as exorcist tradition for the interpretation of Matt 12,22-24, resp. for Matthew's Gospel as a whole, was further confirmed by Matt 12,42 where a direct juxtaposition of Jesus and Solomon can be found.

We have found an earlier allusion to Solomon, respectively Jesus – Solomon typology in Matt 2,1-12 where the similarity was based on the common motifs of pilgrimage, honoring, gifts and especially wisdom. As noted above, Solomon was honored by Gentile rulers (cf. 1 Kgs 10,1-10; 10,24-25; 2 Chr 9,23-24) – perhaps most famously by the Queen of Sheba (cf. 1 Kgs 10,1-10) who traveled to him from a distant land, bringing gifts, and was impressed by his superior wisdom. In Matt 2,1-12, the magi, representatives of Gentile wisdom, travel to honor Jesus, the incarnation of Wisdom itself, bringing him gifts. We have argued that there is a close thematic connection between Matt 2,1-12 and Matt 12,42 and that it is no mere coincidence that the situation of Matt 2,1-12 and Matt 12,42 is similar. In the first case, the Gentile magi, unlike the Jewish leaders, recognize the significance of Jesus (Matt 2,2) and react properly – they come and worship him (2,11). In the second case (12,42), the Gentile Queen of Sheba is given as an example of proper reaction (she came to test Solomon and let herself be convinced by his wisdom). In contrast, the Jewish leaders are not convinced by Jesus' miracles, or his teachings, instead they oppose Jesus and are ready to destroy him (12,14). They accuse him of being in link to Beelzebub, leading thus the crowds, who just started to consider Jesus' messianic and Solomonic identity as that of the Son of David (12,23), astray.

We have concluded that when Matthew's Jesus in Matt 12,42, says "Something greater than Solomon is here," he alludes not only to his own person and teaching, but also to his miraculous deeds. Namely to his healings and

exorcisms, which are the deeds of wisdom (cf. Matt 11,2; 11,19) and which surpass even the healings and exorcisms of Solomon (9,33; 12,42), the mighty exorcist, healer and sage. At this point, Matthew's narrative does not deviate from the Solomon as exorcist tradition, which, as we demonstrated in chapter 2.1. on the example of Wis 7,15-21; *Ant.* 42-44.49 and *T. Sol.*, saw Solomon's exorcistic knowledge and powers (and thus also his healings and exorcisms) as part of his great God-given wisdom. At the level of the story, Matt 12,42 represents an assurance that the crowds (12,22-23), as well as the two blind men (9,27-31), were right in their belief that Jesus could be the Son of David with powers comparable to Solomon.

The analysis of the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter (15,21-28) pericope further demonstrated Matthew's consistency in his usage of the title the Son of David. As in Matt 9,27-31, so also in Matt 15,21-28, the title is connected with the κύριος title, is used within a plea for mercy and serves as an expression of faith and confidence in Jesus' ability to exorcise (i.e., as further allusion to Solomonic tradition) and as recognition of Jesus' messianic identity.

By granting the Canaanite woman's request, Matthew's Jesus once again approves the regular usage of the address Son of David and Lord within a plea for exorcism. In his praising of the Canaanite woman's faith, Jesus praises, amongst other things, her confidence in his abilities as the Son of David.

The main differences in comparison with Matt 9,27-31 and Matt 15,21-28 are that the cry is inserted in the mouth of a Gentile woman, it is not a cry for healing, but for an exorcism of a demon, and finally the woman is alone, she is not blind and she is not asking mercy for herself, but for her daughter.

In the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter pericope, Matthew thus further strengthens the image of the exorcistic/healing Son of David, the Messiah who is sent primarily to Israel (15,24-26), but whose mission exceptionally affects Gentiles (cf. 8,5-13), who turn out to have a stronger faith in the Messiah, than many in Israel.

In the healing of the two blind men (Matt 20,29-34), Matthew re-stresses many of the topics previously mentioned in Matt 9,29-31 and 15,21-28. Some of the topics include: the legitimacy of the usage of the addresses Son of David and the Lord within the plea for healing; the close link between these two titles; the motif of faith and confidence in Jesus' healing powers; the theme of spiritual insight of those who are physically blind, and possibly also Jesus' superiority over Solomon in the way in which he heals (in Matt 20,29-34 only by touch without saying a word). By drawing attention to Jesus' compassion (demonstrated previously in his whole ministry – cf. Matt 9,36; 14,14; 15,32) rather than to the blind men's faith (at least directly), Matthew is stressing, before Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, that Jesus, the Son of David, is not a political warlike Messiah, but a humble, meek, and merciful messianic king, who not only possesses healing powers like Solomon, but who is also ready to use them on behalf of his people when asked for mercy.

In the exegesis of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and his healing in the temple (Matt 21,1-17), we have seen, how the Solomonic and royal messianic traditions were closely linked. Jesus finally arrives in Jerusalem and is publicly hailed by the crowds as the messianic king, the Son of David (21,9). Yet Jesus does not arrive as a warrior or liberator, but in meekness (21,5), as a humble king and servant. In his arrival, Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Zechariah (Zech 9,9) and simultaneously his arrival alludes to Solomon (1 Kgs 1,32-40) who rode on a mule to be anointed as a king.

Jesus goes to the temple and heals blind and lame, who came to him, (21,14), as he did in his Galilean ministry (9,27-31; 12,22-24; 15,21-28) and near Jericho (20,29-34). Sequentially (similarly as in Matt 12,23) he is recognized, on the basis of his healing (i.e., after the actual miracle takes place – cf. Matt 12,22-24), by the children standing around as the Son of David (21,15). He accepts publicly their acclamation as proper (similarly as he had already accepted the address the Son of David as proper when asked for a healing/exorcism – cf. 9,27-31; 15,21-28; publicly in 20,29-34) and declares it God inspired praise (21,16). In the cry of the children, which is an echo of

the messianic cry of the crowds, the royal (21,9) as well as the Solomonic tradition (21,7; esp. 21,15) about the Son of David are alluded to.

Thus for Matthew, Israel's Messiah is the Son of David who heals, even in the temple, in a manner reminiscent of Solomon. This Messiah is also the Lord (21,3), the king of Israel (21,5), greater than the temple (12,6), Jonah (12,41), and in his wisdom (which includes his healings and exorcisms) he is greater than Solomon (12,42), the mighty exorcist, healer, sage and king. But he is also a meek, lowly (11,29), gentle (21,5) and serving (20,28) king who comes to Jerusalem not to conquer it or purge it of its enemies, but to die there (20,17-19). Jesus' triumphant entry contains thus a paradox, he is recognized by the crowds, and lowly ones, as the Messiah, yet he is a meek Messiah. He is acclaimed as the king of Israel (21,9), but Jerusalem, the Holy city and capital of Israel, does not recognize or welcome its Messiah. In fact the people of Jerusalem do not even know who Jesus truly is (21,10). And the chief priests and scribes, the religious leaders of Israel, remain, unlike the blind (9,27-31; 20,29-34; 21,14), spiritually blind, even when reading their own Scriptures (21,16; cf. 2,4-6). They refuse to recognize Jesus as the Messianic Son of David (cf. 9,34; 12,24), although they have also witnessed the wonderful things that he did (21,15), and are indignant about the children's praise ὠσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυὶδ (21,15). Their rejection of Jesus stands in sharp contrast with the children's (21,15) and crowd's (21,9) acclamation.

But not only did the religious leaders not recognize that the Messiah had come (2,4-6; 21,16), they are even unable to answer the question of the sonship of the Messiah (22,39-46) not knowing how the Messiah could be the Son of David when David himself calls him lord.

Matthew's readers, however, know already the answer: Jesus is both – the true and unique Son of God and thus David's Lord, and at the same time the true Son of David (adopted by Joseph into the Davidic line).⁸⁷⁰ Thus

⁸⁷⁰ Cf. Novakovic, *Messiah*, 50, 62-63; on Matt 22,41-46, see *ibid.*, 54-63.

“... he completely fulfills the first two elements of Nathan’s promise to David and therefore possesses both attributes expected of the Davidic Messiah.”⁸⁷¹

As the Son of David, the Messianic king and the healer and exorcist of Solomonic pattern, Jesus is not only greater than David himself,⁸⁷² but even greater than David’s son Solomon. Jesus is not more than the Son of David because “he is the Son of David who has already come to heal, the therapeutic Son of David,”⁸⁷³ as Duling thinks,⁸⁷⁴ but in his wisdom, healings and exorcism Jesus, the humble and meek messianic Son of David, surpasses even the king Solomon, the mighty exorcist, healer, and sage (Matt 9,33; 12,42).

4. Conclusions: The Son of David in Matthew’s Gospel in the Light of the Solomon as Exorcist and the Royal Messianic Traditions

Within our analysis of Matthew’s Gospel, we have seen how Matthew uses the Solomon as exorcist tradition and the royal messianic tradition in order to portray Jesus as the true Messiah of Israel, the meek and humble Son of David whose activity is first of all that of healing (9,27-31; 12,2-24; 15,21-28; 20,29-34; 21,14-17).

We concluded that in Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus is portrayed as the Son of David who is not only greater than David himself,⁸⁷⁵ but even greater than David’s son Solomon, the mighty exorcist, healer and sage. Contrary to Dennis C. Duling, we have argued that Jesus is not more than the Son of David because “he is the Son of David who has already come to heal, the therapeutic Son of David,”⁸⁷⁶ i.e., “that the healing Son of David supersedes the exorcistic Son of David;”⁸⁷⁷ but rather that in his healings and exorcism Jesus, the humble and meek messianic Son of David, surpasses even the king Solomon, the mighty sage, exorcist and healer (9,33; 12,42), as well as he in his meekness surpasses the royal triumphant Son of David. And thus “Der salomonischen wie der herrscherlichen Davidssohn-Erwartung des Judentums gegenüber entsteht ein Drittes: das bild eines niedrigkeitsköniglichen Helfers/Heilers davidischer Familienherkunft, der gerade in seiner Niedrigkeit (*and in his healings and exorcism*) mehr ist als David und Salomo und mit Recht als ‚Herr‘ (Kirios) bezeichnet wird.”⁸⁷⁸

This implies that the portrayal of Jesus as the healing messianic Son of David in Matthew’s Gospel (not only, but also), is a result of an original synthesis of the royal messianic tradition (its too narrow political orientation,

⁸⁷¹ Ibid., 62.

⁸⁷² Paffenroth, “Jesus as Anointed and Healing Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew,” 553; Müller, “Figure of Jesus in Matthew,” 169.

⁸⁷³ Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 410.

⁸⁷⁴ For the therapeutic Son of David, see Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 392-410, esp. 399-410; idem, “Plurisignificant ‘Son of David,’” 112-114.

⁸⁷⁵ Cf. Paffenroth, “Jesus as Anointed and Healing Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew,” 553; Müller, “Figure of Jesus in Matthew,” 169.

⁸⁷⁶ Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 410.

⁸⁷⁷ Duling, “Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David,” 251.

⁸⁷⁸ Karrer, *Der Gesalbte*, 281-282. *Italics mine*.

however, had to be altered after the year 70 C.E.) and the Solomon as exorcist/healer tradition. Luz was right when he observed that Matthew's "own understanding of Jesus' Davidic messiahship means a shift of Jewish hopes from the 'political' to the 'human' level."⁸⁷⁹ However, Luz failed to recognize that this shift was made possible not only due to the concept of the Suffering Servant (a concept which Matthew undoubtedly, unlike the synagogue, understands messianically and which he employs in order to present Jesus' healing ministry as the fulfillment of the Scriptures,⁸⁸⁰ which itself, however, lacks any direct link to the title Son of David), but also due to the usage of the Solomon as exorcist/healer tradition.

Brent Kinman rightly recognized that although "the political expectations connected with a coming 'son of David' were dominant in the Old Testament and intertestamental period, there was, in addition, a developing tradition about the wisdom, healing and exorcistic prowess of one particular 'son of David' Solomon,"⁸⁸¹ concluding: "This does not mean that the newer traditions replaced the older ones, but it may suggest that the implications of what it meant to be a 'son of David' were altered."⁸⁸² And although "it is not intended to suggest that political connotations are absent in the developing traditions about Solomon, *but* rather, those connotations are less emphasized,"⁸⁸³ it is possible that Matthew, as already Mark before him, tried "to relate the therapeutic to the purely messianic notion of Son of David as means of defusing the political impact of the term."⁸⁸⁴

As we have concluded at the end of chapter two, the designation the Son of David, unimportant whether used with or without an article, could have referred in the first century C.E. not only to the royal Davidic Messiah, but also to the non messianic figure of Solomon, the great exorcist and healer, and probably also to a person endowed with great exorcistic/healing powers

⁸⁷⁹ Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 87.

⁸⁸⁰ Cf. Novakovic, *Messiah*, 124-184.

⁸⁸¹ Kinman, *Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem*, 73.

⁸⁸² *Ibid.*, 73.

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*, 77. *Italics mine.*

⁸⁸⁴ Smith, "The Son of David Tradition in Mark's Gospel," 539.

reminiscent of the Solomon's ones, as in the case of Jesus of Nazareth⁸⁸⁵ (cf. Mark 10,46-52) and some charismatic rabbis; therefore Matthew's switch from the political to the human Messiah makes sense against this Jewish background.

One might ask how could the concept of the royal messianic Son of David, who was never referred to as a healer or one who exorcises, be connected with the non-messianic concept of the exorcistic/healing son of David of Solomon's style. We have suggested that the bridge between these two concepts lies not only in the shared title/designation, the Son of David, and in the motif of kingship (Solomon was the greatest king of Israel, the Messianic Son of David was expected to be the eschatological king whose days and reign would surpass those of David and Solomon), but first of all in the motif of wisdom.

Within our analysis of Davidic messianic expectations we have observed in several texts (e.g., *Pss. Sol.* 17; 18; 4QpIsa^a), that the figure of the Davidic Messiah was modeled on the basis of Isa 11,1-5 and that, in accordance with Isa 11,2, the sprout from the stump of Jesse – the messianic Son of David was expected to be endowed with divine wisdom. Similarly, our analysis of Solomonic traditions demonstrated that it was believed already in the first century C.E. among various Jewish groups that Solomon was endowed with exorcistic knowledge and powers (11QApPs^a; *Ant.* 8,42-49; *L.A.B.* 60,3), and that these powers were understood to be part of Solomon's great wisdom given to him by God (1 Kgs 5,9-14). This is evident not only from Wis 7,15-22, but

⁸⁸⁵ It is possible that the address of Jesus as 'Son of David' with reference to a miracle worker of Solomon's art could be "a relict of how some Palestinian Jews with infirmities actually looked upon this particular Jewish miracle-worker and teacher of wisdom, who was believed to be of Davidic descent" (Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 690), i.e., that it may go back to the historical Jesus himself. Charlesworth rightly noted in his comments on Matt 12,22-24 that "Matthew's text will not allow us to conclude that the crowd though Jesus was to be seen in terms of Solomon; but, it may indicate that 'the Son of David' as healer and one who could exorcize a blind man and enable him to see was a concept accepted as possible by first-century Palestinian Jews." (Charlesworth, "The Son of David: Solomon and Jesus," 84.) Although against the background (in the light) of the Solomon as exorcist tradition I consider it far more reasonable, that Jesus' contemporaries could have already understood his healings and exorcisms in the light of the Solomon as exorcist/healer tradition, I have restricted my analysis to Matthew's portrayal of Jesus and not to the historical Jesus himself.

also from Josephus's report (*Ant.* 8,42-49, esp. 8,42-44.49) in which Josephus intentionally narrates Eleazar miracle story to reveal the understanding and wisdom of Solomon, "in order that all men may know the greatness of his nature and how God favored him, and that no one under the sun may be ignorant of the king's surpassing virtue of every kind."⁸⁸⁶

Our analysis of Matthew's Gospel further demonstrated that there is a direct parallel between Jesus' and Solomon's wisdom in Matt 12,42 and that Jesus – the incarnation of wisdom itself (Matt 2,11; 11,19; 23,34), supersedes Solomon, the mighty exorcist, healer, sage and king, in wisdom, which includes not only his words (Matt 13,54) but also deeds (cf. 11,2; 11,19) – i.e., also his healings and exorcisms. Unlike Bruce Chilton, Wayne Baxter failed to observe this fact when claiming: "... when Jesus does draw a comparison between Solomon and himself, it is not miraculous powers that are compared but wisdom (Matt. 12:42)."⁸⁸⁷ Chilton, in his observation, is closer to the truth:

"Solomon's wisdom included his healing and exorcistic craft so that this saying coheres well with the understanding that the address 'David's son' was used of Jesus because he was considered to be of Davidic descent and to be possessed of powers comparable with Solomon's."⁸⁸⁸

And thus we can conclude that "by allusion to Scripture (*esp. Isaiah*) and popular tradition (*Solomonic*) Matthew gradually builds a picture of Jesus as an authentic healer in Israel's tradition with access to the amplitude of divine power,"⁸⁸⁹ using the "... acclamation 'the son of David' in order to express both the therapeutic and (more especially) the messianic side of Jesus' mission..."⁸⁹⁰

In his ministry, Matthew's "Jesus does what Solomon (according to contemporary sources) did. He not only casts out demons but also heals every disease and infirmity. His healing ministry is directed especially to those on the margin of Jewish society: the blind, the possessed, and the Gentiles. With his

⁸⁸⁶ Josephus, *Ant.* 8,49 (Trakeray, LCL, 5:596-597).

⁸⁸⁷ Baxter, "Healing and the 'Son of David'," 47.

⁸⁸⁸ Chilton, "Jesus ben David," 99.

⁸⁸⁹ Saldarini, *Christian-Jewish Community*, 180. *Italics mine.*

⁸⁹⁰ Chilton, "Jesus ben David," 101.

concept of Jesus as the therapeutic (*i.e., the exorcist-healer*) Son of David, Matthew explained to other Jews why Jesus could associate and minister to such persons and still retain his dignity and importance as the Son of David."⁸⁹¹

Simultaneously, Matthew could have used the Solomonic tradition in order to justify Jesus' dealings with demons,⁸⁹² deflecting the Pharisaic charge, still actual in his own time, that Jesus was a magician and deceiver (cf. comment on Matt 12,22-24 and 12,42), whose powers originated from the devil (9,34; 10,25; 12,24). By alluding to Solomon, Matthew pointed out the absurdity of the Pharisaic charge. If Solomon's ability to heal and exorcize originated in his empowerment by the Spirit (wisdom) than how could Jesus, who was not only empowered (in accordance with Isa 11,1-4, cf. Matt 3,16-17; 12,18; 12,28), but even conceived through the Spirit (Matt 1,20) and whose healings and exorcisms were not only reminiscent of/comparable to those of Solomon (12,23), but even surpassed them (12,42; 9,33), be using any demonic powers in order to perform his miracles.

Denis C. Duling argued that Matthew intentionally "removes the more elaborate description of miracle worker's techniques and eliminates Mark's most manipulative miracles (Mark 7,31-7; 8,22-26 – cf. 1,23-28),"⁸⁹³ letting Jesus exorcize only by word, in order to point "to Jesus' broadly based healing activity,"⁸⁹⁴ which "fulfills the prophecies about healing various diseases"⁸⁹⁵ (cf. Isa 53,4; 61,1; 29,18-19; 35,5-6), and in order to disassociate Jesus from a manipulative wonder worker on the other hand.

⁸⁹¹ Harrington, *Matthew*, 291-292. For *italics*, see: idem, "Jesus, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham," 193: "Two problems about Jesus that Matthew's Jewish opponents could throw back concerned the people with whom Jesus associated and the source of his power. With his concept of Jesus as the exorcist-healer Son of David based on Solomon, Matthew had a ready-made explanation why Jesus associated with blind, possessed and Gentile people while still retaining his dignity and importance as the Son of David."

⁸⁹² At this point, Matthew is similar to Josephus, who also tried to reduce any suspicious traits which could provoke Solomon's accusation of sorcery by Jews or Gentiles, stressing that Solomon's techniques against demons originated from God, who allowed Solomon to learn them (*Ant.* 8,45, cf. 8,42.49).

⁸⁹³ Duling, "Therapeutic Son of David," 397.

⁸⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 397.

⁸⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 397.

According to Duling, Matthew “is being cautious about portraying Jesus as an exorcist/Son of David”⁸⁹⁶ and therefore he intentionally “shifts the focus from an exorcism to a healing.”⁸⁹⁷ “The Messiah of Deed in Matthew’s Gospel is primarily a Messiah who according to prophecy mercifully heals every disease and infirmity... a therapeutic Messiah.”⁸⁹⁸ As such he “is not simply the Son of David who exorcizes: that function is part of his larger healing activity”⁸⁹⁹ but he is more – namely the Son of David who heals, the therapeutic Son of David.⁹⁰⁰

Duling is correct in his observation that Matthew understands Jesus’ exorcisms as part of Jesus’ broader healing ministry which he sees as the fulfillment of Isaianic prophecies. What Duling fails to observe sufficiently is that it is Matthew’s tendency to present Jesus as the true fulfiller of various Old Testament traditions, rather than his desire to disassociate him from the Solomon as exorcist tradition, which leads him to the subordination of exorcisms to healings.

Duling also unduly stresses the contrast between his therapeutic Son of David and (according to Duling the limited) Solomonic exorcistic Son of David, forgetting, that there are fewer differences between exorcisms and healings than he would like to see. This was in an exemplary way demonstrated in our analysis of Josephus’ report of Eleazar’s exorcism (*Ant.* 8,42-49) which Josephus narrates as an example of Solomon’s great exorcistic wisdom and abilities.

We have seen that Josephus describes Solomon’s exorcistic ability as “technique against demons” (*Ant.* 8,45) which “God also enabled him to learn” “for the benefit and healing (θεραπείαν) of humans.” Josephus then reports that Solomon “composed incantations by which illnesses are relieved, and left behind exorcistic practices with which those binding demons expel them so that they return no more” (*Ant.* 8,45) and claims (*Ant.* 8,46) that

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid., 401.

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid., 402.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid., 399.

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid., 402.

⁹⁰⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 406-407, 410.

“this same form of healing (θεραπεία) remains quite strong among us until today.” As an example of this form of healing (θεραπεία) and Solomonic exorcistic practices he narrates the Eleazar’s exorcism.

The fact, that Josephus speaks of Solomon’s ability to exorcize demons, of Solomon’s incantations and of the exorcism itself as of a kind of healing/cure (θεραπεία) led us to the conclusion that the connection between illnesses and their causes – demons, was very close in antiquity and that exorcism could be perceived as a kind of cure. As a result we have stated that it is inappropriate to distinguish strictly between exorcisms and healing, between the exorcistic and healing Son of David,⁹⁰¹ or to claim that Solomon was known only as an exorcist and not as a healer.⁹⁰²

Duling is right in his claim that Matthew removes Mark’s more elaborate description of the miracle worker’s techniques and eliminates some of Mark’s most manipulative miracles (Mark 7,31-37; 8,22-26; 1,23-28). But as rightly noted by Luz, Matthew principally abridges almost all of Mark’s narratives. Matthew thus may have eliminated these descriptions of miracle worker’s techniques first of all for the reasons of length, but possibly also for apologetic reasons. Matthew was (possibly) attempting to defuse the still actual accusation that Jesus used magic. However, this does not necessarily mean that “Matthew’s ‘Son of David’ Christology could have functioned, as Duling suggests, as ‘a way of neutralizing any popular Solomon-as-exorcist tradition, if Matthew knew about it.’”⁹⁰³

Or more precisely, if one assumes, similarly as Novakovic, that the constitutive elements of the Solomon as exorcist tradition are: direct confrontation of a demon, possession of a secret knowledge of exorcism, seal-ring, and the usage of certain techniques left over by Solomon,⁹⁰⁴ then Duling’s argument is partially correct. In that case, Matthew would truly disassociate

⁹⁰¹ Contra Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 402; *idem*, “Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David,” 251.

⁹⁰² Contra *i.a.*, Chae, *Davidic Shepherd*, 289, 319; Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 86.

⁹⁰³ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 109. Cf. Duling, “Therapeutic Son of David,” 409.

⁹⁰⁴ Novakovic, *Messiah*, 187, cf. 103-109.

Jesus from the too popular magical image of Solomon as exorcist, retaining only some of its non-magical elements (the motif of wisdom, association of the title Son of David with exorcism/healing). If so, then Duling's question "Could it be that that neither the full-blown royal sense nor the Solomon-as-exorcist sense is correct for Mark's view of Son of David, but rather a less dramatic healing conception of the 'Son of David' in which he seeks to modify the other two alternatives in line with his suffering Servant conception?"⁹⁰⁵ has to be, in the context of Matthew's Gospel, answered positively.

However, if we do not regard these magical aspects of the Solomon as exorcist and healer tradition as constitutive (primary) but rather as secondary element of the tradition, then Matthew's elimination of a few of Mark's more detailed descriptions of healing/exorcistic techniques (which, however, do not fully correspond with those that, according to Novakovic, are so "typical" for the Solomon as exorcist tradition) is rather quantitative and an apologetic change whose purpose is not to disassociate Jesus from Solomon.

The theological significance of this change, regardless of our attitude towards primary/secondary constitutive basis of the Solomon as exorcist tradition, is that since Matthew lets Jesus heal and exorcize simply with a touch or word – i.e., without using any special or classical techniques, which could be regarded as magical, he creates an image of a unique (cf. Matt 9,33) messianic healer and exorcist – Jesus, the Son of David, whose person, healings and exorcisms surpass even those of Solomon (12,42).

Mene Tekel:

Matthew's final image of Jesus as the messianic meek and humble king, the Son of David who first of all heals, is a result of the synthesis of the "classical royal messianic expectations" and the Solomon as exorcist/healer tradition, additionally influenced by the Isaianic servant tradition (Isa 53,4; 61,1; 29,18-19; 35,5-6), and possibly, by the Davidic shepherd motif (Ezek 34).

Matthew found a link between the messianic title Son of David and healing in his sources (Mark 10,46-52) and understood Mark's single reference

⁹⁰⁵ Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David," 252.

(correctly)⁹⁰⁶ in the light (against the background) of the Solomon as exorcist/healer and the royal messianic traditions. He multiplied Mark's single reference by inserting the address ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὸς Δαυίδ, eventually only the title υἱὸς Δαυίδ, into several healing/controversy stories (Matt 9,27-31; 12,22-24; 15,21-28; 20,29-34; 21,9; 21,14-16), creating thus an image of a merciful messianic healing Son of David, who in his healings and exorcisms surpasses even David's son Solomon, the mighty exorcist, healer, sage, and king.

By alluding to Zech 9,9, and the Isaianic servant tradition, Matthew further stressed the meek and humble character of this healing messianic king – Jesus, the Son of David, who "did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt 20,28) in order to "save his people from their sins" (1,21), rather than from their political enemies.

In my dissertation I have tried to show that Matthew truly shifted Jewish messianic hopes "from the 'political' to the 'human' level,"⁹⁰⁷ however, he did so with the help of existing contemporary Jewish ideas.

⁹⁰⁶ S.H. Smith convincingly argued that the connection between the Solomonic and messianic designation Son of David may be already present in Mark 10,46-52. Cf. Smith, "The Son of David Tradition in Mark's Gospel," 523-539.

⁹⁰⁷ Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 87.

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