

DECLARATION

**AN INTERPLAY BETWEEN GOD-IMAGES AND THE KOREAN  
TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS IN A HERMENEUTICS OF  
PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING**

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at the University of Stellenbosch**

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## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any other university for a degree.

Signature:

Date :

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to determine what the influence of the God-image of parishioners within the Korean Presbyterian Church is on their faith and ability to come to terms meaningfully with the crisis of suffering. With the view to making a pastoral diagnosis and the process of assessment, a pastoral hermeneutics was applied.

The basic hypothesis implemented is that inappropriate God-images, exacerbated by the religious-cultural context of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, play an important role in the parishioners' inability to come to terms meaningfully with crises and suffering. In this respect, it was found that Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, amongst others, profile the dominant religious paradigm that functions among members. This cultural context gives rise to a concept of God that applies the theological presupposition of an almighty, fearful supreme being who controls and is in command of everything – even death. In this regard, the concepts of punishment and judgment play a decisive role. Within theodicy, God is viewed as the ultimate cause of evil. Thus, a merciless God (*Ch'unbeol*) is the inevitable cause of suffering.

The research found that, in Korea, theodicy relates to the monotheistic concept of a “supreme god” (*Hanunum/Hananim*), as well as the punitive component in the category of omnipotence (*Ch'unbeol/Chunneung*). Because of a causal paradigm (scheme of cause and effect), manipulation is a strong factor in the Koreans' concept of faith and coping with suffering. This gives rise to a form of “pathology of faith”: the manipulation of God with the view to material and health benefits. This hampers maturity in faith.

In order to understand the theological concepts of judgment and power, we present the exegesis of relevant biblical texts with the view to the development of a theology of compassion. In this respect, we discuss the theological theories of four theologians, that is the existential concept of a theology of the cross (Luther); the ontological-trinitarian concept of a theology of the cross (Moltmann); the dialectic-emotional pain theology of Kitamori; and Louw's pastoral-hermeneutic understanding of the cross within the framework of his promissio-therapy.

This study suggests a paradigm shift away from a punitive judgmental paradigm to a sensitive compassionate paradigm. This implies a radical transformation from a hierarchical concept of power to power as a category of sympathy and identification that demonstrates God's compassion in suffering.

## OPSOMMING

Die doel van dié navorsing was om vas te stel wat die invloed van lidmate binne die Koreaanse Presbiteriaanse Kerk se Godsvoorstelling is op hul geloof en vermoë om die krisis van lyding sinvol te verwerk. Met die oog op die maak van 'n pastorale diagnose en die assesseringsproses, is van 'n pastorale hermeneutiek gebruik gemaak.

Die basiese hipotese waarmee gewerk is, is dat ontoepaslike Godsvoorstellings, versterk deur die religieus - kulturele konteks van die Presbiteriaanse Kerk in Korea, 'n belangrike rol speel in die onvermoë van lidmate om krisisse en lyding sinvol te verwerk. In dié verband is gevind dat die dominante, religieuse paradigma wat by lidmate funksioneer, gevoed word deur, onder andere, Shamanisme, Konfusianisme, Taoisme en Boeddhisme. Hierdie kulturele konteks gee aanleiding tot 'n Godsverstaan wat werk met die teologiese vooronderstelling van 'n almagtige, vrees-inboesemende opperwese wat alles beheer en kontroleer – selfs die dood. In dié verband speel die konsepte van straf en oordeel 'n deurslaggewende rol. Binne teodisee word God gesien as die uiteindelijke oorsaak van die kwaad. Lyding is dan 'n noodwendige, kousale gevolg van 'n genadelose God (*Ch'unbeol*).

Die navorsing bevind dat teodisee in Korea verbind moet word met die monoteïstiese verstaan van 'n "oppergod" (*Hanunum/Hananim*), asook die strafkomponent in die almagskategorie (*Ch'unbeól/Chunneung*). Vanweë 'n kousale paradigma (oorsaak-gevolg skema) is 'n manipulasie 'n sterk faktor in Koreane se geloofsverstaan en verwerking van lyding. Dit gee aanleiding tot 'n vorm van "geloofspatologie": die manipulering van God met die oog op materiële en gesondheidsvoordele. Die ontwikkeling van geloofsvolwassenheid word hierdeur gerem.

Ten einde die teologiese konsepte van oordeel en mag te verstaan, word relevante Bybeltekste eksegeties aan die orde gestel met die oog op die ontwikkeling van 'n teologie van medelye. In dié verband word vier teologiese teorieë krities bespreek, te wete die eksistensiële verstaan van 'n kruisteologie (Luther); die ontologies -trinitariese verstaan van 'n kruisteologie (Moltmann); die dialekties -emosionele pynteologie van Kitamori; en Louw se pastoraal-hermeneutiese verstaan van die kruis binne die raamwerk van sy promissiotherapie.

Die studie stel voor 'n paradigmaskuif weg van 'n verdoemende oordeelsparadigma na 'n sensitiewe paradigma van medelye. Die implikasie is 'n radikale transformasie vanaf 'n hiërargiese verstaan van mag na mag as 'n simpatieke, identifikasie-kategorie wat God se medelye in lyding demonstreer.

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- Soli Deo Gloria -

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## ABBREVIATIONS

**KGI:** Korean God Images

**KPBC:** Korean Presbyterian Churches

**KPC:** Korean Protestant Churches

**KRC:** Korean Religious Culture

**KTR:** Korean Traditional Religions

**LW:** Luther's Work. Jaroslav Pelikan & Helmut T, Lehmann (ed.) (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1957)

**PGI:** Parishioners' God- images

**TC:** Theology of the Cross

**TCR:** Theology of the Cross and Resurrection

**TR:** Theology of the Resurrection

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 MOTIVATION

After receiving Christ as Saviour and Lord while the researcher was a sophomore at University, he was heavily involved with Bible study and the Campus Mission Group and their ministry. For seven years, until he attained his graduate degree, he was fortunate to introduce Christ to hundreds of non-believers during encounters of from five minutes to an hour, and counselled some of them on a private and regular basis in order to enhance their maturity in faith. Upon experiencing, with indescribable joy, the counselees' dramatic change through the power of the Gospel, the researcher decided to dedicate his life to pastoral care and the counselling ministry. However, due to the necessity for more professional training in theology, psychology and pastoral counselling, he furthered his studies after completing his graduate study, and obtained experience in clinical pastoral care for adults during a period of being in office as a part-time or full-time pastor. As a result of this experience, he came to realize that, in the pastoral care of the Korean Church, there was a desperate need to integrate theology and psychology on a sound theological foundation in order to transform its unique therapeutic role.

In fact, although the KPC has achieved one of the most remarkable numerical growths in the world since its introduction, the researcher deemed the KPC as unsuccessful, not only in instilling a vivid hope to the parishioners in the face of their pain and suffering, but also in performing its proper role as the source of a sound value and ethical system. Due to the impact in the 1980s and 1990s of a financial crisis and a drastic social change from an industrial society to a postmodern information society, many Korean citizens became unemployed, the middle-class started to disintegrate, while the indigent class grew. As a result, the number of people who were faced with a severe crisis both financially and psychologically, increased rapidly. For instance, in 1988, there were 2947 suicides in Korea. However, in 2003, this figure escalated to 13,005, meaning that the total number of suicides more than quadrupled during the past 15 years and, currently, a suicide possibly takes place every 40 minutes in Korea (*Up-Korea Newspaper*, 2004-4-24, 2004-5-11; *Kyunghang Daily Newspaper* 2004-5-13, 2004-4-20; *Donga Daily Newspaper* 2004-5-10). In addition, the KPC shows signs of non-political, non-social and self-

oriented characteristics (Min, Kyung-Bae, 1987:148; Timothy, Chung-in Song, 1999:305). Furthermore, many parishioners in the KPC display a strong tendency towards self-centredness, and the manipulation and misuse of God in order to fulfil their materialistic aspirations and selfish purposes (Lee, Hun-gu 1995:95; Jang, Nak-hyun 2002:121). In the light of this background, the researcher could not but ask the following critical questions about the pastoral care of the KPC:

- How can the theological paradigm for pastoral care in the KPC be reframed in order to address the mode in which parishioners respond to the existential issues of pain, suffering and despair?
  
- How does pastoral care in the KPC enhance parishioners' maturity in faith in the face of their pain and suffering, without disregarding both the salvific and the comforting dimensions of God's grace?
  
- Is it possible to develop an appropriate theological model for pastoral care in the KPC, in which we can escape from both a theological and psychological reduction?
  
- What are the undergirding theological and philosophical issues emerging from the Korean cultural and religious setting and how do they influence a Christian reflection on the interplay between the power of God and parishioners' exposure to suffering and vulnerability?

Although all these questions do not have easy answers, the researcher realized that assessing and reframing people's God-images<sup>1</sup> could provide a possible and cardinal solution. According to Louw (1999a:330, 1996:114), pastoral care should be engaged in helping parishioners to

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<sup>1</sup> Because this research focuses mainly on parishioners' God-images, we need to refer to this study's usage of "God-images" and their meaning. In general, we can make a possible distinction between "God-concepts" and "God-images." While God-concepts refer more to an intellectual, mental dictionary-definition of the word and the more dogmatic interpretation of God, on the other hand, God-images refer to more a personal role of perceptions and individual experience of God (Lawrence 1997:214; Louw 1999a:329). However, according to Louw (1999a:329), it is not easy to distinguish between God-concepts and God-images because cognitive and affective components play a decisive role within a contextual situation. Therefore, in accordance with Louw's idea, in this study, the researcher adopts these two terms without any distinction, although the term, God-images, may be mainly used.

interpret God appropriately in terms of existing life issues and existential problems in order to facilitate change and enhance their maturity in faith. Louw (1998:223) argues that inadequate and inappropriate God-images of parishioners eventually lead to a kind of "pathology of faith." Cavanagh (1992:80) maintains that many pathological problems of parishioners are caused by their unhealthy perception of God. Therefore, the researcher dedicated himself to this study that attempts to investigate the experience and shape of the PGI in the KPBC and their role in parishioners' faith within the Korean Church, as well as to propose a strategy in order to instil vivid hope in the face of pain and suffering and to reconstruct their ethical role on the basis of Christ's sacrificial love.

## 1.2 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

While engaged in the issue of God-images within the KPBC,<sup>2</sup> we should regard the cultural dimension as a cardinal factor. Louw (1998a:12-13) refers aptly to the importance of a social and cultural dimension in the issue of pastoral care: "Religious truths are not isolated absolutes, but are relative to a certain historical context. This means that pastoral care must be practised within a context. Attention must be given to the individual within relationships as well as note be taken of how social structures and cultural factors influence the individual."

Within several decades, the Korean society was exposed to drastic social change and the influence of a rapid process of globalization and postmodernization (Shim, Young-hee Kim 2003:67-73). As a consequence, the process of globalization and postmodernization that encompasses the whole world in this contemporary age, may also have influenced Koreans' God-images and spirituality in many ways.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, within the unique context of Korean culture, we cannot disregard the religious cultural background of Korea. In fact, many scholars seem to agree that, within the Koreans' traditional view of God, there is a tendency towards a monotheistic understanding of God (Kim, Sung-hae 1993:8,20-23,38; Yu, Dong-sik 1975:27-60;

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<sup>2</sup> In this study, we shall try to assess parishioners' God-images only within the KPBC for the sake of the practical convenience of our empirical research. However, the implication of this study could be extended to be adapted in the KPC.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, within her research, Shim, Young-hee Kim (2003) tries to disclose how a drastic change and the process of postmodernization within the Korean society has disturbed and shattered children's self-images and God-images, as well as their spirituality.

Yun, Yi-heum 1985:63; Lee, Eun-bong 1984:76-146; Cho, Hung-yun 1997:299-302; Chung, Jing-hong 1985:59-68; Kim, In-hoe 1988:14). Koreans have always used the vernacular term, *Hanunim* (the heavenly one), and this vernacular God, *Hanunim*, has become fundamentally rooted in, and has influenced, the lives and religious experience of all Koreans. Furthermore, the concept of “*Hanunim*” seems to play a decisive role in the way Korean perceive and experience God. This concept points to a personal but Supreme Being, who rules heaven and earth. This understanding of God is clearly related to the issue of punishments and rewards for human deeds (Kim, Sung-hae 1998:11; Chung, Chai-sik 1997:1-3; Yun, Sang-beom 1964:248-249; Rha, Young-bok 1977:141-151). Against this background, we could possibly presume that God-images within the Korean religious and cultural setting have influenced the Korean mind-set, belief system and their religious experience and response to life issues in many ways. Thus, the researcher will first try to determine whether the Korean general views of God, which could be directly related to KTR, namely Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, have influenced on the formation and function of the PGI within the KPC.

Although several studies have been devoted to the issue of building a correlation between the Korean general view of God and the KTR (Kim, S H 1993, 1995; Rha, Y B 1977; Choi, Jun-sik 1995:129-145), their research focuses, however, were not on investigating the pastoral implication of existing God-images within the real field of the KPC. Fortunately, we found Shim, Young-hee Kim’s research (2003), which attempts to assess children’s God-images in the light of the Korean cultural context, especially from a pastoral perspective. Nevertheless, the researcher has found no study in Korea, which focused on identifying the impact of the KTR on the formation and function of the adult parishioners’ God-images within the KPC against the Korean religious and cultural context, from a pastoral perspective. In other words, we noticed that no study seems to deal with the issues of verifying whether, and how, Korean culture and traditional religions have influenced the reality of adult parishioners’ belief systems and the theological paradigm within the KPBC and their response to life issues, as well as their spiritual maturity. Thus, in short, within this study, in order to establish a connection between PGI and Korean culture from a pastoral perspective, the researcher will engage in exploring the following research problems:

- Identifying the existing God-images in the KPBC and how they influence parishioners’

response to life issues (e.g. theodicy and its impact on parishioners' understanding of suffering) and their maturity in faith.

- Investigating whether, or how, culture and traditional religions have influenced the parishioner's theological paradigm and belief system within the KPBC.

- Establishing a criterion of making an assessment of God-images in order to determine whether God-image are appropriate or inappropriate.

### **1.3 HYPOTHESIS**

Many scholars have warned about the strong tendency to manipulate and misuse God by parishioners within the Korean Church, in an endeavour to fulfil their material wishes and selfish purposes (Lee, Hun-gu 1995:112-113; Choi, Jung-hyun 1996:77-79; Jang, Nak-hyun 2002:121). Furthermore, when their property, their success or health is damaged by a sudden crisis or severe suffering, many parishioners within the KPBC seem to be disappointed easily and fall prey to a state of profound hopelessness and despair. Although possible causes might do exist, the researcher wishes to assume that parishioners' views and understandings of God could be associated with one of the most essential and fundamental causes of these pathological phenomena within the KPBC. In fact, in the KPBC, the role that God-images play in parishioners' spiritual / faith development should be understood against the unique cultural background of this Church. In this regard, because the KTR, such as Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, have been the enduring core of the Korean mindset, belief system and spirituality over centuries, the researcher believes that we should accept the fact that the KTR have played a fundamental role, especially when reckoning the connection between parishioners' understanding of God and their interpretation of suffering (the quest for meaning).

Furthermore, the researcher wishes to hypothesize that, taking into consideration of the existing Korean religious cultural background, it is necessary for pastoral ministry in Korea to establish a theology of compassion by exploring the notion of the compassionate God within the Old and New Testaments and to reflect critically the views of a theology of compassion as presented by Luther, Kitamori, Moltmann and Louw. A pastoral approach to the reframing of God-images

should take into account the impact of the Korean cultural and religious setting on parishioners' God-images and their understanding of theodicy. The reasons for the researcher's choice are as follows: Luther's emphasis is more on the existential implication of a theology of the cross, in which the existential exposure to despair and the absence of God became the starting point of theological reflection; Kitamori's emphasis is more on the intrinsic dialectic of pain within God; Moltmann's emphasis is more on the ontological and theological implication of the cross: reframing the Trinity and pathos of God; Louw's emphasis is more on the pastoral and hermeneutical implication of the cross (promissio-therapy): reframing inappropriate images of God, as related to our human quest for meaning. In addition to this, the researcher wishes to hypothesize that, by making use of a theology of compassion (which will be argued throughout the study), the assessment and reframing of existing theological paradigm within the KPBC could help pastors to not only diagnose parishioners' faith at a more precise existential level, but also instill true hope for them and enhance their maturity in faith. In this regard, a theology of compassion can play a decisive role in assessing and reframing the theological paradigms that dominate the theological thinking of the KPBC. In order to verify the major paradigms within the KPBC, a thorough literature survey will be undertaken in order to determine the impact of the Korean culture and the KTR on existing theological paradigms regarding the understanding of theodicy.

#### **1.4 METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE**

In order to fulfil more effectively the central aim of this study, which focuses on assessing and reframing PGI by investigating whether, and how, these images within the KPBC have been profoundly influenced by Korean cultural God-images, including the KRC, the researcher attempts to adopt Dingemans's (1996:92-93) practical theological methodology that consists of descriptive, hermeneutic, normative and strategic phases, because, in order to investigate more clearly the research problems and verify the central hypothesis of this study, the researcher believes that Dingemans's approach could provide a relevant methodology for a pastoral and practical theological approach.

To put it more precisely, regarding the primary aim of this study, we first need to identify the existing God-images in the KPBC and how they influence parishioners' response to life issues

and their maturity in faith. Therefore, in order to fulfil this purpose, as a hermeneutic phase in Dingemans's model, we engage in providing a hermeneutic basis to analyze the existing God-images within the KPBC. That is, the researcher make use of a critical survey of the available literature in terms of Koreans' God-images within the KRC to determine what happened in Korea's history, and the impact of culture on Koreans' God-images, their belief system, as well as their spirituality. Furthermore, as a descriptive phase within Dingemans's methodology, an empirical survey will be done in order to investigate and describe existing God-images within the KPBC. In other words, in order to examine the main research problem and verify the hypothesis of this study, an empirical survey will be executed in this research to examine the cultural influence on parishioners' belief system within the KPBC in respect of their God images. This empirical survey, as the descriptive phase, will be done exclusively in some randomly selected churches of the KPBC by means of a questionnaire due to two reasons. Because in the 1984 statistics, when we reckon the numbers of adherents of all denominations in the KPC, we notice that the KPBC had the highest percentage of the total adherents (at least, 54.6%) (*The yearbook of Korean Christianity*, 1999). Moreover, the researcher is also a member of this denomination.

Next, as a normative phase in Dingemans's model, for the purpose of establishing a criterion of making an assessment of God-images in order to determine whether these images are appropriate or inappropriate, the researcher will attempt to build a theology of compassion in a pastoral perspective by reflecting the notion of the compassionate God in the Old and New Testaments as well as the views of a theology of compassion represented by Luther, Kitamori, Moltmann and Louw. The researcher adopts this methodology, as he believes that a theology of the compassionate God would really be a relevant and appropriate paradigm to apply if one truly wishes to address the problem of the KPBC from a pastoral hermeneutical perspective. Lastly, as a strategic phase, when considering the Korean cultural context, the researcher will transmit the previously established theological theory into the pastoral ministry of the KPBC regarding the issue of a pastoral diagnosis. In short, all the procedures of this research will develop as follows:

In Chapter 2, we shall first try to examine the interplay between the KTR and the KGI against the Korean religious and cultural context. In particular, the views of God within the KTR,

namely Shamanism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, as well as their influence on Koreans' religious thoughts and lives, will be explored. Furthermore, we shall also attempt to examine how Koreans' general views of God have been influenced by socio-political factors since Christianity was first introduced into Korea.

In Chapter 3, by adopting an empirical approach, we shall diagnose existing God-images within the KPBC in order to verify the theological paradigm within the KPBC. In particular, in terms of the main research problem of this study, whether, and how, God-images in the KTR, the doctrine of Christianity, and other socio-political aspects within the KRC have influenced the existing God-images and belief system within the KPBC in terms of the process of conceptualization.

In Chapter 4, in the light of the KRC, for the purpose of proposing a new theological paradigm on a more relevant theological basis, especially from a pastoral perspective, a theology of compassion is established by exploring the notion of the compassionate God in the Old and New Testaments, including exegesis on some biblical texts, as well as reflecting the views of a theology of compassion of four theologians, who designate their own theological stances.

Finally, in Chapter 5, the previously established theological theory is applied to pastoral ministry with regard to the notion of a pastoral hermeneutics and a pastoral diagnosis. Ultimately, against the Korean religious and cultural context, this chapter proposes a strategy and method for pastoral ministry in the KPBC, which reckons with new cultural shifts within the Korean society.

## CHAPTER 2

### AN INTERPLAY BETWEEN CULTURE AND GOD-IMAGES WITHIN THE KRC

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the significance of the Koreans' views and understanding of God will be explored in the light of the Korean religious and cultural setting, since God-images in the KPBC and the role that they play in parishioners' spirituality cannot be free from their unique historical and cultural background. Therefore, we shall firstly investigate the significance of God-images within the KTR, namely Shamanism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, as well as their influence on the Koreans' religious thoughts and lives. In fact, if we accept the assertion that spirituality refers to an awareness of transcendence and the ultimate as influenced by an certain cultural traits and philosophical paradigms that reflect a general mindset, belief system or approach to life (Louw, 2002b:74), then the KTR could be regarded as a cardinal root of the Korean spirituality. Over centuries, the KTR have been the enduring core of Koreans' general mindset, belief system and their approach to life.

Furthermore, the researcher believes that, if one wishes to truly understand the impact of culture and traditional religions on God-images in the Korean context, one needs to examine the period of the *Chosun* dynasty. During this dynasty in Korea, Catholicism was transmitted through the mediation of translated Chinese religious documents, it was regarded as a branch of learning rather than a religion, and was called "*Seohak* (西學)", meaning Western learning, or "*Ch'unjuhak* (天主學)", which means the study of the Lord of Heaven (Kang, Dong-ku 1999:198). When Western thought, *Seohak* (西學), was introduced, the rise of conflict and dispute between traditional beliefs and this new belief was inevitable, because the *Chosun* dynasty had the established social structure of Neo-Confucianism (Keum, Jang-tae 2000:148). In addition, with the fall of the last Korean emperor in the Chosun dynasty, Korea faced extraordinary dramatic and rapid socio-political changes. We can readily assume that these drastic socio-political changes could have had a multilateral influence on God-images within the Korean context. In short, this chapter concentrates on providing an essential basis towards a more holistic and clearer picture of the interplay between God-images and culture within the

religious context of Korea.

## 2.2 AN INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE KTR AND THE KGI

### 2.2.1 Shamanism and the image of the “*prosperity Guarantor & heavenly frightening Ruler*”

#### 2.2.1.1 A historical review of Korean Shamanism

Generally speaking, although Shamanism could be regarded as the most ancient and ubiquitous religious phenomena in both East and West (Chang, Chu-kun 1988:30), it is not easy to verify whether it is valid to give the name ‘Shamanism’ to the primitive animistic religion of Korea that is polytheistic and polydemonistic, being based on nature worship and spirit worship (Rha, Young-bock 1977:76,77; Chang, Chu-kun 1988:30). Because, not only there has been some controversy and debate about defining the term Shamanism itself, but also this primitive religion of Korea has its own uniqueness. Thus, some scholars do not like using the term ‘Shamanism’ for the primal religion of Korea,<sup>4</sup> most scholars of Korean religions seem to agree that this primal type of Korean religion that exhibits many similarities to Shamanism can be referred to as Shamanism. (Kim, Hyun-key Hogarth 1999:23-26,281-282; Park, Il-young 1999:17; Cho, Heung-yun 1997:17; Kim, Sung-rae 1998:53; Rha, Young-bok 1977:76,77; Chang, Chu-kun 1988:30).

In fact, although Korean Shamanism (an indigenous and a primitive animistic religion of Korea) has its own names, such as ‘*Musok*’ that means literally ‘popular *Mu* practice’, ‘*Mugyo*’ that means *Mu* religion, and *Muism* meaning a unique primal type of Korean religion, ‘*Mu*’ can be the core concept of Korean Shamanism (Kim, Hyun-key Hogarth 1999:2; Kim, Tae-kon 1998:26; Kim, Sung-rae 1998:50-52).

Kim, Hyun-key Hogarth (1999:2) explains the notion of ‘*Mu*’ as follows:

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<sup>4</sup> For instance, in order to secure and represent the uniqueness of Korean Shamanism, Kim, Tae-kon (1998:13-37) proposes a special term, *Muism*.

The equivalent of Shaman in Korean is 'Mu' (巫), which is based on the visually explanatory Chinese character. It represents the linking (卍) of heaven (☉) and earth (☷) through two humans dancing (人) in the air."

Furthermore, she believes that the most important function of the shaman is to mediate between the supernatural and human worlds by utilizing trance/ecstasy states (Kim, H K H 1999:12). Thus, by adopting her viewpoint, we find a rough connection between the primal religion of Korea and Shamanism. In fact, Shamanism is based on the word, 'Shaman', coming from the Tungusic 'Shaman', who is believed to be a person with extraordinary spiritual power that enables him/her to mediate between supernatural and human beings (Kim, H K H 1999:7,10; Rha, Y B 1977:78). Kim, Hyun-key Hogarth (1999:9) contrasts the view of Eliade with Lewis's. According to her, Eliade regards Shamanism as 'techniques of ecstasy', focusing more on ascension to heaven or descent to the underworld for the benefit of his or her people, than on spirit possession. On the other hand, Lewis understands that spirit possession is an integral part of Shamanism and he criticizes Eliade's theory on account of the neglect of spirit possession.

Kim, Tae-kon (1998:27-28) represents the characteristic of Shamanism on the basis of three criteria, such as ecstasy, trance and possession. For him, a "trance" is simply a change of consciousness, "ecstasy" is the loss of the soul, and "possession" is the receiving of spiritual power. Thus, he writes:

Trance would be the first level of a change of consciousness, and ecstasy or possession would be two forms of a second and deeper level of change of consciousness.

Furthermore, within the Korean 'Muism', which is his special term for referring to Korean Shamanism, Kim, Tae-kon (1998:26) proposes two types of shaman, so called 'Mudang.' According to him, while *Kangsinmu*, a possession type of shaman, who receives spiritual power spontaneously through spirit possession, is largely prevalent in the northern area of the Han-river, *Sesupmu*, a heredity type of shaman, is largely prevalent in the southern area of the Han-river. Additionally, Kim, Tae-kon (1998:28) explains that *Kangsinmu* is more similar to the possession type of shaman seen in South Asia, Africa and Northeast America, and *Sesupmu* is more similar to the ecstasy type of shaman, found in Northeast Asia, neighbouring Siberia. However, he does not assert that this regional variation is definitive.

Archaeological evidence proves the existence of Shaman in the Bronze Age in Korea.<sup>5</sup> The influence of this primal religion continued during the kingdom of *Koguryŏ*, *Paekche* and *Silla*. For instance, the well-known golden crown of the *Silla* dynasty was used as both a regal symbol, as well as the sign of the chief shaman of the kingdom. Moreover, the name of the second king of *Silla* was called *Ch'ach'ung*, which means shaman (Chang, C K 1988:31). During the *Koryŏ* period (918-1392 A.D.), in spite of the rising influence of Buddhism and Confucianism, Shamanism seems to have harmonized well with them (Kim, H K H 1999:284; Cho, Heung-yun 1997:48-61).

However, with the founding of the *Chosun* dynasty,<sup>6</sup> the situation changed due to the dynasty having been established on the grounds of the Confucian thought and worldview. Since the *Chosun* dynasty (1392-1910) oppressed Buddhism, Taoism and Shamanism, therefore, during the *Chosun* dynasty, Shamanism was less widely practised than before. Nevertheless, it still had great influence on the people's lives, values and their religious experience. For instance, many women of royal families and nobles of the *Chosun* dynasty were ardent patrons of Shamanism (Kim, H K H 1999:284; Cho, H Y 1997:63-106; Kim, Hyoung-hyo 1977:47-49; Yu, Chai-shin 1988:32-33). During the Japanese colonial reign, which began in 1910, Korean Shamanism continued as a way of expressing cultural nationalism. In contemporary Korea, Shamanistic practices and traditions are still very much alive (Kim, H K H 1999:326).

Grayson (1989:230) refers to the significance of Shamanism within the Korean cultural context as follows:

The Korean primal religion (Shamanism) did not disappear with the advent of Buddhism...Rather, it became the substratum of all Korean religious experience and has shaped the development of all religions and philosophies which have been transmitted to Korea, including Buddhism, Confucianism, Roman Catholicism and Protestant Christianity.

Furthermore, Son, Bong-ho (1983:337) also asserts that the practices of Korean Shamanism,

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, some swords, which were not sharp and, thus, they must have been used for rituals, were found (Chang, Chu-kun 1988:30-31)

<sup>6</sup> "the *Chosun* dynasty," the last kingdom of Korea, is also called "the *Yi* dynasty." In this study, the researcher will use these two terms without distinction.

which mainly propose to restore or enhance health, promote conception, and acquire wealth and power, i.e. pursue mundane and worldly desires, have profoundly influenced on the formation and function of the mind-set, value, social practices, family and political lives of Korean. In short, therefore, Korean Shamanism, which displays a strong tendency to pursue blessings, could be regarded as the substratum of the belief system, spirituality and religious experience of all Korean.

### 2.2.1.2 The *Tangun* myth

Because the myth of *Tangun* is the seminal myth of Korean cultural history and this myth has imprinted in the minds of Koreans and has deeply influenced their lives, belief system and religious experience for thousands of years (Cho, Heung-yun 1887:36), the researche believes that this myth have infulenced on the fuction of KGI and Korean sprituality in somw ways. In fact, the *Tangun* myth is extremely well known and all Koreans are familiar with it, regardless of age and class. Furthermore, we find its pervasiveness in the contemporary Korean society in a large number of *Tangun*-related new religions, research groups and other societies (Kim, H K H 1999: 270). Over the past few decades, many scholars of Korean religions have continuously proposed that the *Tangun* myth is directly linked to Korean Shamanism (Cho, Heung-yun 1983:17-19, 1997:29; Lee, Jung-yong 1981:15-26; Yu, Dong-sik 1975:27-35; Lee, Neung-hwa 1927:1; Choi, Nam-sun 1948:44)

Lee, Jung-yong (1981:21) proposes that *Shin-kyo* is a traditional folk faith that is based on the myth of *Tangun*. For Lee, *Shin-kyo* is more than merely Shamanistic. He believes that *Shin-kyo* is included in the national faith, which emphasizes the worship of the highest God of heaven, who became the direct ancestor of the Korean people through *Tangun*. Lee, Jung-yong (1988:25) also insists that the ritual of the *Sinkyoo*, which focused primarily on worshipping the Heavenly King, continues in the contemporary Shamanism in Korea. However, the idea of a direct linkage of *Tangun* to Korean Shamanism cannot be easily verified, because it is not certain whether *Tangun* existed historically, and to define Korean Shamanism itself is ambiguous (Kim, Hyun-key Hogarth 1999:265-269; Kim, In-hoe 1988:13-14).

Nevertheless, if we simply define the shaman as an intermediary or mediator between the

spiritual world and the material world, we can say that the *Tangun* myth depicts the Korean prototype of Shamanistic God-images (Lee, J Y 1981:13,16). This myth described *Tangun* as the Heavenly King and the founder of Korea. Furthermore, there seems to be fairly general agreement that the word *Tangun* derives from the Mongolian ‘*tengri*’ ‘*tengeri*’ of Buryat, the meaning of which relates to heaven and the shaman (Lee, J Y 1981:16; Lee, Eun-bong 1994:173; Kim, H K H 1999:263; Yu, C S 1988:98). This myth describes *Tangun* as a direct descendant of the Heavenly King.

The following is the content of the *Tangun* myth within the *Samgukyusa* (Memorabilia of Three Kingdoms) version, a Korean history book, which the monk, *Iryŏn*, wrote during in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century (*Samguk yusa*, Book 1, Part 1, translated by Kim, H K H 1999:262):

In ancient times, *Hwanin* (this refers to *Chesk*), had a soja (son), called *Hwanung*, who had the ambition to descend to the earth and to rule over humans. His father, realizing his intentions, chose *T'aebaek san* among three great mountains, for him to descend upon, deciding that it was a fitting place from which to benefit huamnkind.... The bear persevered, becoming a woman at the end of three times seven days. The tiger, which could not endure the ordeal, did not become a human. As there was no one whom the woman, *Ungnyo* (Bear Woman), could marry, she went constantly to the base of the Sacred Tree to pray for a child. *Hwanung* temporarily changed his form and married her. A son was born who was called *Tan'gun Wanggom*.... Later, he returned to Asadal and hid himself, eventually becoming the Mountain Spirit, at 1,908 years of age.

Here, we take note of three characters, namely *Hwanin*, *Hwanung* and *Tangun*. This myth described *Hwanin* as the Heavenly King and depicted *Hwanung* as his son. In addition, it referred to *Tangun* as the son of *Hwanung*. According to Lee, Eun-bong (1999:83), *Hwanin*, described as a grandfather of *Tangun* and a heavenly King in this myth, can be recognized as “*deus otiosus*”, an omniscient supreme God who is retired or taking a rest, similar to the god, *Buga*, in the *Tungus* area. Furthermore, he proposes that ‘*tengri*’, defined as “Sky, category of benevolent spirits” or “the supreme power, which is not benevolent nor malevolent, which is not being but Being in general”, is similar to *Buga* and has characteristics of “*deus otiosus*”(Lee, E B 1999:84).

However, Lee, Eun-bong (1999:86-87) emphasizes a tendency to understand God as a *triune* God within the God concept of the *Tangun* myth, thus quite different from those of Northern

Asia. In other words, because *Hwanin* sent his son *Hwanung* (believed to be an incarnated God) to earth, therefore, *Tangun* (born from the marriage of *Hwanung* and *Ungnyeo* - a woman transformed from a bear) can be considered to be a god. However, Yu, Dong-sik (1997:37-38) emphasizes the union of three factors, such as heaven, earth and a human being within the *Tangun* myth. In other words, he focuses on the fact that *Tangun*, as the initiator of Korea, came into the world through the union between *Hwanung* (the incarnated god of heaven) and *Ungnyeo* (the god of the earth).<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, both scholars seem to believe that God-images within the *Tangun* myth cannot be simply related to “*deus otisus*”, a retired, transcendent God, far from the world of human beings. Within this myth, *Tangun*, generally, seems to be recognized as a kind of mediator between the spiritual world of heaven and the material world of the earth (Lee, J Y 1981:13-14; Kim, H K H 1999:264). Sim, Jae-ryong (1993:51) depicts the God-images of *Tangun* as “*a personal and a supreme Ruler*,” who listens people’s petition and guarantees the fulfilment of their wishes.

In short, it seems unreasonable simply to connect the God-images of the *Tangun* myth and “*deus otisus*,” a god who is retired, transcendent and very far from the world of human beings, although *Hwanin*, the grandfather of *Tangun*, can be regarded as such in a sense. Within the notion of triune God in *Tangun* Myth, we can rather see the image of the personal and supernatural God and a guarantor on our behalf, because *Hwanung*, as well as *Tangun* himself, could be regarded as the incarnated personal and supreme Ruler, who intercedes in heaven on behalf of his own people.

### 2.2.1.3 Heavenly worshipping rituals

There were various ancient festivals, such as *Younggo* of the *Puyo* (59 B.C.-494 A.D.) held in December, the *Koguryo* people's *Tongmaeng* celebrated in October, *Much'un* of the *Ye* tribe, the *Sodo* festival of the *Chinhan* people, the southern Han Tribes' *Surinnal* (Eagle Day) in May, and *Sangdal* (High Month) in October. Most scholars seem to agree that these ancient Shamanistic festivals were closely related to worshipping heaven (Kim, H K H 1999:282; Cho, H Y 1997:34; Yu, D S 1997:38-42). For instance, according to Chang, Chu-kun (1988:13), within the book

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<sup>7</sup> In this regard, Yu, Dong-sik develops his unique idea of Korean spirituality, so called, *Pungryu-do* (風流道), in which he tries to propose the notion of the Korean monotheistic God (*Han*, *Hannim*, *Hananim* or *Hanunim*) as the substratum of the religious experience and spirituality of all Koreans (1997:33-42).

*Weizhi*, *Dongyichuan* in *Sanguozhi*, we can see the descriptions of ancient Koreans' religious festivals, such as *Yonggo* (*Puyo*), *Much'un* (*Ye*), and *Sodo* (*Chinhan*). He claims that at an ancient national festival, *Yonggo*, held in Puyo in January, the people drank, ate, sang and danced non-stop for days and offered sacrifices to heaven by slaughtering oxen. Furthermore, after planting seeds in May, the people of *Chinhan* started a heavenly worshipping festival, *Sodo*, in which they offered sacrifices to heaven for an abundant harvest. Additionally, Chang, Chu-kun (1988:13) explains that according to a history book, *Koryŏsa*, in the time of King *Hyonjong* (1020 A.D.), a nationwide ritual for rain was held with the participation of many shamans. The rituals for rain, so called *Kiuje*, were held continuously until the last dynasty of *Chosun* (Kim, H K H 1999:297-298,311). During the *Koryo* Kingdom, the national ceremonies, *Yeondonghoe* and *Palgwan-hoe*, were also held. Although these huge ceremonies were held at the largest Buddhist temples, they, in fact, were Shamanistic rites to worship the heavenly King and five famous mountains and rivers. Chang, Chu-kun (1988:13) believes that these ceremonies resemble today's shaman practices, which focuses on this worldly blessing and protection rather than other worldly salvation. Thus, we can safely say that national heavenly worshipping rituals, praying for good fortune or rain for a better harvest did exist in Korea. Moreover, the main object of worship was to worship *the heavenly Supreme Being*, who can be described as a prosperity Guarantor and heavenly supreme King. Therefore, we notice that in these ancient national heavenly worshipping rituals, God was regarded as a superme being, who controled everything and was responsible for all events, including blessing and diasters.

#### **2.2.1.4 *Cheui*, the ceremonies of Korean Shamanism**

Park, Il-young (1999:82) divides the ceremonies of Korean Shamanism broadly into two ceremonial types (*Cheui*), such as *Chi'sung* and *Kut*. He explains that *Chi'sung* is a more simplified type of Shamanistic ceremony than *Kut*. On the other hand, Kim, Tae-kon (1998:133) suggests that *Kut* (*Cheui*) can be used as more a comprehensive term, including small-scale ceremonies, such as *Chi'sung* and *Sonbim*. However, both scholars seem to agree that *Mudang*, a vernacular term for a shaman, can be regarded as a mediator, who meets the God(s) and prays for the desires of human beings (Park, I Y 1999:86; Kim, T K 1998:127).

Cho, heung-yun (1983:43-44) illustrates a variety of *Chi'sungs*, referring to small-scale

### Shamanistic ceremonies:

(1) Gija Chisung: prays for a son. (2) Smasinmaj ijumsim Chisung: prays for safe delivery at noon. (3) Samsin maji: a prayer for a child on the 100<sup>th</sup> day of birth (4) Myeondari: a prayer for a child's longevity. (5) Pudakguri: prays for the exorcism of a ghost of disease and the curing of diseases. (6) Hutjang puli: a ceremony for curing sudden critical diseases. (7) Seonang puli: a ceremony for prohibiting curses of the seonang god, a village god. (8) Salpuli: a ceremony for eliminating misfortune (9) Giljepuli: a ceremony for safe driving. (10) Jesumaji: a prayer for material blessing and good fortune. (11) Samjepuli: a ceremony for the prohibition of disasters due to fire, flood and wind.

On the other hand, Kim, Tae-kon (1990:133), in order to understand *Cheui* in a broader concept, tries to categorizes broadly Shamanistic rituals as two types: “(1) a general *kut* in a family unit, and (2) *tongshinje*, a *tangkut* in which the village participates as a unit.” T K Kim (1990:134) proposes that a *tongshinje* was held for protection, good weather and abundant wishes for the village's community as an entire unit, on the other hands, many types of general *kuts* were performed for private purposes. All of the above make it clear that the god(s) in the rituals of Korean Shamanism is noted as *an omnipotent being*, who provides or prohibits disasters to human beings, as well as who displays his blessing power by having granted their private wishes. However, it has been generally accepted that a God in Korean Shamanism can be viewed as a functional God/gods for the fulfilment of people's wishes (Yu, D S 1975:314-319; Kim, T K 1981:295).

Furthermore, it should also be emphasized that within the rites of Shamanism god(s) is regarded as an ineffably great and frightening being, because a large part of Korean shamanistic ceremonies focuses on appeasing and soothing God, who has the frightening power to bring disasters and misfortune.

Kim, Tae-kon (1998:92) illustrates the significance of the fearful punishment by god(s) in the rituals of Korean Shamanism as follows:

(1) A man who requested *kut* was struck by disaster due to his impure life. (2) A man with an impure body enters a holy place, resulting in his sudden death. (3) god(s) becomes angry and causes a problem to people as a punishment because a ceremony or rituals were improperly performed.

In other words, within the rituals of Korean Shamanism, god(s) is regarded as such a fearful and frightening being, whereby if people cannot fulfil his will, then they will be punished. The method of punishment is to cause their illness, failure in their endeavours and damage to their property (Lee, J Y 1981:27; Kim, T K 1978:45).

In Clark's (1961:194) description, the Shamanistic god(s) is fundamentally frightening:

A few, very a few, of spirits are benevolent. Almost all are definitely malignant. Shamanism is a religion of fear.

Therefore, we can say that the Shamanistic rituals were practised in order to pacify most frightening, unpredictable, malignant, merciless and even cruel Shamanistic god(s), for the purpose of preventing them from causing disasters and ensuring a long, happy life in this world.

In particular, regarding the issue of the relationship between God and the human suffering, Kim, Tae-kon's remark (1981:286) is of great importance:

The Shamanistic god does not prove his might by an illuminating revelation but by inflicting his anger in the form of punishment or vengeance through suffering, and as a result, is always the object of fear and reverence even if he is a god, which is rarely the case. Therefore, fearing the god and actively pacifying the angered god take precedence over pious devotion and adherence in love of the god who is the object of their faith, since the Shamanistic god is unpredictable and hard to please.

Here, as we can see, although god(s) in Shamanism is an almighty being, who displays the power of both blessing and cursing people, nevertheless, within Korean Shamanism, god(s) is fundamentally understood as an unpredictable and frightening Being, who hardly has any ethical code of conduct (Kim, T K 1998:92). Thus, the ceremonies of Korean Shamanism could be regarded as people's efforts in order to pacify and appease the frightening and cruel god(s), as well as for the purpose of escaping harsh punishment from their merciless god(s). Consequently, within *Cheui*, the ritual of Korean Shamanism, we notice that god(s) could be considered as all source evil things and events, who punishes mercilessly human beings with all suffering and disaster. Therefore, it seems reasonable to summarize that, within *Cheui*, the ceremonies in Korean Shamanism, God could be regarded not only as an "omnipotent and

frightening heavenly King”, but also the direct source of evil and disaster, whereby all human suffering and predicaments might be considered as the consequence of the punishments of merciless and cruel god(s).

#### 2.2.1.5 Shamanistic godly terms

Generally speaking, Shamanism in Korea is pantheistic, polytheistic and polydemonistic, but it also has an element of a monotheistic view of God, the God concept of which is hierarchical, giving the impression of one supreme God who reigns over all other gods (Rha, Y B 1977:80). According to Kim, Tae-kon (1998:90-91), there is a total 273 gods in Korean Shamanism. He attempts to divide Shamanistic gods into four categories. That is, “*the ritual gods in the community shrine; household gods in general; those for the religious ritual of the village; and the gods of each house house.*”

In addition, Kim, Tae-Kon (1998:94-95) describes the heirarchical characteristic of the Korean Shamanistic gods as follows:

(1) The gods in the high class include *Ch'unshin* (god of the sky/heaven), *Ch'ilsongshin* (the seven stars - god-kings - the Big Dipper), *Sanshin* (the mountain god). (2) The gods in the middle class include *Sahaeyongshin* (the god of the four seas, the ocean god), *Sambul chesokshin* (three *mu* gods who resemble Buddha), *Changgunshin* (the general god) (3) The gods in low class include *Songjushin* (the chief household god), *Taegamshin* (a deified court official), *Chishin* (a god of the land, an earth god), *Chowangshin* (the kitchen god) (4) In the lowest class are *Kollipshin* (the grain god) and *chapkwi* (miscellaneous spirits of the dead).

Nevertheless, we can say that Korean Shamanism has the concept of the highest and supreme God, *Ch'unshin* (god of the sky/heaven),<sup>8</sup> who is above all the other gods. In fact, it seems to be generally accepted that Korean Shamanism reflects the recognition of one Supreme God

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<sup>8</sup> In fact, in terms of the Korean traditional God-concepts, although there has been a view that Koreans' supreme God may be regarded as “*Il sin*” (the sun God), which might reflect the impact of Southern Asia, nevertheless, the concept of “*Ch'un sin*” (the sky/ heaven God), which could relate to the God-concepts in Northern Asia, seems to be more appropriate in order to depict the holistic picture of the Korean traditional God-concepts (Lee, E B 1999:14-15; Yu, D S 1997:29-42). Therefore, within this study, the researcher mainly attempted to investigate and identify the significance of God-images in the KTR with regard to the concept of “*Ch'un sin*.”

above other gods and spirits. For instance, according to Rha, young-bok (1997:344), within the Korean Shamanism, there is a special monotheistic God term, *Hananim*,<sup>9</sup> which reflects the recognition of one Supreme God above other gods and spirits. Rha writes, “the hierarchical structure of gods and spirits in Korean Shamanism has placed one Supreme God or Spirit as head, which leads to the concept of monotheism.”

However, an indigenous term for God, *Hanunim*, seems to be more generally accepted to all Koreans. The term *Hanunim* consists of *Hanul* (blue sky) and *Nim* (honorific), which refers to the head of Korean Shamanistic pantheons. This indigenous and monotheistic God, *Hanunim*, who seems to have been synthesized and formed by the impact of not only Shamanism but also other traditional religions, has been extremely familiar among Korean people of all ranks and backgrounds. Koreans have always used the vernacular term, *Hanunim* (the heavenly one), and this vernacular God, *Hanunim*, has become fundamentally rooted in, and has influenced, the lives, belief system, spirituality and religious experience of all Koreans. Furthermore, regarding the term “*Hanunim*,” God could be depicted as a personal supreme God, who rules heaven and earth and blesses human beings, as well as who is a great judge who calls and metes out punishments and rewards for human deeds (Kim, Sung-hae 1998:11; Ro, Bong-rin 1997:344; Yun, Sung-beum 1964:248-249; Rha, Y B 1977:141-151).

Judging from the above, we note that, although there are various views of categorizing god(s) in Korean Shamanism, most agree that the existence of the Supreme God, the so-called *Hanunim* or *Ch'unsin*, the head of all Shamanistic gods, who has been extremely familiar with Koreans and whom they regard as an omnipotent Being, who controls nature and the life and death of human beings. However, as previously argued, Shamanistic god(s) always become objects to fear, because they demonstrate their power through frightening and painful punishments, rather than by some reasonable revelation.

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<sup>9</sup> Some scholars (Ham, Suk-hun 1983:105; Yu, Dong-sik 1997:10-22; Kim, Kyung-jae 1994:113-122) attempt to establish a bridge between this monotheistic God, *Hananim*, and the concepts of *Han*. Although the concept of *Han*, which may comprehend many concepts such as, great, bright, right, oneness, unification, unimpaired, the foundation and the whole, is not easy to understand thoroughly, they seem to believe that *Han* could be regarded as the divine and ultimate Reality, which has been familiar to Koreans as the object of their belief. In addition, Ryu, Ki-Jong (1999:38-54) tries to build a theological connection between the concept of *Han*, as well as Whiteheadians' panentheistic God-concept and the idea of God in the KTR.

From the above discussion, we can summarize that, by examining Shamanistic god-terms, God (gods) can be described as the heavenly almighty, frightening and even cruel ruler, who brings both blessing and misfortune to human beings. Thus, God could be considered as the direct source of evil in the world and all human suffering and predicaments could be easily regarded as the consequence of the punishments of the merciless and cruel God.

## 2.2.2 Confucianism and the images of the “*Sovereign on high & heavenly (moral) Principle/Ulimate*”

### 2.2.2.1 A historical review of Korean Confucianism

Although there has been controversy about whether Korean Confucianism can be considered as a religion or a mere philosophy and ethical system, there is no doubt that Korean Confucianism has permeated the lives and religious experience of all Koreans and has exercised as much cultural influence upon Korea as any religion could over centuries (Yu, D S 2001:61; Yu, Chai-shin 1977:33; Son, B H 1989:62; Keum, J T 2000:33; Yun, Sung-beom 1978:78; Grayson 1989:233; Nelson 1945:7). It has been generally accepted that genuine Confucianism was introduced into the three Kingdoms period.

Kim, Hyung-hyo (1977:42-43) divides the history of Korean Confucianism into four periods:

The first period is marked by Han’s thoughts centering on the five classics Shih Ching (Book of Odes), Shu Ching (Book of History), I ching (Book of Changes), Ch’un Chi’ (Spring and Autumn) and Li chi (Book of Rites); the second by Sui’s and T’ang’s Confucianism that focuses on phraseology and brought to Korea in the first half of the Koryŏ period; the third by Sung’s Neo-Confucianism which entered Korea in the latter years of Koryŏ and flourished in the early part of the Chosun dynasty period, and the forth by Chi’ng’s Silhak thought introduced in the latter half of the Yi dynasty period.

According to historical records, by the establishment of *T’aehak* (the first university established in Korea) in *Koguryŏ*, Confucianism was introduced in 372 A.D. during the three Kingdoms period. *Paekche*, one of Three Kingdoms, sent Korean Confucian scholars, Dr *Ko Hŭng* and Dr Wang In, to Japan to propagate Confucian culture (Yu, D S 2001:158; Keum, J T 2000:35). All academies or colleges in the Three Kingdoms taught Confucian classics. The images of

Confucius and his 72 disciples were also brought from Tang China and enshrined in academies in *Shilla*. And so, the custom of worshipping at *Munmyo* developed. A thorough knowledge of both the *Analects* and the *Book of filial piety (Hyogyong)* was essential to pass the government civil service examination for recruiting civil servants, which was instituted in 788 (Keum, J T 2000:36). Although Confucianism was brought from China during the Three Kingdoms period, the idea of Confucianism did not prevail dominantly. Therefore, we can say that Confucianism had a synthetic influence on people's thoughts and lives with other religions, such as Buddhism, Taoism and the indigenous folk religion (Kim, Hyung-ho 1977:42-44).

Although Buddhism reached its highest peak during the *Koryo* dynasty, the medieval age of Korean history, Confucianism, in fact, provided the basis for the official political ideology of the country. For instance, King *Taejo*, the first King of the *Koryo* dynasty, established a state Confucianistic College. In 987 King *Songjong* ordered the establishment of many institutes for the propagation of the teaching of Confucian classics in the provinces (Keum, J T 2000:36). According to Keum, Jang-tae (2000:37), a noted Confucian, *Choe Sung-ro* presented a petition to warn the king of the danger of Buddhism. Also, late in the *Koryo* period (1290) during the reign of King *Chungyol*, *An Hyang* (1243-1306) introduced Neo-Confucianism to Korea from *Yüan* China, and hoped that Neo-Confucianism would save the country from the corrupt Buddhist faith in the late *Koryo* dynasty. Consequently, during the last century of the *Koryo* dynasty, the interest towards Neo-Confucianism was a remarkably increased in Korea. The school of Neo-Confucianism, called *Tohak*, which began to thrive late in the *Koryo* Kingdom, was an orthodox school that was highly critical of Buddhism (Kim, Hyun-ho 1997:45; Choung, Hae-chang 1996:6; Keum, J T 2000:37).

Consequently, the *Chosun* dynasty was the golden age of Confucianism in Korea. *Lee Sung Gye*, the first King of the *Chosun* dynasty, adopted the Confucian system of education and government examinations. Furthermore, a Confucian scholar, *Chöng To-jön*, gave the strongest theoretical basis regarding the anti-Buddhist movement and proposed Confucianism as the new dynasty's ruling ideology (Michael 1979:46-48). During the period of the golden age of Confucianism in the *Chosun* dynasty, among Confucians, two views arose. That is, while moralists emphasized the constancy of principle more than change in the situation, on the other hand, the revolutionaries attempted to focus more on changeability than principle. In the

middle of the Chosun dynasty, there were many great Korean Confucians, including *Sō Hwadam*, *Yi T'oegye* and *Yi Yulgok*. In particular, *Sō Hwadam* developed a system of thought centering, *Ki* (氣), that explicated the universe from two angles: as *Ki*'s essence and its activity. He wished to seek the truth of Neo-Confucianism, not in the vague world of ideas, but in the world of empirical facts. On the contrary, *Yi T'oegye* tried to emphasizing on *Li* (理: principle or origin). Although, *Yi Yulgok* endeavoured to synthesizes the opposing views of *Hwadam* and *T'oegye*, he seemed more absorbed in realism from *Sō Hwadam's Ki-monosim* (氣: force or phenomenon). This *Li-Ki* debate was the central Confucian phenomenon of the Yi dynasty after the mid-sixteenth century (Choung, Hae-chang 1996:12-23; Keum, J T 2000:40; Kim, Hyung-ho 1977:50-51; Roy, Mun-sang Seoh 1978:25).

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, after the Japanese and Manchurian invasion, *Silhak* (實學: Practical Learning), began to arise and focused more on utilization and public welfare than on philosophical and speculative debate regarding righteousness and virtues. Therefore, *Silhak* discarded the conventional speculative aspects of Neo-Confucianism and demanded empirical and positivistic solutions to people's actual problems (Choung, H C 1996:23; Keum, J T 2000:41; Kim, H H 1977:51-52). It has been the belief that during the Chosun dynasty, Korea was a more Confucianistic society than its contemporary in China, the birthplace of Confucianism. Unlike China and Japan, only in the Korean society, we find that the political, cultural, and social influence of Confucianism still continues in greater degree. Indeed, Korean Confucianism not only has offered an ethical standard to the Korean society, but also has profoundly influenced Koreans' thoughts and lives in many ways (Grayson 1989:274-275; Roy, Mun-sang Seoh 1978:24, Keum, J T 2000:33-34)

#### **2.2.2.2 The ritual of ancestor worship**

A term, "*Chesa* (祭祀)", that commonly refers to an ancestor-worship ritual, was the most common family ritual among Koreans and even continues within many contemporary Korean families. Ro, Young-chan (1989:16) believes that "*Chesa*" can be regarded as the most important religious heritage of the Confucian tradition. Regarding the origin of ancestor worship, Ro, Young-chan (1989:10) asserts that although one can trace the origin of ancestor worship in Korea back to the period of the Three-Kingdoms, the origin of the definitive form of

ancestor worship should be traced at the end of the Koryo dynasty and the beginning of the Chosun dynasty (15<sup>th</sup> century), when Korean Neo-Confucian scholars, such as Paek Yi-chung and Chong Mong-Ju, introduced the Han and T'ang systems of ancestor worship into Korea.

Yi dyanasty espoused Confucianism as a national basic ethical principle and a pragmatic socio-political policy. In particular, within the philosophy of Confucianism, filial piety (Hyo:孝) was regarded as the most fundamental and intergral ethical principle (Kim, Myung-hyuk 1989:21; Ro, Young-chan 1989:12). Additionally, filial piety in Confucianism does not end when one's parents die. That is, the fundamental significance of ancestor worship resides in continuing the filial piety of rewarding the origin and repaying parents favors toward dead parents (Ch'oe Ki-bok 1984: 47-48). In additon, the ritual of ancestor worship can be viewed as a rite that follows the mandate of Heaven (*Ch'un Myeong*: 天命), thus reaches the union of Heaven and man (*Ch'uninhapil*: 天人合一). Within this ritual, one can pray to be united with the essence of the Ultimate through respectful offerings and, as a result, one would have a godly nature (Kim, Myung-hyuk 1989:21; Keum, J T 2000:16). Therefore, through a sincere practice of this ritual, it was believed that one could reach to the roots of one's existence (Ro, Y C 1989:13). From this point of view, Heaven, or God in ancestor-worship rituals, seems to be considered not a personal being but a heavenly *Principle*, that is, *Li* (理) or *Taichi* (太極), the root of existence, with which one can be unified by a sincere practice of the ritual. In addition to this, Ro, Young-chan (1989:16,17) maintains that although the ancestor worship ritual reflected the influence of the thought of Chu His's Neo-confucianism, Shamanistic motives played an important role for popularizing of ancestor worship in Korea, in which ancestor were supposed to possess the power to create calamities for their descendants or to give them blessing.

In this regard, as Y C Ro (1989:10,11, 16-17) appropriately pointed out, the Korean form of ancestor worship could be regarded as an amalgam of the Chinese form of Confucian ancestor worship and the indigenous Shamanistic worship that focuses on the significance of man's relationship with the "God" or "spirit" in respect of material blessings. Thus, from the above discussion, we can conclude that within ancestor-worship rites, God, including ancestral spirits, can be recognized as the heavenly *Principle* (*Tai Chi* or *Li*), as well as supreme *Ultimate* or omnipotent siprit(s), who (or which) has the power to bless, curse people and fulfil their this worldly wishes, or with which one can attain a union through the sincere practice of ritual.

### 2.2.2.3 The Confucianistic terms of the *Ultimate*

Generally speaking, it is not easy to verify whether or not the Confucian God can be recognized as a personal Being. According to Chung, Tae-wi David (1959:221), regarding the Confucian terms of Ultimate, such as *Ch'un* (Heaven: 天) and *Sangche* (上帝), Confucian theism reflects a personal God despite the effort of the Neo-Confucian “materialistic” interpretation. However, Chung, Tae-wi David (1959:221) believes that Confucian theism could not achieve full development as a religion. In fact, a Confucian Ultimate term *Ch'un* (Heaven: 天) comprises diverse meaning.

Furthermore, Kim, Yong-bok (2002) summarizes the notion of *Ch'un* (天) as follows:

- 1) *Ch'un* (Heaven) is the controller of the political destiny of King or state, as well as the destiny of all things. Heaven is the super natural arbiter of the fate and destiny of all things.
- 2) *Ch'un* is the one who exacts moral duties from man. Heaven is the basic of moral order and thus, ethico-political order as well. Politics by virtue has its foundation in moral order, which is guaranteed by Heaven.
- 3) *Ch'un* is also the cosmic force which determines the operation of Yin Yang and five element of cosmogony, as we find in Taoist tradition
- 4) In Neo-Confucianism Heaven or *Ch'ulli* (天理:Heavenly Principle) has gained a metaphysical status: and Heaven is the principle of all things.

Consequently, in the Confucian *Chosun* dynasty, the key notion of Confucian political sanction is the concept of Heaven's mandate (天命). Thus, Confucians of the *Chosun* dynasty believed that the first King, *Yi T'aejo*, received a heavenly mandate to overthrow the *Koryŏ* regime, the former dynasty. Consequently, Heaven in Yi Confucianism continues within the national structure. Therefore, within Confucian thought, we find a political dimension, in which *Ch'un* (Heaven) rules the state as well as the universe by appointing a good man as king in the government. Thus, the preservation and ruin of the state depend upon Heaven, which is the ultimate source of political authority to govern the people. This is the so-called mandate of Heaven (天命), which refers to the Will or Decree of Heaven. (Julia, C 1997:122-123; Kim, Young-bok 2002).

Furthermore, Keum, Jang-tae (2000:4-5) describes six Confucianistic God/Ultimate terms and

their characteristics in Korea:<sup>10</sup>

(1) *Tai Chi* (Great Ultimate: 太極): the axis of creation and the foundation of all things. (2) *Li* (Principle: 理): the basis for the existence of everything. It is also the indispensable standard of all creation. (3) *Tian* (Heaven: 天): Heaven is supreme and unique. It is the zenith of all existence. It also transcends all creation and controls not only things like the weather and the seasons but also the very destiny of humanity and all creation. (4) *Shandi* (The Lord on High: 上帝): the supreme ruler who is the source of punishment and reward and appears as a being with personality. (5) *Shen* (Spirit: 靈): This expresses the presence in the universe of the Ultimate as a mysterious power and function. (6) *Tao* (The Way: 道): Tao is another expression and, when used for the Ultimate, refers to its transcendence of time and space, its immanence and its eternity.

Although J T Keum provides six Confucianistic God/Ultimate terms, he believes that “*Tai Chi*” (The Great Ultimate: 太極), embraces all these concepts. He (2000:5-6) writes:

Tai Chi is the controller of creation and can be understood as not only an impersonal or natural force, but the supernatural and transcendent intelligence, synonymous with a rational or heavenly principle.

However, in terms of another representative Confucianistic God-term, *Ch'un* (天), there is a room for regarding God as a personal supreme being that provides kingship and supervises world kings. Moreover, we cannot disregard the fact that *Sangche* (上帝) has been familiar among Koreans and recognized as ‘*a personal Supreme Being*’, who governs the whole world and judges good and evil. Hence, from the above discussion, one can say that, in Confucianistic God-terms, God can be recognized as a personal Supreme Being, who governs the whole world and judges people’s good and evil doings, as well as an impersonal heavenly *Principle* or *Ultimate* that creates all things and supervises their process of change. Therefore, the researcher believes that regarding the notion of Confucian Ultimate terms, there might exist a metaphysical interpretation of God, in which God could be easily regarded as the ultimate cause or source of suffering and evil in the world with an emphasis on cause and effect principle.

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<sup>10</sup> Here, in order to represent the Confucianistic Ultimate/God, J T Keum adopts the Chinese terms such as, *Tai-chi*, *Tian*, *Shandi*, *Shen* and *Tao* instead of using the Korean terms such as *Tae-kuk*, *Ch'un*, *Sangche*, *Ryoung* and *Do*.

## 2.2.2.4 Confucian scholars

### 2.2.2.4.1 Yi T'oegye

A Korean Confucian philosopher, Yi T'oegye, who lived between 1501 and 1570 A.D., was recognized as a great scholar of Korean Neo-Confucianism. He established his own profound philosophical system by deepening and synthesizing *Chu Hsi's* theory (Choung, Hae-chang 1996:12; Keum, J T 2000:83; Edward, Y J 1992:61; Warren, W S 1978:7; Tu, W M 1978:30). T'oegye regarded *Ch'un* (Heaven) as the *Principle* (理). However, unlike *Chu Hsi*, who understood the ultimate reality as a “mere *Principle*”, he did not regard the ultimate reality to mean a “mere *Principle*”, nor did he regard *Principle* merely as the grounds of being. He asserted that the “four virtues” (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, knowledge) that symbolize four modes of cosmic creativity, can be understood as four qualities of the heavenly *Principle*, which itself has dynamic and creative dimensions. Thus, Heaven decrees nature, including human nature, and the outcome of Heaven's creativity and the *Principle* inherent in everything is the embodiment or manifestation of all the heavenly *Principles*. Consequently, the nature of things shares the same reality as the principle of Heaven, such as the reflection of the moon on numerous rivers that derive their source of light from the moon (Tu, W M 1978:26).

Furthermore, in spite of a severe philosophical debate, the so-called *Li-Ki* (principle-material force) debate, T'oegye developed and inherited his view of the *Principle* (I: 理) through the history of the *Chosun* dynasty, which has the transcendental and dynamic power to generate an impulse within the human mind as a human ethical code. The *Li-Ki* (principle-material force) debate between the school of *Principle* (*Li*: 理), which followed Yi T'oegye's view, and the school of material force (*Ki*: 氣) that followed Yi Yulgok's view, constituted the central Confucian phenomenon of the *Chosun*-dynasty after the mid-sixteen century (Roy, Mun-sang Seoh 1978:25).

The first debate, known as “the debate on ‘the Four Beginnings’ (*Sadan*: senses of commiseration, shame, deference, right/wrong) and ‘the Seven Feelings’ (*Chiljung*: joy, anger, sorrow, fear, love, hatred and desire)”, started between Yi T'oegye and Yi Kobong. This had a profound influence on the development of the thought and philosophy of Confucianism in

Korea.

According to Roy, Mun-sang Seoh (1978:26-27), although *Yi Kibong* raised the question, “*Why was it that only Principle (Li: 理) was responsible for the four beginnings, whereas it was also inherent in the seven feelings?*”, *Yi T'oegye* never yielded his cardinal premise:

The four Beginnings are what *Principle* (Li: 理) emanates and *material force* (Ki: 氣) follows it;  
The seven feelings are what *material force* emanates and *Principles* rides on it.

On the other hand, *Yi Yulgok*, who followed *Yi Kobong's* view and emphasized the material force (Gi: 氣), wrote:

The seven feelings emanate from *material force* (Ki:氣) and *Principle* (Li:理) rides on this.

Roy (1978:26-27) contrasts the formulation of *Yi T'oegye* with *Yi Yulgok's* as follows:

*Yi T'oegye* presupposed a transcendental power, the *Principle* Li (理), capable of generating an impulse within the human mind, whereas *Yi Yulgok* disregarded it as a mere observable law of nature, one of many factors involved in the dynamics of “*material force*” (Ki: 氣) in the function of the human mind.

Furthermore, according to Y J Edward (1992:63-64), “*T'oegye* emphasized “*Kyunghak* (敬學)”, abiding in reverential seriousness, which is the only way of transforming selfish desires into the ultimate goodness of Heaven's Principle and the beginning and end of the “learning sagehood.” *T'oegye's Kyunghak* stressed the significance of meditation, sitting quietly, to practice self-reflection and self-realization in order to realize a union with Heaven's *Principle*.” Consequently, Y J Edward (1992:65) evaluates *T'oegye's* theory as follows:

The uniqueness in *T'oegye's* philosophy is precisely such a contemplative and inner-directed way of *Kyung* (敬) to Neo-Confucian self-transformation, It is a kind of religious reverence toward Heaven's *Principle* (I:理), which is the most important virtue to be cultivated.

As Edward appropriately pointed out, it is difficult to say that *T'oegye* understood Heaven as a personal deity. Nevertheless, one can say that *T'oegye* regarded the *Ultimate Reality*, so-called

*Principle* (理), as the object of worship, as though it has a moral transcendent personality.

#### 2.2.2.4.2 *Song Shi-yŏl*

*Uam, Song Shi-yŏl* (1607-1689), one of the most representative Neo-Confucian scholars in the mid *Chosun* dynasty, was honoured as the successor of Confucius and Mencius. *Uam, Song Shi-yŏl* believed that *Tai Chi* (太極) represents the gist of nature and that the ultimate purpose of the *tai-chi* theory is to discover the origin of the universe. *Uam* proposed "two-pole-origins". According to him, the alternate *ch'i's* (氣) of *yin* (-) (陰) and *yang* (+) (陽) caused the existence of *yin* and *yang*, and *tao* (道) was the ultimate cause of the alternation of *yin* and *yang*. Hence, *Tai Chi* (太極) is the 'two-pole-origin' of *Tao Li* (道理) as the ultimate cause. Like *Yulgok*, *Uam* concentrated on *Tai Chi*, *yin-yang*, and the inseparable relationship between *Li* (理) and *Ki* (氣). He argued that *Li* was the subject of a tangible and active thing, while *Ki* was the container of an intangible and inactive thing. He, therefore, believed that *Li* and *Ki* merged spontaneously and that they could be neither one nor two; neither of them could be the beginning nor the end. Thus, the relations between *Li* and *Ki*, and *yin* and *yang*, can be explained in terms of their phenomena as well as their origin. He explained that *Tai Chi* generated *yang* while moving, and *yin* while static and *Ki* made up form. Thus *Li* springs from *Ki* (Kwak, Shin-hwan 1996:124-125, 142-146; Keum, J T 2000:114).

Here, unlike *Yi T'oegye's* view of the Ultimate, we note that *Song Shi-yŏl* argued that *Li* (Principle or Origin: 理) and *Ki* (force or phenomenon: 氣) were inseparable. Besides, *Song Shi-yŏl* understood the structure of heavenly principle as corresponding to the four human virtues, i.e. being humane, righteous, courteous, and wise. He emphasized the internalization of the heavenly *Principle*, which was viewed as identical to human nature, though both operated within their own cycle (Keum, J T 2000:118).

Therefore, one could say that *Song Shi-yŏl* recognized the *Ultimate*, the heavenly *Principle* or *Tai Chi*, as a moral substance that would be revealed after removing human desire, since he believed that the heavenly *Principle* was inherent in human minds.

#### 2.2.2.4.3 *Chŏng Tasan*

*Tasan*, *Chông Yak-yong* (1762-1836), is an important Confucian who presented “*Shilhak* (Practical Learning: 實學)”, which pursued or constructed a new world view based on the criticism of Neo-Confucianism’s theological basis, the dominant ideology of the *Chosun* dynasty (Yoo, Tae-gun 1994:5). Moreover, *Tasan*’s research and writings were about the Confucian Classics and the method of realizing Neo-Confucianism in society. His Confucian political concepts manifested his creativity, bringing Korean Confucianism to a new level (Keum, J T 1986:10-11). However, *Tasan* was baptized and influenced by his brother-in-law, *Yi Pyok*, a scholar of Western learning who had accepted Catholicism, but it is debatable whether he was a true Catholic (Keum, J T 2000:201-202; Kim, Sung-hae 1996:223,224). Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the influence of Catholicism. Because *Tasan* had a dualistic view regarding spirit and material as the two origins of existence, unlike the thought of Neo-Confucianism, he maintained specific God-images (Yoo, Tae-gun 1994:16).

For instance, although *Tasan* uses the name *Ch’un* (Heaven: 天) or *Sangche* (Lord of Heaven: 天主), originating from orthodox Confucian, he opposes the idea that the "Four Virtues," humanity, righteousness, propriety and wisdom, is profound perceptions inherent in the minds of human beings. He rather argues that the spirit of man and the divine of Heaven are fundamentally different and, consequently, Heaven endowed man with only a spiritual nature, but did not implant virtue (Keum, J T 2000:198-199).

In this sense, J T Keum (2000:199) appropriately points out:

*Tasan*’s view of the Ultimate created harmony between the relationship of Heaven and man in the Catholic doctrine and that of traditional Confucian concepts.

Furthermore, as previously discussed, in Neo-Confucianism, *Tai chi* (Great Ultimate), *Li* (理: Principle), is mainly considered as the origin of the universe. However, against the idea of Neo-Confucianism in Korea, Yoo, Tae-gun’s (1994:6-7) identifies the uniqueness of *Tasan*’s view of the Ultimate:

While Neo-Confucianism asserted the reality of the ideal *Li*, *Tasan* suggested the reality of a spiritual being, namely *Kwishin*, as an incorporeal, volitional, intellectual, and active spiritual being... For him, *Kwishin* was neither born of *Li*, nor of *Ki*. *Kwishin* was not a material being. *Tasan* explained that

nothing in the world is more formless than *Kwishin* and there are both good and evil *Kwishins*. He regarded *Kwishin* as an immaterial, spiritual, moral and volitional being that does both good and evil.

*Tasan* proposes *Sangche* (上帝: Sovereign on High), which is sometimes called *Ch'un* (天: Heaven), as a kind of *Kwishin*, who transcends other *Kwishins*. *Tasan* regards *Sangche* as a creator, who governs all beings with providence and transcends them at the same time. *Tasan* believes that only *Sangche* rules the universe as the parent of all things. In addition to this, in *Tasan's* view, we find hierarchical and polytheistic view of God, in which there exist some gods, who are in charge of the sun, moon, stars, wind, cloud, thunder, rain, grains, mountains, rivers, hills, ridges, forests and lakes, under *Sangche's* supervision (Yoo, Tae-gun 1994:14-15). Hence, we can say that in a certain sense *Tasan's* view of *Sangche* may reflect the Shamanistic view of *Hanunim*, the head of all Shamanistic pantheons.

All in all, it would be more reasonable to recognize that *Tasan's* view of *Sangche* reflects not only the impact of both Confucianism and Catholicism, but also the Shamanistic influence. In this light, we can say that *Tasan's* God-image was monotheistic, although he also had polytheistic gods concepts. For him, God, *Sangche* or *Ch'un*, is the supreme and transcendent Being, who creates and governs all beings, including human beings, and even creates a spiritual nature within human beings.

### **2.2.3 Taoism and the images of the “heavenly omnipotent Ruler & ultimate Reality”**

#### **2.2.3.1 A historical review of Korean Taoism**

Taoism, which originated from the person and thoughts of the Chinese philosopher, *Laozi*, might include two characteristics: the Taoist religion called *Daojiao* (道教) and the Taoist system of thought or philosophy called *Daojia* (道家). These religious and philosophical aspects of Taoism are closely related. Furthermore, religious Taoism is a fusion of the immortalism of Chinese folk religions and Taoist philosophy (Lee, Jong-eun 1986:19). Although the assertion exists that ancient Korea has her own Taoistic idea of Shinsun (divine ascetic), it is generally accepted that Taoism was first introduced into Korea from China during the Three Kingdoms period (Yu, Chai-shin 1979:189; Kim, Sung-hae 2003:278-286; Clark 1961:127).

In 624 A.D., *Koguryŏ* King *Yŏngryu* sent an envoy to *T'ang* China requesting some Taoist calendars, books, pictures and other items depicting respect for deities. The Emperor, *Gaozu* of *Tang*, sent a *tianzun* (icon) and a Taoist monk to spread this new religion. As a result, Taoism later spread to *Shilla* and *Paekche*. However, once *Silla* unified the Three Kingdoms, Taoism lost its control of state sacrifices to Heaven and became a folk faith in people's daily life. According to Yu, Chai-shin (1979:194-195), Korean Taoism has submerged but has influenced Koreans' thinking and practice in many ways. For instance, Taoism stimulated literature, music and art in Korea through its emphasis on nature and laissez-faire thinking. Moreover, Taoism's ideas of immortality impacted on Korean folk stories and fairy tales and have influenced the people's ideas considerably, especially in terms of the issue of how to control illness and avoid evil. Therefore, it seems reasonable to say that, although Korean Taoism never attained the status of a national religion or a national ideology, it has submerged into the daily life of the people as a folk faith, while failing to become a systematized religion with a particular form. In addition, since its introduction, Korean Taoism has been an essential component of the belief system, spirituality and religious experience of Korean (Byun, Kyu-yong 1986:16-17; Lee, Jong-eun 1986:19-20; Choi, S Y 1988:99-100).

### 2.2.3.2 Taoistic godly-terms

According to Chung, Tae-wi David (1959:222), Taoism displays a monotheistic hierarchy in its pantheon like a well-organized government on earth under an absolute ruler. In particular, as he explains, "*the Taoistic pantheon is systematized in a tight hierarchy under the sovereignty of the Supreme Deity, "Shang-huo-chiu-huang-tao-chiin" (上合壹皇道君), or "Y'uen--shih-t'ien-tzun (元始天尊)."*

Borrowing T'ao hung-chings depiction, Chung, Tae-wi David (1959:222) summarizes the significance of the Taoistic godly-terms as follows:

There are seven classes of *true Spiritual Beings* or *Shen-tzun* (仙尊). And in each class there is ruling deity *Chu-tzun* (主尊) respectably. Each *Chu-tzun* has own office and duty to perform. Furthermore, each office.... consists of various numbers of *Chun* (君) or very important Persons; *Shen* (仙) or Immortals or Holy Persons; *Fu-jen* (主人) or Ladies; *Yu-nu* (玉女) or Jade Women (virgins); *Whang-hou* (王-侯) or Kings and Feudal Lords; *Hsien-che* (賢者) or Wise men; *Chiang-chiln* (將軍) or

Generals; *Shih-che* (使者) or Messengers; and *Li-shih* (力士) or Warriors. In other words, there are seven sets of governments under the absolute ruler *Y'uen--shih-t'ien-tzun* (元始天尊)

Here, we notice that *Y'uen--shih-t'ien-tzun* (元始天尊) could be regarded as a transcendental deity, who rules the universe through his vicars and deputies. Rha, Yong-bok (1977:67-68) proposes another Taoistic God term, *Okhwang-che* (玉皇帝). According to Rha, *Okhwang-che*, who was the greatest and honoured Being in the celestial bureaucracy or hierarchy of Taoism, became the deputy of *Y'uen--shih-t'ien-tzun* (元始天尊), administered the celestial bureaucracy, and governed the world. In addition, Kim, Sung-hae (1993:38) points out that the term *Okhwang-Sangche* (玉皇上帝), rather than *Okhwang-che*, can be found easily in many novels of the Chosun dynasty and has been a most familiar and commonly used God-term by all Koreans over centuries. According to S H Kim, all Koreans have recognized *Okhwang-Sangche* as an omniscient almighty personal Deity, who also judges and punishes people according to their deeds.

Furthermore, Taoism can be regarded as the religion that recognizes *Tao* (道), which means Ultimate Reality that cannot be expressed in words. *Tao*, which is invisible, inaudible, indeterminate, and incomprehensible, is the undifferentiated, indefinable source of all things and virtues. It is a formless form and an imageless image. It is nothing and everything, the source and the end of all things. The concept of Heaven (天), a Confucian God-term, is similar to the concept of *Tao*. However, *Tao* is more comprehensive because it includes all the “Ways of Heaven, Earth and Man”. Thus, one can say that Taoism has more comprehensive and holistic God-images which focus mainly on contemplative life, while Confucianism has more moralistic God-images (Byun, Kyu-yong 1986:4-5).

Moreover, Taoism has a kind of human-God image, the so-called *Shinsun* (神仙: immortal or god-man), a human being who “lives in perfect peace” with no self-interest or individual ambition. By borrowing *Ko Hung's* description, Chung, Tae-wi David (1959:239) depicts *Shinsun* (神仙: immortal or god-man) as follows:

An immortal (*Shinsun*) can jump into the clouds and even fly without wings. He can ascend to heaven riding on a dragon, floating upon the clouds.... He can transform himself in to a bird so that he can fly in the blue sky or into a fish so that he can swim in the deep seas...He can absorb energy

from the air and live on the spiritual-herb, Chih-ts' (藥草), and can make himself unnoticeable or even completely invisible to mortal eyes.

Thus, we can say that one of the primary goals of Korean Taoism is to attain immortality by practising ascetic methods, such as self-discipline, contemplation and intensive study.<sup>11</sup>

All in all, within the God-images of Korean Taoism, as noted by the Taoistic God term *Okhwang-Sangche*, has existed the image of a personal and an omnipotent Deity, who satisfies human beings' secular desire for longevity, immortality, secular benefit, elimination of ills and the evocation of happiness, as well as who judges and punishes people according to their deeds. Furthermore, we also can find the holistic and comprehensive God-image, *Tao* (道), as ultimate reality, which refers to the union of Heaven and man, or the union of nature and man by means of contemplative life. Therefore, in terms of the Taoistic godly term, we also find a tendency of metaphysical interpretation of God, in which God is probably regarded as the ultimate source of evil and suffering in the world.

### 2.2.3.3 The *Hwarangdo*, the institution for the elite youth

In Korean history, *Hwarangdo* has been the most famous institution for cultivating elitist youths, and was founded by King, *Chinsung* (540-576) (Cho, Heung-yun 1997:44,45; Yu, Dong-sik 1997:46-47). Although one could say that *Hwarangdo* was related to Shamanism and *Pung-ryu* (風流), an indigenous religion, which absorbed and integrated the influence of three religions, such as Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism, there is a strong Taoistic colour in *Hwarangdo* (Lee, Neung-hwa 1927:2; Cho, H Y 1997:46; Yu, D S 1975:92-94; Kim, H K H 1999:293-294).

In an address dedicating a tablet erected in honor of a person called Rang-nang, a *Hwarang* knight, Cho'oe Chi-won wrote (Chung, T W D 1959:237):

In our country there is a Tao, deep and myterious, called *Pung-ryu*(風流), the origin of which are

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<sup>11</sup> Although H N Song (1986:14) claims that "the ancient core thought of Heaven, which begins with the mythology of Tangun and is characterized by the idea of the union of god and man, was related to Korean Taoistic God-concepts," but, regarding this argument, there is room for further study.

recorded with details in the Heisen-sa. It embraces the three religions grafting them into its own body and nourishing the divergent understandings there from in harmony with for the benefit of the whole nation.<sup>12</sup>

Here, we notice that *Pung-ryu* (風流) could be interpreted as the “national faith or religion.” T W D Chung (1959:238) believes that *Hwarangdo* was the name given to the religious body of this “national faith” or *Pungryu* (風流). In accordance with T W D Chung’s view, D S Yu (1997:55-60) also understands that *Hwarangdo* is no more than *Pungryu-do*, as the substratum of Korean spirituality. Additionally, T W D Chung (1959:238) asserts that a close connection exists between Taoism and *Hwarangdo*, as, for instance, “*Hwarang*” was also called *Hsin-rang* (仙郎) or *Hsien* (仙), which was the same word used for the Taoistic Immortal.

Let our main concern now be the issue of God-images that *Hwarang* might have. An autobiography of General *Kim Yushin*, regarded as one of the most famous *Hwarang*, reveals a significance of the God-images of *Hwarang* as follows (an extract from General *Kim Yushin's* biography recorded in *Samguk-Sagi*, cited and translated by Kim, H K H 1999:295):

In the 28th *konbok* year of the reign of King *Chinpyong* (611) ... with the intention of conquering the enemies, he went into a stone cave in the *Chungak* Mountains all by himself. After purifying himself, he prayed to Heaven, “we have no peace, because of the repeated invasions of our enemies, who indiscriminately bully us like ferocious tigers. I, though a mere weakling without any talent or power, cherish an ambition to terminate these disastrous wars. May Heaven listen to my prayer, and give strength to my hands.

This makes clear that in terms of *Hwarangdo*, there existed a monotheistic view of God, which could be probably regarded as the substratum of Korean spirituality, in which we find a heavenly Supreme Being, who might have a personality and omnipotent power, as well as who controls destiny of countries and listens to people’s petitions.

#### 2.2.3.4 The Ceremonial Taoism

Ceremonial Taoism was introduced into Korea during the Three Kingdoms dynasty. For

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<sup>12</sup> *Sam-kuk Sa-ki*, vol.4. Silla Bon-ki 4.

instance, the *Koguryŏ* dynasty accepted the *wudoumi* (五斗米: five pecks of rice) cult from Tang China. This state ritual (Taoism's version) focused on offering to the Heaven and the stars, praying for the elimination of evil, for happiness, the safety of the state and the health of the King (Song, H N 1986:15). Furthermore, Taoism of the *Koryŏ* dynasty is similar to that of the *Koguryŏ* dynasty. Taoism in *Koguryŏ* was influenced less by either the pursuit of immortality or the academic pursuit of the philosophy of *Laozi* or *Zhungzi*. It can rather be regarded as a "happiness-praying Taoism," centering round the rituals of Heaven. King *Yejong* built a Taoist temple, *Pogwŏn-gung* (福原宮: origin of the bliss palace), and state rituals for Heaven were held. Consequently, according to traditional legends, during the *Chosŏn* dynasty, the national progenitor, *Tangun*, held rituals for Heaven, called *Ch'ochae*, in the Mani Mountain. In this ceremony, God was regarded as a Supreme Being who controlled the universe and all life and death, and as a Moral Judge, who curses evil deeds and blesses humans' good deeds (Kim, S H 1993:20-22; Kim, Nak-pil 2003:293-302).

#### 2.2.3.5 A Taoist, *Kim Shi-sŭp*

*Kim Shi-sŭp* (1434-1493), who was very learned, widely read and well versed in literature, has been called an eccentric scholar and an unusually talented man. Many strange stories have circulated about him. For instance, at five he wrote a composition before the king and became famous throughout the country by the name of *Kim O-se* (*O-se* means "five years old") (Ch'a, Chu-hwan 1986:46-47; Lee, Jong-eun 1986:27-28). *Kim Shi-sŭp* made some contributions to Buddhism and Confucianism. However, we find a whole section specializing on Taoism within his writing, such as *Maewŏldang Jeonjip* (梅月堂全集) that comprises some 30 volumes, which was the result of a painstaking and wide-spread search for the dead poet's work (Ch'a, Chu-hwan 1986:46). During the *Chosŏn* dynasty, *T'aejo*, the first King of the *Chosun* dynasty, established the formal government department, *Sogyokchon*, later renamed *Sogyokso*, which supervised the performance of Taoist rites (Ch'a, Chu-hwan 1986:47).

In particular, in *Maewŏldang Jeonjip* (梅月堂全集), the writing of a Korean Taoist, we find a special poem, which describes the official Taoistic ceremony, *Ch'oje* (招際) (rite-offering), which was performed at the *Samch'ŏnggung* palace or lodging at *Sogyokso*. It wrote (Ch'a, Chu-hwan 1986:50):

I went to Samch'önggung (the palace for an official rite) to see a friend; it was the day for the winter rite. The Great Bear was cold in the distant sky when they finished reciting the precious writing (ch'ongsa or ch'ojemun) and bowed to the altar. Where *Okhawng-Sangche* (玉皇上帝) descended increased fog encircled. And Xiwangmu (cloud) flew on a many-coloured Nan-bird. Although the precious music sounded people were scarce...

As can be seen above, *Kim Shi-sŭp* not only referred to the precious writing, *Ch'ongsa* and *Ch'ojemun*, the standard recitations for the *Ch'oje* ceremony, but also referred to the altar called *Ch'undan* (天壇), the memorial tablet of *Sangche*, who is the highest King of the Upper World. As discussed earlier, *Okhawng-Sangche* (玉皇上帝) is the same as *Y'uen--shih-t'ien-tzun* (元始天尊) in Chinese, which refers to the supreme God of Taoism. Here, we notice that *Kim Shi-sŭp* might considered this rite as an occasion, in which humans could communicate directly with the Supreme God. Moreover, within his famous book *Maewöldang Jeonjip*, we also find that he describes *Okhawng-Sangche* as a supreme King, who is found high and far in the upper part of heaven and many immortals stand around in the next high part of heaven and the heavenly palace (Ch'a, C H 1986:50). Thus, it seems that *Kim Shi-sŭp* regarded God as an omnipotent, holy and transcendent Ruler in heaven, giving both disaster and good fortune to human beings. Furthermore, he seemed to have thought that human beings could not only achieve immortality by self-discipline and self-contemplation, but also enter into heaven and communicate with God as an immortal.

## 2.2.4 Buddhism and the synthetical trends of God-images

### 2.2.4.1 A historical review of Korean Buddhism

Buddhism came to Korea from China in the 4<sup>th</sup> century during the three Kingdoms period, when the Buddhist faith had a strong tendency to pursue secular interests instead of receiving nirvana in the next world. Three Kingdoms continued to revere *Maiterya*, the image of gold and bronze, with mainly one leg crossed, a thinking image, rather than focusing on faith in the next world toward *Amitabha Buddha* images (Lee, Young-ja 1983:29). In the *Koryŏ* dynasty, Buddhism became a popular state religion. Many kings believed in the protective power of Buddhism and, through this faith, prayed for fortune. Also, Buddhism was a means to escape from the realities

of misfortune and they prayed to be freed therefrom. However, by the end of the *Koryŏ* dynasty, monks became ostentatious and degenerate; consequently, the general population hated them. In the *Chosun* dynasty, an anti-Buddhist orientation was the national policy. On the other hand, there are many records in which royal and aristocratic ladies violated the state policy by attending Buddhist rites, displaying the ambivalent attitude of the *Chosun* dynasty toward Buddhism. Despite the suppression of Confucianism, Buddhism was able to survive and even became one of the representative religions in modern Korea (Lee, Young-ja 1983:31-32; Kang, Dong-ku 1998:103).

#### 2.2.4.2 Buddhism and syncretic trends of God-images

Although there has been much controversy in terms of God-concepts in Buddhism, whether it is aesthetic, agnostic or polytheistic or even theistic, nevertheless, within the Korean religious cultural setting, due to the decisive impact of the Shamanistic and Taoistic understanding of God, Korean Buddhism has displayed a noticeable theistic dimension in many ways (Rha Young-bok 1977:71). For instance, the *P'algwanhoe*, the original *Silla* kingdom, was fundamentally a Buddhist assembly. In this ceremony, which involved worshipping the spirit of heaven, the spirit of famous mountains, rivers, and dragon gods, people actually worshipped the Shamanistic God (Chai, S Y 1988:106; Kang, D G 1998:101). Furthermore, in Buddhist temples, the kings of the *Koryŏ* dynasty continued to worship the Taoist deities, *Yuhan-shen*, *Tien-shen* and *Shan-hsing* and the planet of Mercury (Chai, S Y 1988:107). Evidence also exists of Shamanitic influence on Buddhism's God-concept in the *Samsŏnggak*, the Shrine of the Three Divinities, which can be found inside the majority of Korean Buddhist temples. The *Samsŏnggak* is dedicated to worship Shamanistic Gods, such as the *Ch'ilsŏng* (deity of Seven Stars), the *Sansin* (Mountain God) and the *Toksŏng* (deity of Self-Enlightenment).

Furthermore, T W D Chung (1959:221) claims that there is a close connection between Taoism and *Mahayana* Buddhism. According to him, Taoistic theism was thoroughly anthropomorphic. This character made the Taoistic pantheon more coherent than that of *Mahayana* Buddhism, in which Buddha or Buddhas were regarded as an omnipotent deity or deities.

Rha, Young-bok (1977:71) indicates the theistic and even monotheistic dimension of Buddhism

in Korean context:

Yet, under the strong influence with Mahayana Buddhism, theistic and even monotheistic, has been exercising in Korea, the Korean Buddhists use the term for their god Buddha, *Bu Ch'u Nim*, who is the glorified and deified historical Gautama Buddha himself.

Therefore, due to the decisive influence of *Mahayana* Buddhism, within the Korean Buddhism, we find a theistic and even monotheistic view of God, in which Buddha himself is regarded as an omnipotent God, who answers people's prayer and takes care of their this-worldly wishes.

Moreover, according to H K H Kim (2002:310-312), although Buddhism itself is essentially an atheistic religion, in Korea, many basically 'Shamanistic' supernaturals have found their way into the Buddhist pantheon. For instance, Korean Buddhist temples usually contain Buddhist paintings called *Ta'enghwa*, which depict individual deities, most of whom derive from Shamanistic pantheons. Usually, they are placed in a small separate building in an obscure corner of the temple grounds. What is more, shrines of the Seven Stars Spirit, a representative Shamanistic pantheon, are sometimes placed on a hill directly above the main hall where the chief *Buddha* statues are placed. Added to this, although a kind of god called *Chesuk* (Indra) exists within Korean Buddhism, which might be derived from the Indian deity, the ruler of the sky, god of storms, and protector of the Aryan people, this god was even regarded as inferior to *Buddha* (Kim, S H 1993:12). Thus, it seems reasonable to believe that Korean Buddhism herself has had little influence on the formation and function of Koreans' general God-concepts. Rather, Korean Buddhism has had a synthetic influence on the formation and function of the Korean general God-images in company with other religions, such as Shamanism and Taoism. Nevertheless, we can say that the idea of transmigration of the Korean Buddhism have influenced on Koreans' understanding of theodicy issue in some ways.

For instance, Shim, Young-hee Kim (2003:25) describes the significance of fatalism in the idea of the transmigration of the Korean Buddhism as follows:

The idea of transmigration, that is, who does good in this world will be born in the next life as a human being but who does bad will be born as an animal, influenced individuals to try to be good. What I am now is the result of my behaviour in my previous life, therefore whatever I am now,

prince or Yangban, or the despised, I have to accept as my lot, fate. From this was born the idea of fatalism.

With in this fatalism, we find clearly “the law of rewards in accordance with deeds,” in which human suffering could probably and easily be regarded as a consequence of their misdeeds. The researcher believes that with the impact of the Korean Confucianism and Taoism, the fatalistic idea of “the law of rewards in accordance with human deeds” in Buddhism could also relate to the formation of the metaphysical interpretation of God with its emphasis on cause and effect principle in a sense.

## 2.3 THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY AND GOD-IMAGES

### 2.3.1 Encounter with Catholicism: *Seohak* (Western Learning)

When, during the Yi dynasty in Korea, Catholicism was transmitted through the mediation of translated Chinese religious documents, it was regarded as a branch of learning rather than a religion, and was called “*Seohak* (西學)”, which means Western learning, or “*Ch’unjuhak* (天主學)”, meaning the study of the Lord of Heaven (Kang, D K 1999:198). In addition to this, when Christianity was first introduced to Korea by means of books, such as the *Ch’unju Shilyi* (Discussion on God) written by *Mateo Ricci*, the *Qik* (Seven kinds of Subduing) and catechism written by Jesuit priests, some debate took place to merge the Confucian concept of *Sangche* (the Ruler of Heaven: 上帝) with the Christian concept of *Ch’unju* (the Lord of Heaven: 天主).<sup>13</sup> For instance, *Yi Ik* claimed that the Catholic Lord of Heaven (*Ch’unju*: 天主) and the Confucian Lord High (*Sangche*: 上帝) were identical. *Shin Hu-tam* also asserted that *Sangche* (the Ruler of Heaven: 上帝) and *Ch’unju* (the Lord of Heaven: 天主) have something in common, i.e. both of them preside over heaven and earth and have produced all of creation. On the other hand, *An Chong-pok* tried to prove the difference between *Sangche* (the Ruler of Heaven: 上帝) and *Ch’unju* (the Lord of Heaven: 天主) (Kang, Dong-ku 1999:205; Kim, Hei-chu 1973:146; Keum, J T 2000:152).

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<sup>13</sup> This conflict between the Confucian concept of *Sangche* (the Ruler of Heaven: 上帝) and the Christian concept of *Ch’unju* (the Lord of Heaven: 天主) might lead to a sort of syncretism regarding the God-images within *Seohak* in a sense.

This conflict between the Confucian concept of *Sangche* (the Ruler of Heaven: 上帝) and the Christian concept of *Ch'unju* (the Lord of Heaven: 天主) might lead to a sort of syncretism regarding God-images within Seohak. For instance, in his book, *Songgyoyoji, Yi Pyok*, claimed the creativity of *Ch'unju's* (the Lord of Heaven: 天主) (Keum, J T 2000:155):

As *Ch'unju* labored for six days, heaven and earth were opened and everything existed. It was really wonderful and amazing. He shaped earth in to a aman and gave him a soul, and then he gave the earth life and prepared everything he needed.

On the other hand, although *Shin Hu-tam* accepted the ruling of *Ch'unju* for heaven and earth, he rejected the idea of *Ch'unju's* creativity (the Lord of Heaven: 天主) (Keum, J T 2000:156-157). Besides, very interesting debates in terms of God's transcendence and personhood took place in the field of *Seohak* (Eastern Learning: 西學). In fact, in Confucianism, *Sangche* (the Ruler of Heaven: 上帝) corresponded to the universal ultimate, as *Tao* (the way: 道), *Tai Chi* (the Great Ultimate: 太極) and *Li* (principle: 理), is estranged from the view of God as a personal Being. For instance, *Shin Hu-tam* did not accept God's incarnation. Because he believes that God is an absolute Being and His universality cannot be separated into individuality by incarnation (Keum, J T 2000:160). Here, we realize that the notion of God's incarnation might have been be very difficult for Confucians to accept, since for them, the essence of *Sangche* (the Ruler of Heaven: 上帝) was regarded as *Li* (理) or *Tai Chi* (the great Ultimate), the universal Principle. Thus, *Hong Chong-ha* asserted that the dimension of emtion of *Sangche* (God: the Ruler of Heaven: 上帝) and the personhood of *Sangche* could not be the objects of worship because they were mere metaphors (Keum, J T 2000:160). For him, God was fundamentally regarded as an "immutable and apathetic Being"

Indeed, God's incarnation as a human being with a physical personhood and emotions, as well as His death and resurrection, are core doctrines of Christianity. However, for some Confucian scholars, who first became acquainted with Christianity in the Yi dynasty, these doctrines and views of God regarding the notion of incarnation could be regarded as a kind of blasphemy and a negation of God's transcendence and absoluteness.<sup>14</sup> Yet, in general, they did not deny the coherence of moral and ethical teachings between Confucianism and Catholicism. For instance,

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<sup>14</sup> Here, we find a prominent tendency of the metaphysical interpretation of God regarding Confucianism, in which God was easily regarded as the transcendent and causal *Ultimate/ Principle*.

in his writing, *Chugyu yoji*, *Chung Yak-chong* (1760-1801) deals with topics such as the proof of existence of the Lord of Heaven and his meting out rewards and punishments. Moreover, in 1839, in *Sangche-sangsŏ*, one of the first remarkable apologetic writings, *Chung Ha-sang* describes God as a Supreme Lord who rewards good deeds and punishes evil deeds (Kim, H C 1973:147). In this regard, within Western Learning (*Seohak*), we find a tendency of syncretic views of God. However, despite much debate and controversy regarding the issue of merging Confucianism and Catholicism, the God-images of the Roman Catholic community in the Yi dynasty have gradually turned aside from the Confucianistic understanding of God and assimilated those of Christianity, in which one finds a clear notion of the triune God.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that when Western thought, *Seohak* (西學), was introduced, conflict and dispute arose inevitably between traditional beliefs and this new belief, because the Yi dynasty was on the highly established social structure of the Neo-Confucianism (Keum, J T 2000:148). For instance, the most controversial issue at the time related to the ritual of ancestor worship, *Chesa*. As we previously discussed (See 2.2.2.2), ancestor worship ritual was closely related to filial piety, a cardinal ethical principle, pragmatic socio-political policy and the paradigmatic core value of the Yi dynasty. Therefore, the political order was anchored upon this value, which loyalty to the king was based upon. On the other hand, because Roman Catholics considered ancestor worship as an act of idolatry, it was not surprising that the abolition of ancestral rites by the Roman Catholic community was regarded as a critical attack against the central value system of filial piety in the Yi dynasty (Kim, Myung-hyuk 1989:21; Y C Ro 1989:12; Kim, Yong-bok 1992). As a consequence, the government began to prohibit strictly the propagation of Catholicism and persecute this strange Western religion. However, despite the strict prohibition and persecution of the Confucian government, the Catholic Church grew impressively. This rapid growth brought about the first major suppression, the so-called *Shinyu-persecution* in 1801, leading to at least 300 martyrs and to more than 1000 arrests. Another major suppression, the *Kihae-persecution* in 1839, curbed the expansion of Catholicism, in which over 200 Catholic members were executed, including the French clergy. In particular, during 1866-1871, there was a most severe persecution, in which approximately 8,000 believers, including nine French clergy, were executed (Garyson 1989:142-146; Min, Kyung-bae 1982:68-78).

Here, it is necessary for us to give a more attention to the issue of what God-images of those Korean martyrs enable them to endure such harsh suffering and persecution. In order to attain an answer to this question, we should first reckon the difference of the notion of God between Confucianism and Catholicism.

Kim, Yong-bok (1992) attempts to contrast the God-concepts of the Neo-Confucianism with that of the Roman Catholicism as follows:

The Roman Catholic community worshipped the heavenly Lord (*Ch'unju*) as the sole and supreme authority and as the Creator of heaven and earth, whereas Confucian political authority emanated from Heaven (*Ch'un*). The king's rule was based upon the heavenly Mandate (*Ch'unmyung*: Heaven's decree), whereas the Catholic community lived according to the commandments of the heavenly Lord. The authority of the Heavenly Lord was directly mediated to the member of the community of Roman Catholic believers, whereas the supreme authority of Heaven was mediated to the king and then to society in a hierarchical order.

In other words, while the government of the Yi dynasty adapted the notion of *Ch'un* (Heaven) as a ruling ideology in order to secure the stability of the Confucian hierarchy, on the other hand, the Roman Catholic community regarded *Ch'unju* as the creator of heaven and earth. In this light, we note that the God-images of the martyrs in the early Roman Catholic community reflected the spiritual dimension in a greater degree, while the notion of God of the Confucian government comprehended a more socio-cultural and political meaning. Nevertheless, one can say that the God-images of those martyrs could not be totally free from the impact of the social and political influence, when we consider the social and political circumstance of the first Roman Catholic community. In fact, Catholicism, Seohak, was first introduced and propagated mainly by the *Silhak* scholars.<sup>15</sup>

Kim, Han-sik (1983:6-7) describes the characteristic of the pro-Catholicism intellectuals, who were mostly in the sector of *Silhak* (practical learning) as follows:

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<sup>15</sup> The hierarchical system in the society of the Yi dynasty was consisted of four ranks, namely, *Yangban*, *Chungin*, *Sangmin* and *Ch'unmin* (Kim, Chae-yoon 1982:63-68). Of course, *Shilhak* scholars, a sector of the Korean Confucianism, could be categorized as *Yangban*, the high rank in the Confucian hierarchical system.

Pro-Christianity (Catholicism) intellectuals were in a mental world different from that of anti-Christianity intellectuals, who were closely related to the power of hierarchy, and blindly followed Neo-Confucianism. The former sloughed off the China-first view of the world to develop a far broader view of the world, and pursued national wealth through the development of commerce and industry, denouncing the then prevalent value of placing gentleman-scholars and farmers above merchants and craftsmen. These pro-Christianity intellectuals, ... even called for equality of men and merit system in government service.

It is noteworthy that the first Roman Catholic community was led by *Silhak* scholars, who pursued national wealth and strength through the development of commerce and industry, as well as the reconstruction of the social system for equality of men against the Neo-Confucianistic hierarchical system of the Yi dynasty. Of course, the teaching of Catholicism was in accordance with their intention for the social and political reconstruction in a sense. In addition, we can easily assume that the egalitarian principle within the teaching of Catholicism might be more welcomed, especially by the people, who were in the middle or low rank in the hierarchical system of the Yi dynasty. In fact, because within the Roman Catholic community, the persecution and pressure of the Confucian government made it very difficult for the Yanban Catholics to remain in the *koinonia*, the number of *Chungin*, *Sangmin*, *Ch'unmin* were increasing (Kim, Yong-bok 2002). In this background, through the process of the propagation of Catholicism in the Korean society, the Roman Catholic Church became a more equal community, which comprehended different classes, from the high-class to low-class peasantry and slaves (Choi, S U 1986:77). Nevertheless, we should pay our attention to the fact that the majority of the martyrs and arrested Catholics belonged to the lower class origin, such as *Chungin*, *Sangmin*, *Ch'unmin* (Kim, Y B 2002). Y B Kim (2002) believes that the experiences the Catholic community with regard to their suffering under the persecution of the Confucian government in the Yi dynasty could relate to the utopian symbolism, which had always been powerful with the marginal people when life was extremely difficult.

In this background, for the martyrs in the Yi dynasty, God<sup>16</sup> was not merely an apathetic, distant and metaphysical heavenly *Principle* or *Ultimate*. Rather, in contrast with the view of the

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<sup>16</sup> In fact, due to the influence of the KTR, especially Confucianism, one cannot disregard a possibility that God-images of the martyrs of the Li dynasty might reflect a syncretic understanding of God in a sense. Nevertheless, the researcher would like to advocate that God-images of the martyrs of the Yi dynasty have gradually assimilated those of Christianity, in which one finds a clear notion of the triune God.

Heaven of the Confucian government, many martyrs seemed to regard God not only as “the sovereign Ruler,” who creates and governs all creation, but also, in a sense, as a “political (and social) liberator or soul savior,” who displays His gracious and impartial love regardless of the social rank, as well as one who dwells with them and secures otherworldly salvation (or eschatological utopia) for them. Due to these God-images, as the researcher believes, many martyrs of the Catholic community in the Yi dynasty seemed to endure such severe suffering and persecution from the Confucian government.

### 2.3.2 The counter-religious movement *Tonghak* (Eastern Learning)

Against the introduction of Catholicism, there was a well-known counter-religious movement *Tonghak* during the Chosun dynasty, in which one could find a prominent tendency of syncretism. *Tonghak* (Eastern learning: 東學), the so-called *Ch'undo-kyo* (The way of Heaven: 天道教), an indigenous Korean religious thought established by *Ch'oi Che-u* in 1860, was a critical religious movement of peasants in the late *Chosun* dynasty. This movement aimed not only to suggest a new religious thought but also to bring about a new society. Nevertheless, it has often been said that *Tonghak* is a comprehensive religion, which includes Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Shamanism and Catholicism, while *Seohak* (Western Learning: 西學) can be regarded as the combination of mainly Confucianism and Catholicism (Kang, D K 1999:198; Kim, S H 1988:6; Kim, Han-gu 1980:17; Kim, Yong-bok 2001; Kim, Hei-chu 1973:180).

During his years of wandering through the country to seek spiritual enlightenment, *Ch'oi Che-u*, the initiator and founder of *Tonghak* (Eastern Learning), clearly realized that the people desperately wanted a new society, a new order and a new ideology. In 1860, during meditation, *Ch'oi* experienced and entered a state of ecstasy. He named the new way, “*Tonghak*” (Eastern Learning), or “heavenly way”, which emphasized that it arose to confront Western Learning (Shin, Yong-hwa 1994:61-63).

*Ch'oi Che-u* saw the intrusion and invasion by Western powers and recognized Western Learning as widely invading the East and the Eastern country (*Chosun*). Thus, he demonstrated his own universal view of God. For instance, in *Anshim-ga*, written by *Ch'oi Che-u* as songs in a popular style and rhythm, in which his personal destiny and God interconnected, *Choi* freely

uses various terms for God interchangeably, such as *Ch'un* (Heaven: 天), *Sangche* (Sovereign High: 上帝) and *Hanunim*. The *Anshim-ga* describes God as an almighty Being, who has magical powers to cure diseases and control human life, death and destiny (Shin, Yong-hwa 1994:64-65; Kim, Y B 2001). However, *Ch'oi* also emphasized the unity of God (Heaven) and man by self-cultivation. In addition, *Ch'oi* asserted that all humans had God, and this God was the same regardless of social rank - legitimate or illegitimate, lord or servant, sex, age or wealth. This was warmly welcomed among the peasants who dearly desired equality.

According to Kim, Hei-chu (1973:181), *Ch'oi* created the principle of *In-Nae-Ch'un* (人乃天: man and God are one) as the foundation of the entire religious dogma and political philosophy of the *Tonghak* religion. This principle means that, potentially, man is God, but that this oneness is actually realized only when an individual exercises sincere faith in the unity of his own spirit and body and in the universality of God. Thus, an individual must also implement this faith by harmonizing all truth into a *Tao* (道), or way of life, based upon the *In-Nae-Ch'un* principle. Therefore, *Ch'oi* preached that “*God is man and man is God*”, which differed from Western Learning (Catholicism), in which God is transcendent, a separate and absolute Being, who exists external to man. In this sense, we can say that *Ch'oi* viewed man as God himself, establishing man as high and most honoured (Shin, Yong-hwa 1994:66). Chung, Yun-jae (1997:158-159) manifests that “within the notion of *In-Nae-Ch'un*, man’s mind or spirit is a replica of that of God, thus Heaven does not dwell externally to man, but resides in the human mind or soul.” Thus, Chung, Yun-jae (1997:159) evaluates the notion of God between Western religions and *Tonghak*: “while Western religions propose God as an absolute Being who exists external to man, and preach that God should rule humans and that they should serve God as his servants, *Tonghak* put man on an equal footing with God and established man as a most high and most honoured being.” Furthermore, C A Clark (1961:172) understands *Tonghak* as mere “*a pathetic effort of human spirit by its own outreach of reason trying to find its God.*”

In particular, Yu, Dong-sik (1997:151) believes that the notion of “*Si-Ch'unju*”<sup>17</sup> is of great

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<sup>17</sup> Although the literal meaning of Yu’s notion of “*Shi-ch'unju*,” could be simply described as “*accepting and serving God,*” it is not easy to explain this term with its holistic nuance. Yu attempts to understand the notion of “*Shi-ch'unju*,” in the light of the notion of *Han* and *Pyungryu*. (cf. Chapter 2: 2.2.1.5). Yu believes that through “*Shi-ch'unju*,” God and man could become one. Thus, one could say that Yu’s interpretation of “*Shi-ch'unju*,” reflects a syncretic view of God regarding Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Shamanism and even Christianity (1997:151-170).

importance within *Tonghak*. D S Yu (1997:145-170) attempts to build a connection between the notion of “*Si-Ch’unju*” and his unique idea of *Pungryudo*. In a similar vein, Kim, kyung-je (2004) also regards the experience of “*Si-Ch’unju*” as the core of *Tonghak* doctrine, which emphasizes the importance of body.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the researcher wishes to advocate that there might be a close connection between Yu’s interpretation of “*Si-Ch’unju*” and Kim’s. In particular, K J Kim (2002) points out, *Tonghak* displays a panentheistic view of God, which could be associated with Whiteheadian’s view of God in a sense.

Therefore, in short, although *Tonghak* exhibits a syncretic view of God, which might reflect the impact of Christianity and the KTR, nevertheless, we cannot disregard a possibility that *Tonghak* (Eastern learning: 東學) may reflect considerably the impact of a monotheistic or panentheistic view of God<sup>19</sup> in terms of the mainstream God-images of the KTR.

### 2.3.3 Encounter with Protestantism<sup>20</sup>

When Protestant Christianity came to Korea, the 500-year Chosun dynasty was about to fall. Kim, Nam-sik (2000:16) asserts that Korean people could easily accept Protestant Christianity as a new religion that might provide security for them due to the unstable socio-political situation regarding the rise of the Japanese invasion. As discussed above, before the first Protestant missionary, Allen, arrived in Korea in 1884, Catholicism had entered and had provoked a conflict between God-images within Korean religious culture and those of Catholicism. Since Christianity was introduced into Korea, the naming of God has been a

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<sup>18</sup> According to Kim, the notion of “*Shi-ch’unju*,” should be understood in the light of a theology of body, which relates to people’s experience of God with its emphasis on as body, in body and with body. However, for Kim, body does not mean a mere flesh. Rather, it could be regarded as the unified Ultimate, which comprehends physical/materialistic, psychic and divine/spiritual dimensions (Kim, K J 1999). Similarly, as previously discussed, Yu believes that within the idea of “*Shi-ch’unju*,” one finds the notion of “the union of God (the Korean monotheistic God: *Han*, *Hannim*, *Hananim* or *Hanunim*) and man.”

<sup>19</sup> The researcher believes that the monotheistic mainstream God-images of the KTR might reflect a panentheistic view of God in a sense.

<sup>20</sup> As a matter of fact, after the introduction of Christianity, the Korean Protestant Church had to confront many abrupt and enormous social and political changes. However, in this section, we shall deal with solely an early phase of the view of God within the Korean Protestant Church. The possible impacts of the political and social issues on the God-images of the Korean Protestant Church will be discussed in the following.

critical issue to both Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches. Consequently, the Roman Catholic Churches adopted directly the most representative traditional term of Koreans for God, ‘*Hanunim*’. On the other hand, in order to avoid confusion, Korean Protestant Churches adopted a similar but slightly different term for God, ‘*Hananim*’ (Hong, Sung-wok 1997:32; Grayson 1985:137). Nevertheless, we could assume that there might be some continuity as well as discontinuity of God-images between Korean religious culture and the imported Protestantism (Yu, D S 1965:37; Scott 1920:699).

While Japan deprived Korea of all diplomatic rights in November 1905, the missionaries, in fact, adopted a neutral or non-committal stance toward this oppressor, emphasizing a policy of ‘depoliticization’. Consequently, the Korean Church devoted itself to spiritual growth, despite the Japanese invasion. Furthermore, during this period, the so-called, “Great Revival Movement in the Korean Church” was initiated at the Changdehyun church in Pyung yang in 1907 in the midst of great despair (Yang, Nak-hyung 1993:116-119; Kang, Gil-soo 2002:29). Within this movement, many parishioners in the Korean Protestant Churches seem to have had a most profound experienced of the God’s holiness through the work of Holy Spirit.

For instance, Blair (1957:63) describes an event during an annual Bible conference at the Changdehyun church, in which the great revival movement in the Korean Church started:

As the prayer continued, a Spirit of Happiness and sorrow came down upon the audience. Over on one side some began to weep, and in moments the whole congregation was weeping. Man after man would rise, confess his sin, break down and weep, and then throw himself to the floor, beat with his fists in perfect agony of conviction.

This public confession of sin happened not only in that conference, but also took place in other place. Furthermore, this confession of sin brought ethical renewal into the practical lives of many parishioners within the Protestant Churches (Kim, Nam-sik 2000:22; Kang, Kil-soo 2002:30-31). However, according to Rhee, Jung-suk (1995:234), this movement also functioned as a kind of religious “catharsis” for the loss of their country. In addition to this, Moon Suk-ho (1998:35) argues that, “during the Japanese occupation, Korean Protestant Churches showed little concern for issues of social and communal ethics, and only focused on the issue of “soul-salvation”- evangelizing people at a personal level.” In this background, hence, the God-image

within the early encounter between Korean religious culture and Protestantism could be depicted as “the holy God and the individual soul Saver.”

## **2.4 THE SOCIO-POLITICAL ISSUES AND THE FUNCTION OF KGI WITHIN THE KRC**

Previously, we have investigated the significance of God-images within the KTR and the impact of the introduction of Christianity on God-images within the KRC. In this section, in order to understand more clearly the impact of both culture and KTR on God-images within the KRC, we shall attempt to explore the influence of some socio-political issues on God-image. With the fall of the last Korean emperor in the Chosun dynasty, Korea began to be exposed with the extraordinary dramatic and rapid socio-political changes. As a result, one could presume that these drastic socio-political changes have influenced on the belief system and spirituality of Korean people in many ways. For instance, politically, when the Chosun dynasty collapsed, with the end of its long rule of 518 years, Korea had to confront the reign of the Japanese colonial government, the communist government and the military dictatorship during a century (Macdonald 1990:36-50, 126-137). As another example, with the rapid process of modernization and industrialization, one can also assume that Western culture and value and behavior patterns have influenced on the belief system and spirituality of Korean people in some ways. We shall deal with how socio-political issues have influenced on the KGI and their belief system against the religious and cultural context of Korea in the following.

### **2.4.1 The emergence of new indigenous religions**

After the introduction of Christianity into Korea, many indigenous religions newly emerged. Although most new indigenous religions were derived from the root of the KTR, nevertheless, many of them seemed to reflect the impact of Christianity in some ways. In particular, in this section, through exploring several new indigenous religions, the researcher wishes to examine how God-images of the KTR regarding new indigenous religions have syncretized each other after the introduction of Christianity.

### 2.4.1.1 *Chungsan-kyo*<sup>21</sup>

*Kang Il-sun* (1871-1909), whose literal name was *Chungsan*, established *Chungsan-kyo*. It is said that, when he was born, *Kang's* mother had a vision of Heaven opening up and of being surrounded by a heavenly light and *Kang's* father dreamt that fairies guarded the baby during the ordeal of birth. Thus, *Kang Il-sun* was recognized as an unusual child while growing up, and at an early age he became an avid reader of Confucian, Buddhist, and Taoist books, as well as various occult works. In his early 20s, *Kang* witnessed the *Tonghak* Rebellion and its failure, and for several years he wandered about the countryside seeking out various people known to have occult powers (Grayson 1989:205).

In 1900, when he was 29, he entered into a nine-day period of intense meditation at the *Taew6n-sa* temple where he had a vision in which five dragons visited him, giving him the power to rid the world of the Four Evils: avarice, lust, anger, and stupidity. Furthermore, *Kang* also came to realize that he had the power to communicate with the spirit world, to predict the future, to understand the divine plan of universal movements (Prunner 1980:4; Grayson 1989:205). Although, by propagating his doctrine, he had many followers, he was soon arrested and incarcerated. After his death, many of his followers created a religious movement which traced *Kang's* doctrine. This movement has continued in contemporary Korea, especially among many university students (Grayson 1989:205). In 1902, *Kang* declared himself as “*the Lord of Nine Heavens*”, who had descended to earth and many followers believed him as a national saviour (Grayson 1989:206).

*Kang* believed himself to be the Lord of Heaven while *Ch'oi Che-u*, the founder of *Tonghak*, claimed that the Lord of Heaven had selected him. More accurately, *Kang* saw himself as the incarnated Lord of Heaven and also the Lord of Nine Heavens, who had three goals on the earth (Grayson 1989:207):

- (1) to save mankind from anxiety, troubles, and diseases of this life;
- (2) to re-establish the sovereign Korean state; and
- (3) to redeem the people by purifying human religions of their endemic evils.

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<sup>21</sup> A term “*kyo*” in Korean means “religion”

According to Grayson (1989:207), *Kang* had a unique concept of God that included highly polytheistic and Shamanistic views of God. Choi, Jun-sik (1998:65,66) also points out that *Kang's* view reflected the impact of Taoist-Shamanism in higher degree. Therefore, we can conclude that *Kang's* understanding of God reflects both Shamanistic and Taoistic influences, in which *Kang's* notion of Lord of the Nine Heavens designates the supreme Ruler of a polytheistic universe.

#### 2.4.1.2 *Taichong-kyo*

*Taichong-kyo* is a well-known indigenous and nationalistic religion, which relate "*Tangun*,"<sup>22</sup> who has been believed as the founder of the Korean nation in 2332 B.C. In fact, the prototype of *Taichong-kyo* could be found a traditional form of folk faith, *Shin-kyo* that is based on the myth of *Tangun*, which emphasizes the worship of the highest God of heaven, who became the direct ancestor of the Korean people through *Tangun* (Rha, Y B 1977:87; Lee, J Y 1981:21).

Nevertheless, Rha, Young-bok (1977:88) describes the origin of *Taichong-kyo* in its modern form as follow:

In October 1904, a man by the name of Paik pong proclaimed that he received a direct revelation from *Tangun*, ... There he located a temple, in which place the principle image of *Tangun* was installed and religious services for *Tangun* were held...In that temple, he also found a stone-box, in which there were scriptures. These scripture he gave to his disciples..., in turn, transmitted them to Chul Rha. On January 15, 1909, in Seoul, Chul Rha became the first man who started to proclaim this religion, organizing and theoretically systematizing it. He called it "*Tangun-kyo*"<sup>23</sup> and became the chief leader.

As previously discussed, *Tangun* has been worshipped as "the highest form of heavenly God, who became the direct ancestor of the Korean people" over centuries (Lee, J Y 1981:21). In a similar vein, within *Taichong-kyo*, *Tangun* was regarded as "a great ancient Shaman or a great

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Chapter 2: 2.2.1.2

<sup>23</sup> This indigenous religion also was called as "*Tangun-kyo*" (Clark, C A 1961:187). However, this name was changed into *Taichong-kyo* in 1910 due to the pressure of Janese colonial government (Rha, Y B 1977:89)

ancient god-man, who is called “*Han Be Kum*” or “*Han Ul Nim*,”<sup>24</sup> who is the supreme God, one great one, the lord of the world, the creator, the sustainer, the light, as well as who is holy, almighty and omnipresent (Rha, Y B 1977:90, 94). Furthermore, as we already confirmed in *Tangun* Myth, the significance of God-concepts within *Taichong-kyo* reflects a notion of a triune god, in which we find three gods, so called, *Hawnin*, *Hwanung* and *Tangun* (or *Hwangum*) (Lee, E B 1999:86-87; Rha, Y B 1977:91). In addition, within the notion of God-concepts of *Taichong-kyo*, we also find a motive of incarnation of God, in which the heavenly god *Tangun* himself, (as well as *Hawnung*) became a man (Rha, Y B 1977:95). Therefore, within the *Tangun-kyo*, we may find an image of “a god-man” or “a man-god,” who has omnipotent power and controls everything and every event, which reflects the impact of Shamanism in greater degree.

#### 2.4.1.3 *T'ongil-kyo*

*Mun Sonmyong* founded *T'ongil-kyo*, known as the Unification Church in English. *Mun* was born in Chongju in North Korea in 1920. After he had an unusual experience at the age of 16, he began to establish a heretic religion that had spectacular growth especially outside, rather than inside, Korea. Although *T'ongil-kyo*'s membership is in the millions at present, it has aroused considerable criticism not only from orthodox Christian Churches, but also from various humanitarian groups (Prunner 1980:5; Grayson 1989:209-211).

According to the doctrine of *T'ongil-kyo*, because Eve had sexual relations with Satan in the Garden of Eden, sin came into the world and has been transmitted physically through Satan's blood to succeeding generations. Moreover, Jesus failed in his mission to save mankind, because he did not marry and produce sinless children. Thus, physical sin continued to be transmitted to later generations and Jesus' death brought only spiritual salvation, not physical salvation. Therefore, it was necessary that someone, called the Lord of the Second Advent, should come to save mankind both physically and spiritually through marriage with a perfect woman. Of course, *Mun* identified himself as the Lord of the Second Advent. Consequently, *Mun* selected suitable marital partners from the faithful and conducted sacred ceremonies of marriage in large groups (Grayson 1989:211). In short, *Mun*'s understanding of God seems to be

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<sup>24</sup> This term “*Han Ul Nim*” seems to be very similar to the most representative Korean monotheistic God-term, Hanunim. Therefore, one can say that the God-concepts within *Taichong-kyo* reflect Koreans monotheistic God-concepts in some ways.

similar to that of *Chungsan-kyo* in that the founders of both religions regarded themselves as an incarnated God. Nevertheless, *Mun's* heretic view of God seems to have reflected the view of Christianity in greater degree.

#### **2.4.1.4 *Wonbul-kyo***

*Park Chung-bin* (1891-1943), better known by his religious style *Sot'aesan*, established *Wonbul-kyo*. From an early age, *Pak Chung-bin* tried to experience an encounter with the Mountain God through sincere and strenuous meditation. In April 1916, in his 26th year, Pak had an overwhelming experience, which deepened when hearing a discussion by two Confucian scholars, as well as through his own contemplation (Chung, B K 1984:19; Prunner 1980:5; Grayson 1989:212). After his enlightenment, *Park Chung-bin* began to pursue some basic texts of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, *Ch'undo-kyo* (*Tonghak*) and Christianity to perfect the essence of his doctrine (Chung, Bong-kil 1987:4). Consequently, he adopted what seemed relevant from all of these and declared his doctrine, which was closest to Buddhism. He taught his followers that it was useless to worship Buddha by revering images. He believed that the *Dharmakaya*, the Body of Truth or Buddha nature, was the ineffable reality behind all things. A circle, *won* in Korean, could represent this reality, which *Park* called *pulbŏp-sin irwŏn-sang* (*Dharma*: body as one circle). Unlike traditional Buddhist concepts, *Park* believed that everything in the universe has its origin in the *Dharmakaya* or Buddha Body of Truth (Chung, Bong-kil 1987:5; Grayson 1989:213). Thus, we can say that in his concept of *Dharmakaya*, *Park* reflects the impact of not only “a traditional *Mahayana* concept in Buddhism”, but also “the monism of Confucianism and the monotheism of Christianity” (Grayson 1989:215).

### **2.4.2 The Japanese colonial reign**

#### **2.4.2.1 The First March Independence movement**

During the Japanese rule (1910-1945) of Korea, Christianity played a critical role. It gave a sense of patriotic national identity as an alternative force to Japanese colonial assimilation, while Western missionaries adopted a neutral or non-committal stance toward the oppressor, Japan (Yang, Nak-hyung 1993:116-119; Kim, Nam-sik 2000:28). This movement proclaimed

'the Declaration of Independence' signed by 33 representatives of the people, and engaged in a nation-wide peaceful protest demonstration for three months. More than two million people participated in 1,542 demonstrations. In fact, Christians played a leading role in this independence movement, as 22% of those imprisoned for participating in the demonstration were Christians. This is astonishing if one considers the fact that Christians comprised only about 200,000 or 1.3% of the total population of 16 million at that time (Kim, Nam-sik 2000:28; Kim, Anderw E 1995:42; Min, Kyung-bae 1982:311; Rhee, Jung-suk 1995:262; Yi, Man-yul 1991:349).

However, the fact cannot be ignored that this independence movement also reflected the impact of *Ch'undo-kyo* (*Tonghak*: Eastern Learning). For instance, among the 33 representatives who signed "the Declaration of Independence", 16 were Christian leaders and 15 *Ch'undo-kyo* (*Tonghak*) leaders. Moreover, among the 311 regions in which the identity of the leading group was openly revealed in this movement, 78 regions were led by Christian leaders, 66 by *Ch'undo-kyo* (*Tonghak*) and 42 by leaders from both groups (Lee, Sang-bok 1993:80; Kang, Kil-soo 2002:37). Therefore, God-images revealed in this independence movement seem to have reflected an amalgam of an understanding of God between Christianity and *Ch'undokyo* (*Tonghak*).

Kim, Yong-bok (2002) cites part of the Declaration of the movement:

We make this petition with utmost sincerity. The Declaration of March First movement is based on the will of the entire people, even if only 33 representatives have signed it. We believe that God will accept it gladly .... Therefore, our call for Korean independence is according to the principle of humanity; it follows the trends of the time, and is responsive to the command of God.

Here, we notice that God was recognized as "the Vindicator of justice and the political Liberator," who broke the emperor's chains of oppression and provided a new era of justice. This understanding of God seems to reflect the thought of *Ch'undo-kyo* (*Tonghak*), which maintains "the identification of God's (Heaven's) will with the people's will, and of man with God" (Moon, S H 1998:28).

#### 2.4.2.2 Shintoism

From the early 1930s the Japanese nationalists realized the necessity for a faith that might provide an ideology to conquer the Chinese mainland and the continent more efficiently and easily. Hence, they began to utilize their own faith, Shintoism, popularly known as the worship of the Japanese emperor as the divine descendant of Amaterasu, cultivating its usefulness as "an agency of political and military control" (Kim, Anderw E 1995:43). Furthermore, according to Kim-Nam-sik (2000:110), from the early stage of Japanese colonial rule, the governor recognized the Korean Christians as the most difficult obstacle, due to the fact that many Koreans developed nationalism through their association with the Christian faith, as proven by the example of "the 1<sup>st</sup> of March independent movement". Hence, Korean Christians became the main object of Japanese persecution. With this general background, the Japanese imposition of Shinto-shrine-worship on Korean Christians was first started systematically in 1932, especially concentrating on the schools. When the Japanese governors perceived that their Shinto policy was successful in the schools, they began to extend their severe pressure on the Churches (Kim, Nam-sik 2000:111-113)

In fact, Shintoism is an ancient indigenous religion of Japan, which worships native deities called kami, including deified emperors and heroes, spirits of nature and deities of Japanese mythology. Moreover, Shintoism also can be described as the syncretic religion of "the agricultural cult, nature worship, ancestor worship, and Shamanism". Shintoism has a hierarchical organization of polytheistic local deities headed by the Sun-goddness, Amaterasu. Although this primitive religion was assimilated into Buddhism, the Meiji imperialist regime separated Shintoism from Buddhism in 1868 and revived it as the national religion for their political purposes. Similarly, Japanese governors also adopted the Shinto shrine policy and pressured all Koreans to attend the Shinto shrine worship. As a result, this policy inevitably provoked conflict between Shintoism and Christianity (Kim, N S 2000:82-84,113-115; Rhee, J S 1995:264-265).

As a consequence, Japanese colonial began to impose pressure on individuals, pastors and prominent Christian leaders and many of them, who refused to participate in Shinto shrine worship, were arrested and tortured. However, due to the strong resistance of many church leaders, the Japanese governors changed their strategy and imposed force on the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to approve their policy formally by using severe pressure

and threats by the police.

At last, in 1938, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church passed a resolution of compromising the Japanese policy. It wrote (Kim, N S 2000:115):

Obeisance at the Shinto shrines is not a religious act and is not in conflict with Christian teaching and should be performed as a matter of first importance thus manifesting patriotic zeal.

On the other hand, many ministers, who were opposed to the decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and resisted shrine worship courageously, began the "Non-shrine Worship Movement". As a result, many of them became martyrs or spent from five to seven years in prison (Lee, Keun-sam 1966:170; Kim, N S 2000:141, 189). In particular, according to N S Kim (2000:173), the prominent leaders of the "Non-shrine Worship Movement," such as Son, Yang-won, Lee, Ki-sun, Choo, Ki-chul and Han Sang-dong, as well as many other adherents of this Movement believed that God would make the present suffering and tribulation a stepping-stone to triumph. Due to the severe persecution, many leaders and parishioners within Protestant Churches, including anti-Shintoists, believed that the words of Matthew 24, which described the second coming of Jesus Christ, would be fulfilled literally (Lee, K S 1966:50). However, the significance of this movement should be distinguished from a political protest regarding nationalism. N S Kim (2000:136) points out that their faith in the hope of the second advent of Christ should be distinguished from a fanatic or partisan faith, since they believed and emphasized Jesus Christ's reign as the King during the millennium Kingdom.

In accordance with Lee, Keun-sam's view (1966:183-194), N S Kim (2000:134-140) represents the theological background of Anti-Shintoist as follows:

- (1) Love of God
- (2) Absolute submission to the commandments of God
- (3) Eschatological expectation
- (4) Witness to divine truth
- (5) The enthusiasm for martyrdom.

In this light, N S Kim (2000:189) appropriately evaluates the significance of the faith of anti-Shintoists:

Korean Christian resistance leaders were not politically motivated when they pursued anti-Shintoism.

They were motivated by their desire to obey God's commands. Their faith became instrumental in Christian missions, and their affliction and the martyrdom provided the foundation for the growth of the Christian Church.

In short, although it seems to be difficult to deny totally the fact that the worship of Shinto shrines have provoked confusion and contamination of PGI within the Korean Church in some ways, nevertheless, the sincere faith of many anti-Shintoists, as well as their affliction and martyrdom, have served as a stepping-stone for the future growth of the Korean Church. In particular, within the concepts of God of the anti-Shintoists in the Korean Church, we could probably find the image of God, "who indwells in them and displays His sacrificial love, as well as who provides an eschatological hope to overcome all trouble, tribulation and even deadly persecution in the present." Due to these God-images, anti-Shintoist, including many martyrs, seemed to endure severe affliction and harsh persecution from the Japanese colonial government.

### **2.4.3 The Communist government**

When the Communist government was established in North Korea, the governor, Kim Il-sung, adopted not only an extreme hostile position to Christianity (like Marx), but also established a unique policy to idolize himself as though he were a god. Thus, this inevitably was in severe conflict with Christianity. In fact, when the Japanese imperial reign ended in 1945, Marxist Communism confronted the Korean Churches. Although, ironically, Christians first introduced Communism, it soon became evident that Christianity and Marxist Communism were incompatible. In particular, the churches in North Korea had a quarter of a million members and the Christian-led Korean Democratic Party had a half million members, while the Communist Party had only 4,500 members. Nevertheless, with Russian political and military assistance, the Communist Party incredibly completely defeated the Christian-led Democratic Party and formally established the Communist government in 1948 in North Korea while the Democratic Christian-led Democratic Party moved its headquarters to Seoul soon after the Communists began the persecution. Consequently, the majority of Christian leaders and believers in North Korea escaped from the reign and persecution of the Communist government. Eventually, no organization or leadership remained to resist the Communist rule (Rhee, Jung-suk 1995:268-269). As a result, although North Korea had been a traditional Christian stronghold, it became

completely under Communist control. The dictator Kim Il-sung, like many other prominent Communist leaders, was from a Protestant family. However, this did not make him more lenient with the church. Furthermore, both Kim Il-sung, who held power from the end of the Korean War in July 1953 until his death in July 1994, and his son Kim Jong-Il, who is the present ruler in North Korea, presented themselves as gods to be worshipped by all people in North Korea (Scotchmer 2003; *Korea Times* 2003-7-30). Thus, in North Korea, it is not surprising that material for reading instruction in schools are almost entirely limited to Kim Il-sung's work, or works, which idolize him, and the themes of these books are the greatness of Kim and Communist ideology (Park, Young-soon 1991:37).

What is more, according to S J Choi (1998:72), all people in North Korea called Kim Il-sung father, like Christianity refers to God. Thus, the idolization and worshipping of Kim Il-sung seems to have been regarded as a religion. Hence, of course, this inevitably gave rise to conflict between the Communist government and Christianity. Although the majority of Christians fled from the Communist government's rule into South Korea, many of them still remain in North Korea. Although, according to the North Korean government, there are three officially recognized churches, two Protestant and one Catholic in Pyongyang and 500 authorized house churches, nevertheless, they are intended to serve the propaganda interests of the North Korean government (Scotchmer 2003).

Furthermore, the latest edition of the *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Oxford, 2001), gives the number of Christians in North Korea at just over 500,000, but nobody knows the exact number of Christians, as it is impossible to determine the exact number of underground churches. However, some estimate that there are approximately 500 underground churches (*Korea Herald* 1988). According to most estimates, there are around one million political prisoners in North Korea, of which 100,000 are Christians. Given the overall population of 23 million and a Christian population of 500,000 (the highest estimate we have seen), this means that one out of every five Christians is incarcerated in that country compared to one of 23 North Koreans in general.

In addition, the US State Department reports that many religious and human rights groups, "have provided numerous, unconfirmed reports that members of underground churches have been beaten, arrested, or killed because of their religious beliefs .... 400 Christians were

executed in 1999 .... Reports of executions, torture, and imprisonment of religious persons in the country continue to emerge.” What is more, a former prison guard in North Korea testified before the US Congress that Christian prisoners in North Korea are treated more harshly than other prisoners and authorities regard them as insane. According to the State Department's Year 2000 Report on international religious freedom, "a woman was kicked repeatedly and left with her injuries unattended for days because a guard overheard her praying for a child who was being beaten" (Scotchmer 2003). Despite severe persecution by the Communist government, many Christians in underground churches have kept their sincere faith.<sup>25</sup>

For instance, according to a report that was presented in a mission conference in Germany, believers in North Korea's underground churches recite five principles along with the Lord's Prayer, at their secret gatherings, which reads (Scotchmer 2003):

Our persecution and suffering are our joy and honour; We want to accept ridicule, scorn and disadvantages with joy in Jesus' name; As Christians, we want to wipe others' tears away and comfort the suffering; We want to be ready to risk our life because of our love for our neighbour, so that they also become Christians; We want to live our lives according to the standards set in God's Word.

In short, due to the harsh oppression and the imposition of dictator idolization by the Communist government, it seems that the majority of North Korean people worship their dictator as though he were a god and there are only a few sincere Christians in the underground churches. Nevertheless, these Christians seem to have a view of God as “a close partner”, who dwells with them and shares their suffering. The researcher believes that due to this image of God, many Christians in the underground Church in the North Korea seem to endure the harsh persecution and suppression of the Communist government and keep their sincere faith towards God.

#### **2.4.4 Military dictatorship**

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<sup>25</sup> The researcher believes that the God-images of the martyrs under the suppression of the Communist government in the North Korea might be in accordance with those of the anti-Shintoist martyrs under the persecution of the Japanese government in some sense, since within the North Korea, as soon as the the Japanese colonial government collapsed, they had to confront the appearance of the Communist government (cf. Chapter 2: 2.4.1.2).

#### **2.4.4.1 The appearance of military government**

Severe corruption and the inability of the first democratic Christian government in South Korea inevitably provoked the advent of the autocratic military regime. After Korea was divided into two parts, South and North Korea, the government of the Republic of Korea, led by the Christian president Rhee, Syng-mahn, was established in South Korea. However, it was not long before Koreans realized that Rhee's administration was unjust and severely corrupt (Rhee, J S 1995:270; Yang, Nak-hyung 1993:137). In particular, Rhee, who seemed more concerned about his own power than a healthy development of the new Republic, wanted to continue to hold his power as long as possible. Hence, he amended the constitution that had stipulated that one person could not be elected as President more than twice, thus fulfilling his purpose (Yang, N H 1993:138).

What is more, in the presidential election of March 15th 1960, Rhee's party and his government implemented corrupt election practices for Rhee and his running mate, Ki Boong Lee, another professing Christian. This provoked huge demonstrations, which were led mainly by college and high school students, along with other citizens. As a result, 187 students were killed and over 5000 were wounded. Nevertheless, the protests became more and more vehement. Finally, on April 19th 1960, president Rhee announced the resignation of his presidency (Yang, N H 1993:139; Moon, S H 1998:5). Thereafter, Rhee left Korea and, on May 16th, 1961, Park Jung-hee took power by a military coup in the midst of political confusion, due to the general distrust of politics. However, Park Jung-hee, displaying political aspirations like his predecessor, established Yu-shin Law in 1972 to secure his long-term power and infringement of human rights in many respects. Although Korea achieved tremendous economic growth during Park's reign, his unjust and oppressive rule generated a massive stream of the people's democratic movement (Moon, S H 1998:33).

#### **2.4.4.2 Non-violent civil righters**

##### **2.4.4.2.1 *Ham Suk-hun***

In the midst of the nation's hardships and suffering due to oppression by the autocratic

military government, Ham Suk-hun was well known to Koreans, not only as a religious thinker and poet, but also as a civil-rightist and nonviolent pacifist (Park, Jae-soon 2000:136-137; Kim, Kyung-je 2003:27). Ham, suk-hun (1983:105) attempts to link the national spirit “*Han*” to the concept of the Korean traditional monotheistic God, *Hananim*. That is, Ham uses the term “*Han*” (meaning national spirit or Korean people), and *hannim/ hananim* interchangeably in his thoughts. *Ham* also proposes his own term “*Ssial*”, a purely Korean word, meaning a “bare people”. This word is a combination of *Ssi* (seed) and *al* (kernel). With the idea of *Ssial*, Ham emphasises the dynamic unity between God and humans.

According to Ham, the life of the universe is condensed in a seed and the life of the universe and God are contained in human beings. Thus, Ham argues that “*Ssial*” represents the dynamic and intensive unity between “me” and God (Moon, Suk-ho 1998:57; Park, Jae-soon 2000:152). Ham claims that when he realized that an absolute being is separate from him and exists in an absolute distance from him, he also understood that the absolute being is within him. For *Ham*, God is not a dialectical being - both transcendent and inherent - but a paradoxical being, who is transcendent as he is inherent, and inherent as he is transcendent. Also, Ham believes that, although God can be regarded as a complete and absolute being, God is simultaneously a growing being or in the course of completion rather than a constant, static and complete being (Park, J S 2000:153). According to Ham, “I” and “God” unify in the “mind” of a human being. Hence, everything comes out of, and enters, the mind as there is no division between the subject and object, while Western thought clearly distinguishes between subject and object. Consequently, in the universe, the dynamic unity between man and God can be achieved via the resonance and response between heaven and earth inside a human being (Ham, S H 1983:282).

Furthermore, Ham understands God as “a transcendental and absolute being and the place, which is neither existent nor nonexistent, neither living nor dead, neither good nor evil.” According to Ham, people are the whole in history, while God is the whole in the universe and God buried people in the ground with dirt by descending to earth. As a result, Ham’s notion that God and the spirit of the nation are hidden in people’s hearts would be linked to the *Tonghak* doctrines of *In-Nae-Ch’un*. (Park, J S 2000:155). Therefore, Ham’s understanding of God can be regarded as an amalgam of the Korean national soul and the Christian faith.

#### 2.4.4.2.2 *Kim Ji-ha*

Kim, Ji-ha, one of the most representative poets and leaders of the students' anti government movement, was a strong agitator on behalf of suffering people under the unjust rule of the military regime. His well-known poem, "Five bandits", depicted especially the various aspects of corruption. Due to his harsh criticism and resistance against the political and economic corruption of Korean society, he was arrested, imprisoned, tortured and even sentenced to death. However, he has never stopped criticizing the structure of Korean society until today (Moon, S H 1998:60). Moreover, Kim Ji-ha was also known as a priest of *Han*. Because *Han* is a unique experience of Korean people, non-Koreans do not easily understand this. *Han* is often simply viewed as the suppressed people's "grudge" or "resentment," but it rather can be used individually or collectively to designate the unconsciously conscious layer of psychic power that entangles and oppresses the people's lives (Lee, Jung-yong 1988b:8-9). According to S H Moon (1998:61), Kim Ji-ha developed the concept of *Han* in terms of a collective dimension on the basis of the Korean socio-economic and political reality, while Ham Suk-hun proposed the concept of "Ssial" in terms of an individual dimension.

Furthermore, Kim, Ji-ha proposes the concept of "*Dan*", which means to cut off *Han*'s chain that creates vicious circles of violence and repression. Kim, Ji-ha asserts that *Dan* has two dimensions: "self-denial at a personal level, and curtailment of the vicious circle of revenge at a social level." At a personal level, *Dan*, cutting off *Han*, can be achieved through self-denial or self-sacrifice. However, at social and collective levels, *Dan* can sublimate the entire human society to a higher level of existence (Lee, J Y 1988b:10; Lee, Sang-bok 1993:102).

In addition, Kim, Ji-ha describes the revolutionary process, *Dan*, in four stages (Lee, J Y 1988b:11):

The first stage, "worshipping the divine embodiment" (*Shin-ch'unju*: 神天主), is to realize God in our hearts. This realization motivates us to worship God. The second stage, "nurturing the divine embodiment" (*Yang-ch'unju*: 養天主), is to allow divine consciousness to grow in us. The third stage, "practising divine embodiment" (*Haeng-ch'unju*: 行天主), is to practise what we believe of God. This stage marks our struggle to overcome the injustice of the world through the power of God. The final stage, "transcending the divine embodiment" (*Sang-ch'unju*: 上天主), is overcoming

injustice by transforming the world....

Here, we notice that within his *Dan* concept, which reveals his unique understanding of God, Kim Ji-ha adopts a central doctrine of *Tonghak* (Ch'undo-kyo: Eastern Learning), *In-Nae-Ch'un* (人乃天: man and God are one), for the purpose of securing individual as well as social transformation.

#### 2.4.4.3 Minjung theology

After the “*Yu-Shin Constitutional Law*” was enacted on October 17, 1972, to establish the military government’s secure unjust long-term power, the liberation theology of Latin America was introduced into Korea. Consequently, several scholars in Korea began to pay full-scale attention to socio-political issues. The word, “*Minjung theology*”, was first used in the title of an article written by Suh, Nam-dong in the book, *The Korean thought*, published in 1975 (Moon, Suk-ho 1998:40-41). Although the term, “*minjung*”, designates “the people” and “the masses,” however, this word *minjung* cannot be understood apart from the context of the Korean people's history of suffering. As J Y Lee (1988b:4) argues, *Minjung* are not just the people who are poor, weak and oppressed. However, as he asserts, “although they are economically poor, politically weak and socially deprived, nevertheless, they are rather historically and culturally rich and powerful.” Therefore, according to him, *minjung* could be regarded as the custodian of the Korean people’s indigenous cultural and historical heritage.

Moon, suk-ho (1998:10) makes it clear that *Minjung* theology should be understood in the light of the “*Han*” - solving structure of the suffering people. Here, the term “*Han*” represents the special concept, which describes the feeling of the poverty and agony, which the lower social class of the Korean people experience regarding their suffering and oppression (Moon, S H 1998:11). However, if we accept Moon’s assertion (1998:41) that the *Minjung* theology adopted the views and doctrines of Ham, Suk-hun and Kim, Ji-ha in order to deal with the suffering of Korean people, the notion of “*Han*” could be understood within a more comprehensive context. As previously argued, some Korean scholars believe that “*Han*” could be regarded as the kernel of the Korean spirituality or the Korean national spirit (Cf. Chapter 2: 2.2.1.5; 2.5.3.2.1). In particular, Ham, Suk-hun attempts to relate the national spirit “*Han*” to his own term “*Ssial*,”

meaning a “bare people” or “suffering people.”<sup>26</sup> With the Ham’s idea, there is a dynamic unity between God (Han: the national spirit) and humans (Ssial: bare or suffering people). On the other hand, Kim-Ji-ha’s interpretation of “Han” reflects the socio-economic and political dimension of the collective Minjung’s suffering experience more in a greater degree than Ham’s (Moon, S H 1998:61). Kim, Ji-ha proposes the concept of “*Dan*”, meaning to cut off *Han*’s chain that creates vicious circles of violence and repression. As previously discussed, for him, at a personal level, *Dan*, cutting off *Han*, can be achieved through self-denial or self-sacrifice. However, at social and collective levels, *Dan* can sublimate the entire human society to a higher level of existence (cf. Chapter 2: 2.4.4.2.2)

In accordance with Kim, Ji-ha’s view, Minjung theologians wish to liberate the poor, oppressed people from socio-political injustice and to urge the Korean Church to participate in socio-political affairs (Moon, S H 1998:92). In order to accomplish their primary objective, Minjung theologians adopt the notion of “*Missio Dei*.” S H Moon (1998:93) represents Suh, Nam-dong’s understanding of “*Missio Dei*” as follows:

Nam-dong Suh analyzes the idea of “*Missio Dei*” from the perspective of that God’s liberating activity in history takes place through the Minjung themselves, in that the Holy Spirit in *Missio Dei* is no more than and no less than the liberating spirit at work in the socio-economic history of mankind. Minjung theologians, therefore, acknowledge that God is the One who acts for the liberation of suffering people in order to establish the Messianic Kingdom of God in history.

As we see in the passage, in the light of their liberal interpretation of “*Missio Dei*,”<sup>27</sup> within Minjung theologians’ understanding of God, one finds a prominent tendency that focuses more on God as the Holy Spirit than on God as the Father or as the Son. For instance, Suh, Nam-dong (1976:132) emphasizes the role of Holy Spirit as the spirit of freedom, which empowers people to renew society and to build the Messianic Kingdom. Suh concentrates on the activity of the Spirit, rather than Jesus, as agent who makes social transformation possible. In addition, Ahn,

<sup>26</sup> “Ssial” can also be understood as “the suffering Minjung.” One can see Ham’s notion of Ssial in a greater detail at chapter 2 (2.5.3.2.1) and (Moon, S H 1998:57)

<sup>27</sup> One can say that Minjung theologians’ notion of ‘*Missio Dei*’ relates to mainly the socio-economic concern of the Church. As S H Moon (1988:68) cites Kim, Yong-bok’s interpretation of ‘*Missio Dei*,’ “the concrete content of ‘*Mission Dei*’ is to make ‘economic justice from economic exploitation’ real and to have people participate in political affairs, and it tries to create ‘*koinonia*,’ which is a solidarity of human beings, from the alienation of human beings. This is God’s creative activity in changing dehumanizing history into God’s humanizing history.”

Byung-mu (1988:219) understands the “Pneuma” in the light of the concept of the spirit of freedom, as the power, which liberates everything from any existing oppression in history. Therefore, it is noteworthy that the interest of the representative Minjung theologians, Ahn Byung-mu and Suh Nam-dong, resides in the work of the Spirit. According to them, due to the movement of the Holy Spirit, the Jesus-event had taken place long before Christianity came to Korea. Since God works as the Holy Spirit, God's work is not confined to time or space. Furthermore, according to them, the Father does not surpass the Son, but the Son surpasses the Father. Moreover, the Son does not surpass the Spirit, but the Spirit surpasses the Son and the Father (Moon, S H 1998:93; Lee, J Y 1988b:12-13). J Y Lee claims (1988b:13) that this tendency to focus on God as the Holy Spirit reflects the impact of Shamanism, because Shamanism regards everything as a manifestation of the Spirit or spirits, and time and space does not restrict this spiritual presence.

Furthermore, Kim, Kyung-jae (1992:239) argues that Suh Nam-dong's view of the Spirit comes from the idea of *Si-Ch'unju* (侍天主) or *In-Nae-Ch'un* (人乃天) in Tonghak. What is more, Lee, Jung-yong (1988b:22) points out that on account of the influence of the central doctrine of Tonghak, most Minjung theologians regard a human being as above or superior to God and, thus, for them, God is regarded as merely a mean to satisfy the needs of the Minjung.

Hence, in short, although Minjung theologians attempt to propose a theological answer in the face of people's suffering under the oppression due to the socio-political injustice, for them, God could be easily degenerate into merely a mean to fulfil people's needs. In particular, within their views of God, which focus on the work of the Spirit as the liberating power for social reformation, we find a syncretic view of God, which may reflect the impact of Christianity and Tonghak, as well as the Shamanistic understanding of spirits.

#### **2.4.5 Modernization and materialism**

For several decades after modernization began in the Korean society, Korea has achieved one of the most dynamic economic growths in the world. Nevertheless, due to this rapid economic growth, Koreans have been more and more absorbed in pursuing materialistic wealth and values. Consequently, it seems that this materialistic tendency provoked a negative impact on KGI. It

has been generally accepted that the Park regime, which seized power through a military coup in 1961, started Korea's genuine modernization. Park's military regime placed economic growth as the most important item on the national agenda and forcefully drove the policy of "rush-to" growth (Kim, Won-bae 1999:7). Although Park's military-dictatorial rule deeply scarred the nation with countless violations of human rights, his regime showed enthusiasm for a modernized, strong and wealthy Korea. As if military targets, Park's regime attacked the agenda, rapid economic growth and development regardless of procedure and means. As a result, from 1965 to 1990, Korea has had one of the most rapid economic growths in the world with an average annual growth rate of 7.1% - the highest growth rate in the gross national product (GNP) of the world. Korea's GNP increased 200 times from US\$2.3 billion to US\$457.9 billion in 1995, and the Korean GNP per capita has increased 115.8 times from US\$87 to US\$10,076 in 1995. Korea was transformed completely from an agricultural society to a modern industrial society within approximately 30 years (Kim, Yong-woong 1999:39; Han, San-jin 1998:7).

However, this dramatic economic growth widened the chasm between rich and poor. While the upper-middleclass enjoyed a culture of luxurious consumption, the lower-income class felt not only relative deprivation and frustration, but also a mixed feeling of envy and animosity against the former group. Since a consumption-oriented pattern of life has been prevalent in Korean society the value of money has been held in high esteem and respect for material possessions has heightened. Furthermore, the developed mass communications media has incited the desire for material possessions and affluence, which has increased continuously. On the other hand, however, the inequality in the distribution of wealth has provoked a feeling of relative deprivation (Kim, Won-bae 1999:21; Kim, Kyung-dong 1986:18).

More fundamentally, to Koreans, the rapid economic development has added new values and behavioural patterns that focused more on materialistic concerns. In other words, in order to fulfil material needs, the procedures or methods of attainment were not considered to be very important. As a result, this change in values and behavioural patterns that focused more on materialistic concerns seems to be related inevitably to Korean Shamanism's traditional God-images, because, as discussed in the previous chapter, these God-images had a prominent tendency to understand God/gods as "the prosperity guarantor/s", who has/have the power to realize people's material wishes, such as longevity, health, male birth, wealth and occupational

success. In other words, one can say that Korean Shamanism has treated and believed God/gods to be functional by fulfilling material wishes (Son, B H 1995:261-264).

Therefore, for the parishioners, who are deeply captured by materialism, God can be easily degraded into a functional God, who is hijacked in order to serve their this worldly and material wishes. In fact, much evidence proves that Shamanism, materialism and God-images have synthetically influenced many Christians' style of faith in Korean Churches. For instance, many of Christians seem to associate the purpose of offerings with secular blessings. That is, the dedication of "Sowonhongeum" (offering of petition) (money and a list of wishes to be prayed for in an envelope) can be easily applied for the purpose of material-wish fulfilment. What is more, Cho Yong-ggi, the pastor of the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, the world's largest church, currently with over 700,000 members, emphasizes the threefold blessings of Christ, i.e. health, prosperity and salvation. In addition, Cho maintains a fivefold Gospel, that is, the Gospel of regeneration, the Gospel of being filled with the Holy Spirit, the Gospel of Divine healing, the Gospel of success and the Gospel of the Second Coming. Furthermore, Cho suggests some principles of blessings that have to be kept in order to enjoy prosperity (Lee, Y H 1996:36; Kim, A E 2000:116)

In this respect, we notice that many KPC's teaching and ministry seem to be based on American prosperity theology, which stresses God's blessing like a sugar-coated gospel, in which parishioners keep God's commands in order to enjoy God's material blessings. Regarding this pathological phenomenon, as the researcher argued in this section, we cannot disregard the impact of Shamanistic understanding of God, as well as material-centred values along with the sudden modernization of Korean society. In short, hence, as a natural consequence of such enormous social changes to westernization, particularly materialism seems to present an easy way to Koreans to pursue the functional omnipotent God, who guarantees the fulfilment of material wishes, like Shamanistic God/gods.

#### **2.4.6 Religious pluralism**

Generally speaking, it seems that the theology of religious pluralism has presented the Korean Churches with a perplexing challenge, in association with her cultural background similar to

other younger churches in Third World countries. Although the term “pluralism” originally came into the English language in its earliest usage as a religious term in the 17th and 18th centuries, in this century it has been used as a sociological term as well as a religious term. Furthermore, in the development of the term pluralism it has always meant “*more than one contained in one*” or “*the one expressed in more than one way*” (Scott, W S 1999:1,2). Unlike Christianity, religious pluralists maintain that all religions are equal salvific paths to the one God. In particular, a representative pluralist thinker, John Hick (1882:14-32), argues that all religions in the world have the same ultimate divine reality, in which they can be regarded as people’s historically and culturally restricted responses. Therefore, he regards Yahweh, Allah, Sunyata, Brahman, and Nirvana as the authentic manifestation of the reality. Hick believes that since mankind cannot possibly grasp the totality of the infinite God, they may experience the same reality differently due to their differing historical, cultural, or philosophical biases (Hick 1988:241-243)

Furthermore, the KPBC could not totally escape the impact of religious pluralism. For instance, a young Korean woman theologian, Chung, Hyun-kyung performed a special spiritual dance in the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra. In that Korean traditional Shamanistic dance, she called several spirits to come along with the spirit of Jesus Christ, as follows (Chung, H K 1991:1):

Come. The spirit of Hagar, Egyptian, black slave woman exploited and abandoned by Abraham and Sarah, the ancestors of our faith; Come. The spirit of male babies killed by the soldiers of King Herod upon Jesus' birth; Come. The spirit of Mahatma Ghandi, Steve Biko, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcom X, the struggle for liberation of their people; Come. The spirit of Earth, Air and Water, raped, tortured and exploited by human greed and money; Come. The spirit of the Liberator, our brother Jesus, tortured and killed on the cross

Here, we notice that Chung, Hyun-kyung seemed to recognize not only other spirits similar to the Holy Spirit, but also the validity of other religions in salvation. Besides, some Korean Protestant theologians also propose a pluralistic view of God. Following the pluralistic religious view, Byun, Sun-hwan (1985:328) also argues that although there are many names that refer to the ultimate reality in the world, all these gods reflect people’s experience of one God. In addition, Yu, Dong-sik (2001:150) also maintains that Christ can relate the universal logos that

is generally referred to as “Tao” in the East. D S Yu (1997:179-220) believes that the Korean Church should adopt the view of religious pluralism and establish their own hermeneutical theology of religion, which reflect the idea and doctrine of the Korean traditional religions, as well as his unique idea of Korean spirituality (*Pung-ryu*). In a similar vein, Ryu, Ki-jong (1999:4,5) emphasizes a necessity of building a theology of dialogue in the light of religious pluralism. K J Ryu (1999:12-53) proposes a theology of *Han*, in which he tries to build a connection between the idea of *Han* (as the kernel of the Korean spirituality) and Christianity, as well as the idea of Ultimate within both the Western philosophy and the KTR. In this respect, one conclude that regarding the God-images of the Korean Church, the religious pluralism have influenced on the formation of a tendency of syncretic understanding of God in some sense.

#### **2.4.7 Hierachy in the Korean society**

Due to the influence of Confucianism, the Korean society has exhibited a higher degree of hierarchy. Thus, one could presume that due to the impact of hierarchy in the Korean society, for many Koreans, God has become as a more “authoritative and distant Being.” In fact, as previously discussed, during the Yi dynasty, they adapted the concept of “*Ch'un* (天)” as its political ideology, in which it was believed that Heaven (*Ch'un*) ruled the state as well as the universe by appointing a good man as a king. Because the social hierarchical system was occupied in a very strict way, the Confucian ethic of the Yi-dynasty emphasized a unilateral obedience on the part of the subordinate to the superior (Lee, Sang-bok 1966:18).

The system consisted of four ranks, namely, *Yangban*, *Chungin*, *Sangmin* and *Ch'unmin* (Kim Chae-yoon 1982:63-68). The first class, *Yangban* enjoyed various privileges in their political, social, and cultural life, whereby they belonged to the ruling stratum whose members could become officials through the government service examination or by dint of the meritorious service rendered by their ancestors to the state. The *Yangban* was a cultured class whose members monopolized all educational opportunities, as well as a leisured class whose members could devote themselves to learning and reading or a wealthy class of landlords who could own many acres of land (Kim Chae-yoon 1982:63-64). The second rank, *Chungin*, meaning “men in the middle”, engaged usually in learning and executing for special technical fields and techniques as a whole were defined as lower. These special techniques or artistic pursuit were

evaluated as subsidiary and necessary, in all respects, as long as they supplemented politics such as miscellaneous departments of learning as foreign languages, medicine, astronomy, geography, arithmetic, law, music, and painting and miscellaneous government positions (Kim Chae-yoon 1982:64-65).

The third class, *Sangmin*, meaning commoners, were engaged in various in agriculture, handicraft, commerce, etc. and shouldered all burdens for the state, constituted the class of actual producers in the Yi society. Most of the commoners were farmers while some commoners were engaged in handicraft and commerce. The Sangmin were obliged to pay tributes or agricultural products of their communities as a tax and provide labor for the construction of palaces, embankments, and roads. They were denied opportunities not only to engage in learning, but also to apply for the government service examination; furthermore, it was in principle, not allowed for them to seek the advancement in estates (Kim C Y 1982:65-66). The lowest class, *Ch'unmin*, meaning 'lowly', occupied the bottom in the Yi dynasty structure of social strata comprised serfs, stage performers, shamans, women entertainers, butchers, etc. The main constituents of the lowly class were, of course, serfs. According to circumstances, the serfs were sold and bought, presented as a gift, and bartered. (Kim C Y 1982:66-68).

Furthermore, as previously discussed, because the Yi dynasty adopted the notion of "*Ch'un* (天)" as a ruling ideology, it was believed that Confucian political authority emanated from Heaven (*Ch'un*) and the king's reign was based upon the heavenly Mandate (*Ch'unmyung*: Heaven's decree). Consequently, the supreme authority of Heaven was mediated to the king and then to society in a hierarchical order (Kim, Yong-bok 1992; Kim, Myung-huk 1989:21).

In other words, during the Yi dynasty, God, "*Ch'un* (天)," was regarded as an absolutely authoritative and distant Being, who (or which)<sup>28</sup> was in the very peak of the Confucian hierarchical system. According to Chang, Yun-sik (1982:154-155), due to the fall of the Yi dynasty, Korea marked the end the traditional status-system. Nevertheless, "the normative regulations governing the hierarchical relations and the traditional patterns of relations based on

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<sup>28</sup> As argued previously, the notion of "*Ch'un* (天)" reflects both the idea of a personal God and an impersonal Ultimate/Principle. One can see a comparison (and conflict) between the notion of "*Ch'un* (天)" and that of Christianity in the Yi dynasty at Chapter 2 (2.3.1)

authoritarianism have still persisted in the contemporary Korean society.”

If we adapt Chang’s view, we can say that the hierarchical relations and the traditional patterns of relations based on authoritarianism in Korean society may bring out the hierarchical interpretation of God, in which people easily regard God as a more an “authoritative, distant and apathetic Being.” within the Korean context.<sup>29</sup>

#### **2.4.7 Patriarchy in the Korean society**

In the object relations theory, it is generally accepted that there is a close connection between children’s parental-images and their God-images (Hall & Brokaw 1995:377; Underwood 1986:299-300). Therefore, one could presume that the patriarchal character of the Korean society has influenced the Korean God-images in some way (Shin Myung-sook 1999:200). Although Korea has experienced a rapid transformation through industrial modernization from an agricultural society to a postmodern society due to the dominant impact of Confucianism, the Korean society has still preserved a hierarchical and patriarchal structure. Traditionally, Korean women’s status and function were extremely subordinate to men in accordance with the doctrine of Confucianism.

For instance, women were not allowed to participate in the family ritual of ancestor worship. While the men performed all processes of the ritual, women were relegated to duties of preparing the food offerings in the kitchen. By excluding women from practising important family rituals, patriarchs reaffirmed and maintained their absolute authority (Kim, Chung-sook Chung 1988:19-20; Dennis 1993:56-57). However, the father’s position in the centre of the family in the pre-industrial patriarchy has changed enormously in Korean society’s contemporary patriarchy. Today, this patriarchy reflects in a father’s authority being founded more on his economic ability rather than on his social status, an embodiment of Confucian morality, which emphasized filial piety and the absolute authority of a patriarch. According to studies, in 1980,

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<sup>29</sup> The researcher believes that this possible tendency of the hierarchical interpretation of God within the Korean context could be associated with the metaphysical interpretation of God regarding Confucianism and Taoism, in which God is easily understood as the ultimate source of evil or suffering in the world with an emphasis on cause and effect principle. As a result, within the Korean context, there exists a danger of understanding of God as a totally indifferent and apathetic Being in the context of human suffering. This point will be argued in greater detail in the following.

men served in 70.7% of all professional, technical, administrative, and managerial occupations and, in 1985, 77.6% of urban families regarded a male as the primary provider (No, M H 1987:10; Dennis 1993:48).

However, now, the family's economic power is divided largely between the right to manage assets and the right to handle income and expenditure. For instance, previously, husbands received direct monthly cash payments and, in turn, gave a portion to their wives to cover living expenses. But, with the advent of the on-line banking system, the majority of companies deposit salaries directly into their employees' accounts, which are generally managed by the wives (Park, Bu-jin 2001:58-59). Consequently, due to rapid changes in the social environment, Koreans now experience confusion as to establishing a new status for their family's patriarch. More precisely: in Korean society, the patriarch's traditional status, which emphasized the exercise of absolute patriarchal power, has inevitably conflicted with the sudden changes in the social environment. In other words, in the traditional agricultural Korean society, the relationship between the father and his children was exceedingly vertical. However, since the industrialization of society, which seems to emphasize a more horizontal and equal relationship between fathers and their children, this relationship has rapidly progressed from the traditional authoritative patriarch that might have been mirrored as a more negative image in the children's eyes. A research that surveyed and analyzed the father's image among the middle, high and college students in Korea provides an example of the children's negative tendency towards images of their fathers in the patriarchal society.

Here, by adapting the view of the object relations theory, we find a clue that seems to contribute to an examination of the impact of patriarchy on Koreans' understanding of God, as indicated in part of the results of Park Bu-jin's study (2001:49-73):

(1)*The intimidating and authoritative father*: The father is still an authoritative and fear-inspiring figure. Roughly half of the survey's respondents regard their father as authoritative, with a higher percentage of college students (56.1%) than middle-school students (37.5%).... (2) *The father who insists on his own values*: Of the respondents, 22.8% saw their fathers as autocratic figures and 37.3% said that they were not able to have a conversation with their fathers on equal terms. ... "he ignores almost all other opinions except his own"; "he thinks of everything only from his own perspective".... Thus, many children in Korea seem to think that their fathers do not listen to them with empathy and do not wish to know their minds. This view may widen the gap not only between

fathers and their children, but also between God and these children. (3) *The father who loves his children but cannot show affection*: 93.1% saw the father as an unaffectionate figure who loves his children, but cannot show his love.... "I wish my father was warmer around the family"; and "I wish my father didn't treat the family so inconsistently according to his moods". (4) *The alienated father*: In the survey 18.4% had negative emotions towards their authoritative, interfering and unaffectionate fathers and 15.1% believed their fathers were alienated from the rest of the family. They regarded their fathers more negatively than the mothers, as only 11.3% did not like their mothers and 6.3 % believed that their mothers were alienated from the rest of the family. (5) *The ideal father*: According to the survey, the ideal father is one whom "I can have a conversation with" and "I can lean on" within a mutually respectful relationship. He is one who "can share a hobby with his children," "is attentive and warm" and "can share a deep conversations as though with a friend".

This passage makes clear that children in Korea generally have negative images of their fathers' patriarchal attitude. That is, children in Korea, under the impact of patriarchy, show a tendency to view their fathers as intimidating, authoritative, distant and indifferent beings. However, it is still not certain that Korean children's negative images of their fathers as intimidating, authoritative, distant and indifferent beings can relate to the formation of their God-images.<sup>30</sup> According to Louw, (1999a:85), the connection between God's Fatherhood and patriarchal domination may arouse more negative associations within the usually more patriarchal Eastern culture than in Western culture. What is more, according to Shin, Myung-sook (1999:200), within pastoral counselling in Korean Churches, due to the impact of the Confucianistic patriarchal tradition, parishioners have perceived the majority of pastors as authoritative fathers who focus more on spiritual direction than on empathy. Therefore, one could say that there is a possible danger that the image of pastors as authoritative fathers can also relate to the formation of children's negative God-images within Korean culture.

## 2.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher examines the interplay between culture and God-images within the KRC for the purpose of attaining a clear picture of how KTR and culture have influenced the function of their God-images and belief system regarding God-images and Koreans' understanding of theodicy as a more philosophical issue in respect of the connection between

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<sup>30</sup> A possible correlation between Korean children's negative patriarchal images and their God images shall be examined by the empirical approach in next chapter.

## God and suffering.

Among scholars of KTR, there has been some debate in respect of KGI, i.e. whether Koreans had a prominent traditional image of God as “*a personal supreme Being (God)*” and how their traditional God-images have influenced their thoughts and lives. Nevertheless, most of them agree that the general Korean God-image can be directly related to the traditional religions, such as Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Furthermore, such images have become rooted fundamentally in most Korean minds and have continuously influenced their lives and religious thinking. As discussed previously, broadly speaking, within KTR the historical current of God-images could be divided into two streams. More concretely: within the mainstream God-images, God can be described as the monotheistic personal Supreme Being. On the other hand, within non-mainstream God-images, various views of God can be found, including atheistic, pantheistic, polytheistic, and even panentheistic views of God.

Now, let us turn to this chapter’s main issues. Initially, we noted that Korean Shamanism, a primal type of religion and the substratum of all Koreans’ religious experience, indicated a tendency towards a monotheistic understanding of God as “*prosperity Guarantor and heavenly frightening Ruler,*” although it contains polytheistic and polydemonistic views of God. Accordingly, these Shamanistic God-images have influenced Koreans’ religious culture and thoughts in many ways. For instance, the *Tangun* myth, the seminal myth of Korean cultural history (the God-images of which could be described as personal and supernatural) has produced other religions such as *Shinkyō* and *Taejongkyō* and has influenced the religious thoughts of Korean Shamanism and Taoism. The great national Shamanistic festivals, such as *Younggo*, *Much’un*, *Sodo*, *Surinnal* and *Sangdal*, were closely related to heavenly worship. God was viewed as a heavenly, supreme Being, who guarantees good fortune or rain for a better harvest. Furthermore, the private rituals of Korean Shamanism, *Cheui*, existed among contemporary Koreans, where they viewed God as a most fearful and frightening Being. Hence, they believed that if people did not fulfil God’s will, i.e. if they practised rituals improperly or without sincerity, they would be punished by illness, fail in their endeavours, or their property would be damaged. We also noted that, although there are various ways of categorizing gods in Korean Shamanism, most agree about the existence of a Supreme God, the so-called *Hanunim*, *Hananim* or *Ch’unshin*, the head of all Shamanistic gods, who is extremely familiar among Koreans, whom they

consider to be an almighty and frightening Being who controls everything, including the life and death of human beings, and who judges and punishes people mercilessly. In this regard, within the Korean Shamanistic context, God could be easily considered as the ultimate source of evil and all human suffering and predicament could be regarded as the consequence of the punishment of the merciless God.

Through this research, we also recognized that God-images of “*the Sovereign on high and heavenly (moral) Ultimate*” are found within Korean Confucianism (categorized as a religion and a philosophy, establishing an ethical and moral system to govern all social relations in the family, community and society). Of course, this Confucianistic understanding of God has influenced various aspects of Korean lives and thoughts. To begin with, as shown above, within a Confucianistic ritual of ancestor worship (the most accepted and popular family ritual among Koreans that still exists widely), God-images, including the spirits of ancestors, can be described as the *heavenly Principle (Tai-chi or Li)*. One can attain unity with them by means of a sincere practice of ritual, or through a heavenly supreme Ruler, who has the power to bless and fulfil one’s wishes. Next, a variety of names and concepts of the Ultimate in Korean Confucianism, such as *Ch’un* (Heaven: 天), *Sangche* (The Lord on High: 上帝), *Tai-chi* (Great Ultimate: 太極) and *Li* (Principle: 理), illustrate God-images of both personal and supreme beings, who govern the whole world and judge good and evil, and an impersonal heavenly principle and norm that creates all things and supervises their process of change. Moreover, within the mandate of Heaven (*Ch’unmyeong*: 天命), having a political dimension, *Heaven* (天) was regarded as a personal supreme being who provided kingship and supervised the kings of the world, and was recognized as a basis for self-cultivation or self-realization. These God-images might be closer to the heavenly ultimate principle. In addition, most scholars in Korean Confucianism seem to have recognized mainly the *Ultimate (God)* as a “*heavenly (moral) Principle*” rather than a personal Being. Nevertheless, within their views of the *Ultimate*, we cannot deny the influence of other religions with God-images of a personal Supreme Being. In addition, within the Korean Confucianistic context, we noticed that God could be regarded the ultimate source of all things and events, as well as evil in the world world. Thus, human suffering might be considered as a consequence of God’s judgment and punishment on account of human misdeeds in the light of the ethical criteria of Confucianism.

Furthermore, within Korean Taoism, an essential component of Korean religions and culture, God-images of the “*heavenly omnipotent Ruler and ultimate Reality*” seem to be found, especially with regard to the Korean monotheistic understanding of God. For instance, a Taoistic God-term, *Okhwang-Sangche*, most familiar to all Koreans, portrays God as a personal and almighty Deity, who satisfies the human secular desire for longevity, immortality, secular benefit, elimination of ills and the evocation of happiness. In addition, within official Taoistic ceremonies, such as the *wudoumi* (五斗米: five pecks of rice) cult and *Ch’ochae*, God was regarded as a Supreme Being, who controls the universe and all life and death, and as a moral Judge, who curses evil deeds and blesses human good deeds. On the other hand, unlike other religions, Korean Buddhism has rarely influenced the formation of Koreans’ general God-images, due to the fact that it can be regarded authentically an atheistic or agnostic religion. Nevertheless, within the Korean religious cultural setting, due to the decisive impact of the Shamanistic and Taoistic understanding of God, Korean Buddhism has displayed a noticeable theistic dimension regarding the issue of God-images. For instance, due to the decisive influence of *Mahayana* Buddhism, within the Korean Buddhism, we find a theistic and even monotheistic view of God, in which Buddha himself is regarded as an omnipotent God, who answers people’s prayer and takes care of their this-worldly wishes. In addition, we can say that Korean Buddhism has had a rather synthetic influence on the formation of Korean God-images with other religions, such as Shamanism and Taoism. For instance, although a kind of god called *Chesok* (Indra) is found within Korean Buddhism, which might be derived from the Indian deity, the ruler of the sky, god of storms, and protector of the Aryan people, this god is even regarded as inferior to *Buddha*. So far, we have examined briefly the God-images that have existed historically within each of the Korean traditional religions and what the influence of such God-images were on Korean culture and religious thinking.

As we previously confirmed, before Christianity was introduced into Korea, Koreans already had their own traditional God-images that originated mainly in their traditional religions. Hence, with the introduction of Christianity, the God-images within KTR were confronted by another demand for extravagant variations. As a result, within the first Catholic community in the Yi dynasty, one finds the tendency of a syncretic view of God in some sense. For instance, especially among the Confucian scholars within the sector of *Seohak*, there existed much debate regarding the issue of merging Confucianism and Catholicism. However, the Confucian scholars

involved in *Seohak* (Western learning) have gradually escaped from Confucianistic God-images, as they were more oriented to the image of God as the moral and ethical *Ultimate* or *Principle*, and they have gradually assimilated with Christianity. In addition, it is noteworthy that when Catholicism was introduced, severe conflict arose, since Catholicism and Confucianism had its own God-images. For instance, the most controversial issue at the time related to the ritual of ancestor worship, *Chesa*. Whereas ancestor worship ritual was closely related to filial piety as the paradigmatic core value of the Chosun dynasty, Roman Catholics considered ancestor worship as an act of idolatry. Thus, the government began to prohibit the propagation of Catholicism and persecute this strange Western religion in a very harsh way. Due to the severe persecutions of the Confucian government, there were more than the thousands martyrs. While the government of the Chosun dyanasty adapted the notion of *Ch'un* (Heaven) as merely a ruling ideology in order to secure the stability of Confucian hierarchy, on the other hand, many matrys seemed to believe that their God, *Ch'unju*, not only as a “sovereign Ruler,” who created and governed all creation, but also as a “social (or political) liberator or suol savior” who displayed His impartial love and genuine omnipotent power regardless the social rank, as well as one who dwelled with them and secured a utopian haven or otherworldly salvation for them. Meanwhile, On the other hand, although *Tonghak* (Eastern learning: 東學) might reflect the impact of Christianity, as well as polytheistic and pantheistic views of the non-mainstream God, nevertheless, we cannot disregard the fact that it displayed *panentheistic* view of God, which probably related to the Korean mainstream traditional monotheistic God-concept. Furthermore, when Protestantism was introduced into Korea, God-images in Protestantism inevitably conflicted with God-images in the Korean religious culture, and seemed to have shown aspects of both the continuity and discontinuity of Korean traditional God-images.

In addition, after the introduction of Christianity, several indigenous religions, such as Chungsan-kyo, Taichong-kyo, Wonbul-kyo and Tongil-kyo, emerged. Their God-images seem to reflect the impact of the undestanding of God within KTR (and the impact of Christianity in a sense). However, we can say that their views of God reflect a characteristic of syncretic religion in higher degree. During the Japanese colonial reign, “The First March Independent Movement,” which the leaders of mainly Christianity and the Tonghak religion led, aroused people immensely. This Movement recognized God as a “Vindicator of justice and the political Liberator,” who broke the emperor’s chains of oppression and gave rise to a new era of justice.

This understanding of God seems to reflect not only Christianity's understanding of God, but also the notion of Ch'undo-kyo (Tonghak), which maintains the identification of God's (Heaven's) will with the people's will, and of man with God.

After this Independent Movement, the Japanese began to impose Shinto-shrine-worship on Korean Christians. Although it seems to be difficult to deny totally the fact that the worship of Shinto shrines would have provoked confusion and contamination of PGI within the Korean Church in some ways, nevertheless, the sincere faith of many anti-Shintoists, as well as their affliction and martyrdom, served as a stepping-stone for the future growth of the Korean Church. In particular, within the concepts of God of the anti-Shintoists in the Korean Church, we could probably find an image of God, who indwells in them and displays His sacrificial love, as well as who provides an eschatological hope to overcome all trouble, tribulation and even deadly persecution in the present. What is more, after the fall of the Japanese colonial regime, the Communist government was established in North Korea. However, the governor, Kim Il-sung, enforced a unique policy to idolize himself as though he were a god. Thus, it seems that the majority of people in North Korea worshipped their dictator like a god, and there were only a few sincere Christians who understood God as a close Partner who dwells and shares their suffering, despite severe persecution. On the other hand, although the first democratic government led by Christian leaders was established in South Korea, severe corruption and inability of this first Christian regime inevitably brought about the emergence of the autocratic military regime. Amidst the nation's hardship and suffering due to this oppression, well-known leaders of the human rights movement, such as *Ham Suk-hun* and *Kim Ji-ha*, demonstrated their unique view of God which seems to reflect the impact of God-images of *Tonghak* as well as non-mainstream KTR. Moreover, the God-images of the Minjung theologians might be influenced by both the doctrine of Christianity and the philosophy of the above-named two leaders. Since then, modernization began in Korean society and, although Korea has achieved one of the most dynamic economic growths in the world, this growth has provoked a negative impact on Koreans' God-images. That is, an image of "the heavenly omnipotent Ruler" within the mainstream God-images of KTR that guarantees this-worldly and materialistic prosperity is easily related to the pursuit of a life-style of materialistic wealth and values. Furthermore, the theology of religious pluralism, in association with their cultural background, has presented a perplexing challenge to not only Catholicism, but also the KPC. In fact, in a pluralistic view, the

God-images of KTR seem to synthesize with the God of Christianity. Particularly, due to the rapid transformation of Korean society, many Korean children of the postmodern age seem to have a more negative image of their patriarchal fathers. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate whether Korean children's negative images of their fathers, as being intimidating, authoritative, distant and indifferent, could relate to the inappropriate formation of their God-images.

All in all, as examined earlier, due to the decisive impact of Shamanism and Confucianism, as well as some minor impact of the diverse aspects of Korean culture, the God-image within the Korean religious setting could be summarized as a "heavenly omnipotent Ruler and frightening moral Judge", who controls everything and is responsible for every event, including the life and death of human beings, as well as who judges and punishes according to people's deeds. In fact, as previously argued, regarding theodicy issue, we already confirmed that due to the decisive impact of Shamanism, human suffering could be easily and directly regarded as the punishment of the merciless and unpredictable god(s). After Christianity was introduced into Korea, some socio-political factors in the KRC acted as "switches" that controlled the level of influence of God-images on the formation and function of KGI in both the mainstream and non-mainstream. Therefore, we can generally say that God could be easily regarded as the ultimate source of evil in the world in the Korean context, in which all human suffering and predicaments might be considered as the direct consequence of the judgment and punishment of an apathetic and merciless God on account of their sins (or misdeeds).<sup>31</sup> (Of course, the significance of sins within KRC must be distinguished from the notion of sins in Christianity. It should be understood against the Korean religious cultural background.)<sup>32</sup> The concept KGI that have formed and transformed within the diverse contexts of Korean culture, may be depicted as follows:

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<sup>31</sup> The researcher believes that the Korean terminology of the omnipotence (*Chunneung*) and punishment (*Ch'unbeōl*) of God may reflect the impact of KTR regarding the question of human suffering. This point will be argued regarding the results of the empirical survey in the KPBC in greater detail in the following chapter.

<sup>32</sup> For instance, within the context of Shamanism, god(s) is regarded as an ineffably great and frightening being, who is extremely unpredictable, as well as one who hardly has a moral code of conduct. Thus, even a failure of appeasing god(s) during the practice of a Shamanistic ceremony could be considered as a serious sin. However, because Korea has been a highly Confucianistic society over centuries, the researcher believes that the notion of sins (misdeeds) within KRC should be understood in the light of the ethical criteria of the Korean Confucianism.

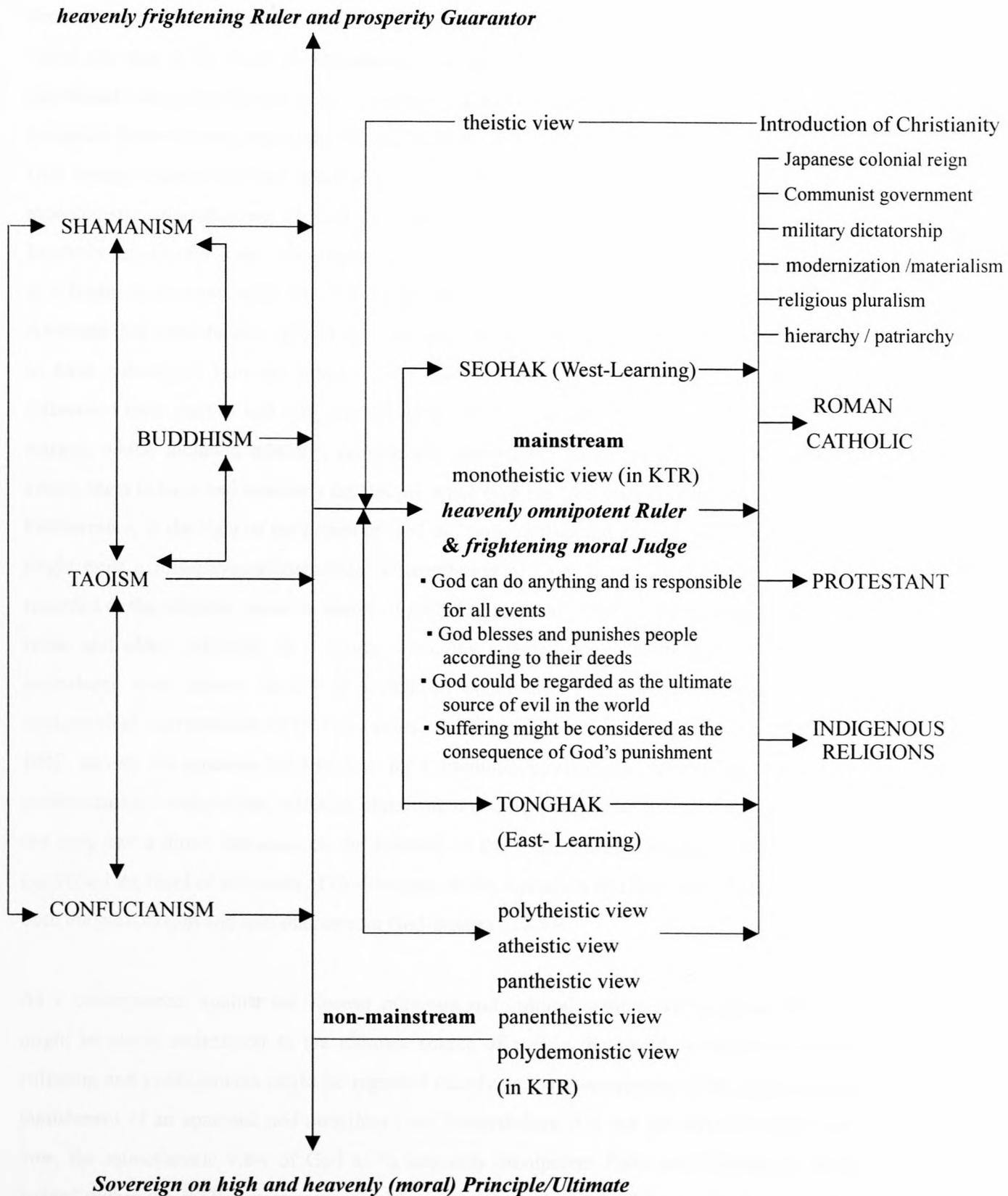


Fig. 1. An overview of the flow of God-images within the Korean religious context in a pastoral perspective

From the above discussion, it seems reasonable to conclude the following. In the first place, one could say that KTR, such as Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, played a significant role in the formation of God-images and their function. In other words, within the historical flow of Korea, due to the impact of the KTR, there seems to have been two streams of God-images: mainstream and non-mainstream. Particularly within the mainstream, one finds a monotheistic understanding of God as a personal Being. This God would be viewed as a heavenly omnipotent Ruler who blesses human beings and guarantees their prosperity, as well as a frightening moral Judge who judges and punishes human beings according to their deeds. Although this monotheistic view of God was not revealed, as in Christianity and Islam, it seems to have submerged into the minds of all Koreans and has constantly and fundamentally influenced their culture and religious thoughts. On the other hand, the non-mainstream God-images, which included atheistic, polytheistic, pantheistic, panentheistic and polydemonistic views, seem to have had relatively far less influence than the God-images within the mainstream. Furthermore, in the light of the notion of God in Confucianism and Taoism, we found that there might exist a metaphysical/hierarchical interpretation of God, in which God could be easily regarded as the ultimate cause or source of suffering and evil in the world with an emphasis on cause and effect principle. In a similar vein, the fatalistic idea of “the law of rewards in accordance with human deeds” of Buddhism could also relate to the formation of the metaphysical interpretation of God in a sense. Added to this, some socio-political factors in the KRC, namely the Japanese colonial rule, the Communist government, the military dictatorship, modernization / materialism, religious pluralism, hierarchy and patriarchy in the Korean society, not only had a direct influence on the function of the KGI, but also acted as “switches” that controlled the level of influence of God-images on the formation and function of KGI regarding both the mainstream and non-mainstream God-images of KTR.

As a consequence, against the Korean religious and cultural setting, we conclude that God might be easily understood as the ultimate source of evil in the world, in which all human suffering and predicaments might be regarded mainly as the consequence of the judgment and punishment of an apathetic and merciless God. Nevertheless, it is not yet certain whether, and how, the monotheistic view of God as “a heavenly omnipotent Ruler and frightening moral Judge” within the KTRs’ mainstream God-images and the doctrine of God in Christianity (that also might have functioned synthetically with other socio-political factors within the Korean

religious context) have critically influenced the formation and function of PGI and their practice of faith in the KPBC, especially regarding the question of human suffering and predicaments. Therefore, these issues will be examined more precisely in the following chapter by adopting an empirical approach.

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to identify the existing conceptions of the deity and the children's parishioners' response to life issues (i.e. pain and suffering) in the KPBC. The study will also measure faith. Therefore, in this chapter, especially with regard to the KPBC, the researcher will determine the significance of the existing God images and how they affect the children's perspective of God, by adopting an empirical approach. The researcher will also identify the influence of Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, which originated from the indigenous function of God-images.

Furthermore, previously it was argued that, since Christianity was introduced into Korea, the God images in KTh not only, indirectly, incorporated the holistic view of God that had been continuously and symbolically influenced after world religions (i.e. Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism) but also, directly, incorporated the function of SGI. On the grounds of this fact, we can easily assume that the indigenous religions of KRC have also influenced the formation and function of God images in the KPBC. Nevertheless, as proposed as the main research problem and hypothesis, since the indigenous religions in the real field of the KPBC, little is known about whether and how God images in the KPBC have been influenced by the indigenous religions. Therefore, the influence of the doctrine of God's image have influenced the formation and function of God images of the adult members of the KPBC.

In particular, it is not yet certain how the monotheistic view of God as "the invisible, omnipotent Ruler and frightening moral Judge," originating from the KTh, has indirectly influenced the formation of PGI and their faith within the KPBC. Thus, the researcher will engage in an empirical research by using a questionnaire in order to investigate the existing

<sup>21</sup> As stated previously in this section, because Y H K. Yoon (2007) already tries to assess children's God images in the Korean cultural setting, the researcher will focus on identifying only those of the adult members within the KPBC for the sake of convenience of our empirical survey. In fact, the Korean Protestant Church has many denominations, such as the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostal and Pentecostal Churches. However, the Presbyterian Church had the highest percentage of the total adherents (at the very least 54.63%) (*The yearbook of Korean Christianity*, 1999). Moreover, the researcher is also a member of this denomination. Thus, sample churches were selected among the KPBC. The researcher believes that the result and its implication of this section could perhaps be extended and adopted in the KPBC.

## CHAPTER 3

### PGI (PARISHIONERS' GOD-IMAGES) IN THE KPBC - AN EMPIRICAL APPROACH

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to identify the existing God-images in the KPBC and how they influence parishioners' response to life issues (i.e, pain and suffering), as well as the spiritual quality of a mature faith. Therefore, in this chapter, especially within the KPBC,<sup>33</sup> the researcher tries to determine the significance of the existing God images and how church members experience and perceive God, by adopting an empirical approach. As discussed above, the KTR, such as Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, have critically influenced the formation and function of God-images.

Furthermore, previously it was argued that, since Christianity was introduced into Korea, God-images in KTR not only inevitably encountered the theistic view of Christianity, but also continually and synthetically influenced other socio-political factors within the KRC regarding the function of KGI. On the grounds of this fact we can easily assume that God-images in the KRC have also influenced the formation and function of God-images in the KPBC. Nevertheless, as proposed as the main research problem and hypothesis of this study, within the real field of the KPBC, little is known about whether, and how, God-images in the KRC (with the influence of the doctrine of God) have influenced the formation and function of God-images of the adult members of the KPBC.

In particular, it is not yet certain how the monotheistic view of God as "*the heavenly omnipotent Ruler and frightening moral Judge,*" emanating from the KTR, has critically influenced the formation of PGI and their faith within the KPBC. Thus, the researcher will engage in an empirical research by using a questionnaire in order to investigate the interplay

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<sup>33</sup> As stated previously in this section, because Y H K Shim (2003) already tried to assess children's God-images in the Korean cultural setting, the researcher will focus on identifying only those of the adult members within the KPBC for the sake of convenience of our empirical survey. In fact, the Korean Protestant Church has many denominations, such as the Presbyterian, Methodist, Holiness, Baptist and Pentecostal Churches. However, the Presbyterian Church had the highest percentage of the total adherents (at the very least 54.65%) (*The yearbook of Korean Christianity*, 1999). Moreover, the researcher is also a member of this denomination. Thus, sample churches were selected among the KPBC. The researcher believes that the result and its implication of this section could perhaps be extended and adopted in the KPC.

between existing perceptions of God among church members and the possible influence of their religious cultural context. In this regard, on the grounds of an analysis of the empirical data, the interplay between doctrine and culture on the function of parishioners' belief systems and their theological paradigm will be discussed. Finally, the hypothesis will be argued in respect of the need to establish a way of making an assessment of God-images in order to determine whether these images are appropriate or inappropriate, especially when it concerns the philosophical issue of theodicy.

### **3.2 A DIAGNOSTIC GOAL AND PROCEDURE**

By adopting an empirical survey in order to provide an answer to the main research problem in this study, the researcher attempts to assess the existing PGI within the KPBC for the following purposes:

- To verify the existing God-images in the KPBC and how they influence parishioners' response to life issues (e.g. theodicy and its impact on parishioners' understanding of suffering) as well as their maturity in faith.
- To verify or investigate whether, or how, culture and traditional religions have influenced parishioner's theological paradigm and belief system within the KPBC.

In order to fulfil this goal, an empirical survey was carried out in some selected churches in the KPBC by using a newly developed diagnostic tool.

### **3.3 AN EMPIRICAL SURVEY**

#### **3.3.1 The design of a questionnaire**

The researcher had already extracted some descriptions of God-images of the KTR within the religious context of Korean culture by means of a historical literature survey. Furthermore, he used them as a source for assessing criteria in this research. As deduced from the literature survey, the tendency of God-images within the KTR can be summarized as *the heavenly omnipotent Ruler*, emphasizing the power of God in terms of the prosperity Guarantor, as well as *the frightening moral Judge*, who judges and punishes human beings according to their deeds. For the purpose of fulfilling the diagnostic goal, a new questionnaire, consisting of 15 questions, was developed in terms of the significance of God-images within the KRC. All the questions,

with two or multiple choices or an empty space in which respondents could add their own thoughts without restraint, were designed to reveal more effectively the interplay between PGI in the KPBC and KTR at a qualitative level. In other words, we first attempted to implement this diagnostic tool in some churches of the KPBC in order to examine whether, or to what extent, a prominent tendency to understand God as a “*prosperity Guarantor and apathetic / distant Being*” exists within the KPBC. Then, we endeavoured to investigate whether, and how, the views of God as “*the heavenly omnipotent Ruler and frightening moral Judge*” in KTR (with the influence of the Christian doctrine) have detrimentally influenced the function of PGI in the KPBC and their belief systems.

### **3.3.2 The procedure and method of the survey**

Because the number of the parishioners of the KPBC was estimated no less than 6,167,000,<sup>34</sup> the empirical survey of this study is limited to a small number of churches in the KPBC in order to identify the significance and function of PGI. The researcher particularly focuses on surveying adult parishioners in this study. Furthermore, 20 Presbyterian Churches in three regional sectors, namely the metropolis, cities and rural area all over the country, were randomly selected and 1000 copies of the questionnaire were mailed to these churches with precise explanatory guidelines for more accurate results of the survey. Seventeen churches, including five in the metropolis<sup>35</sup> and seven in small or medium-sized cities, such as Sanbon, Nonsan, Weonju, Jeonju, Paju and Singal, as well as five churches in the rural area, returned their results. Of those received, 669 respondents proved to be statistically efficient. All these data were diagnosed by using SPSS WIN 10.0 Version (Statistical Packages for Social Science for Windows 10.0 Version), were categorized by factors of region, gender and age, and were analysed by adopting the Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) analysis.

### **3.3.3 A demographic profile**

#### **3.3.3.1 The holistic distribution of the respondents**

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<sup>34</sup> *The yearbook of Korean Christianity*, 1999.

<sup>35</sup> In this research, the term “metropolis” was used to refer exclusively to the capital city of Korea, Seoul that had a population of approximately 10.6 million in 1995 (Kim, Y W 1999:47).

Table1. Church groups and the distribution of respondents

**< 17 churches / 669 respondents >**

	church	respondents	percentage	respondents	Percentage
metropolis	Yaehyang church	83	12.4	280	41.9
	Dongsan church	53	7.9		
	Machonjungang	91	13.6		
	Banseok church	38	5.7		
	Yein church	15	2.2		
cities	Serom church	29	4.3	311	46.5
	Sanbonjungang church	36	5.4		
	Nonsanjungang church	65	9.7		
	Weonjujungang church	98	14.6		
	Bitwasokeum church	17	2.5		
	Jeunjuseokwang church	27	4.0		
	Singaljungang church	39	5.8		
rural area	Keumjang church	22	3.3	78	11.7
	Keumsanjungang church	22	3.3		
	Nochunjeil church	5	.7		
	Hwajeon church	20	3.0		
	Jesumaul church	9	1.3		
Total		669	100.0	669	100.0

This table indicates the regionally classified Church Groups and the distribution of all respondents. In general, the number of respondents in the metropolis churches is larger than that of respondents in the churches of rural area.

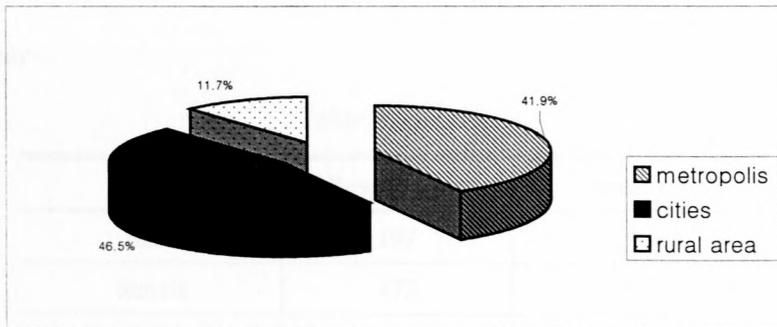
### 3.3.3.2 Region

The ratio of the distribution of respondents in the cities (46.5%) is higher than that of other areas (metropolis 41.9%, rural area 11.7%).

Table-2. Regional distribution of respondents

	respondents	Percentage
metropolis	280	41.9
cities	311	46.5
rural area	78	11.7
Total	669	100.0

Fig. 2 Pie chart of the regional distribution of respondents

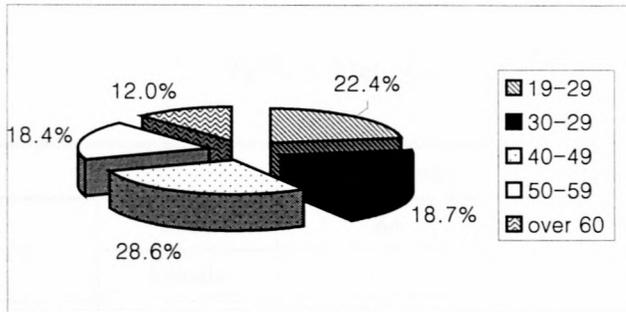


### 3.3.3.3 Age group

Table 3. Age distribution of respondents

	respondents	percentage
19-29	150	22.4
30-39	125	18.7
40-49	191	28.6
50-59	123	18.4
over 60	80	12.0
Total	669	100.0

Fig.3. Pie chart of the respondents' age distribution



The ratio of the age group “40-49” is the highest (28.6%) among all age groups and the age group “9-29”(22.4%) is second. Moreover, “30-39”(18.7%), “50-59”(18.4%) follow.

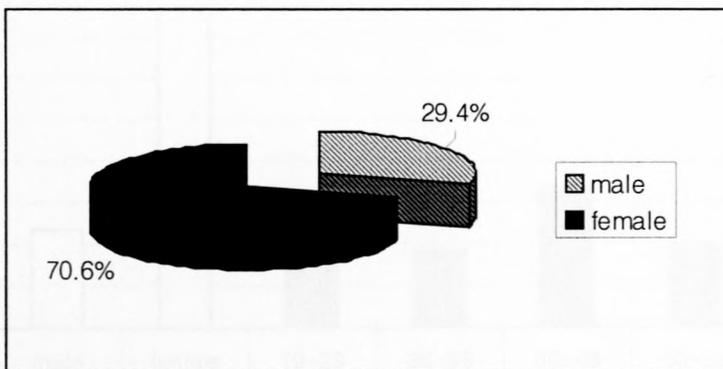
3.3.3.4 Gender

Table 4. Gender.

	Respondents	Percentage
male	197	29.4
female	472	70.6
Total	669	100.0

The ratio of the female respondents (70.6%) is far higher than that of the males (29.4%)

Fig.4. Pie chart of gender



**3.3.3.5 A comparison of the church groups**

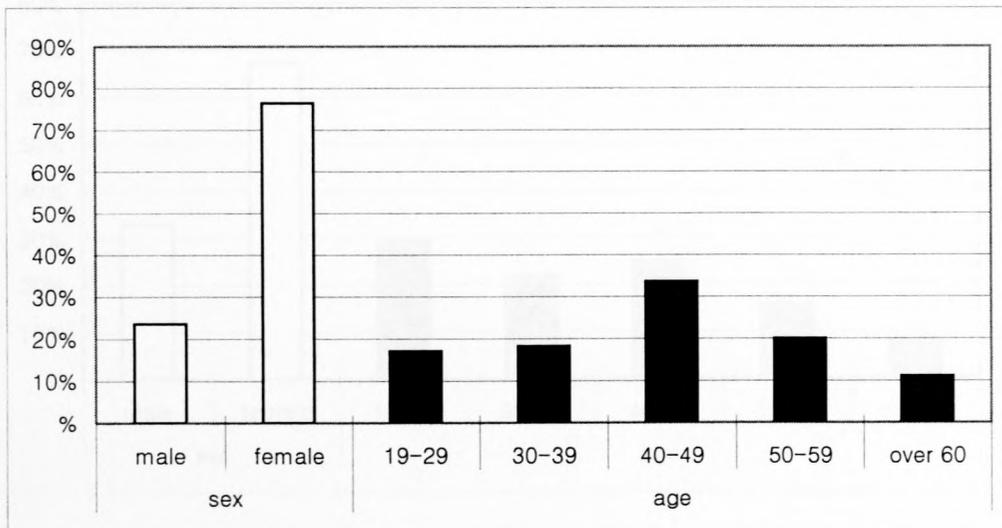
(1) Metropolis

Table 5. Metropolis

		respondents	percentage
sex	Male	66	23.6
	Female	214	76.4
age	19-29	48	17.1
	30-39	51	18.2
	40-49	94	33.6
	50-59	56	20.0
	over 60	31	11.1
Total		280	100.0

In the metropolis, the ratio of the females (76.4%) is far higher than that of the males (23.6%) and the ratio of the age group “40-49”(33.6%) is the highest among all age groups and the age group “50-59”(20.0%) and “30-39”(18.2%) follow.

Fig.5. Bar chart of the metropolis



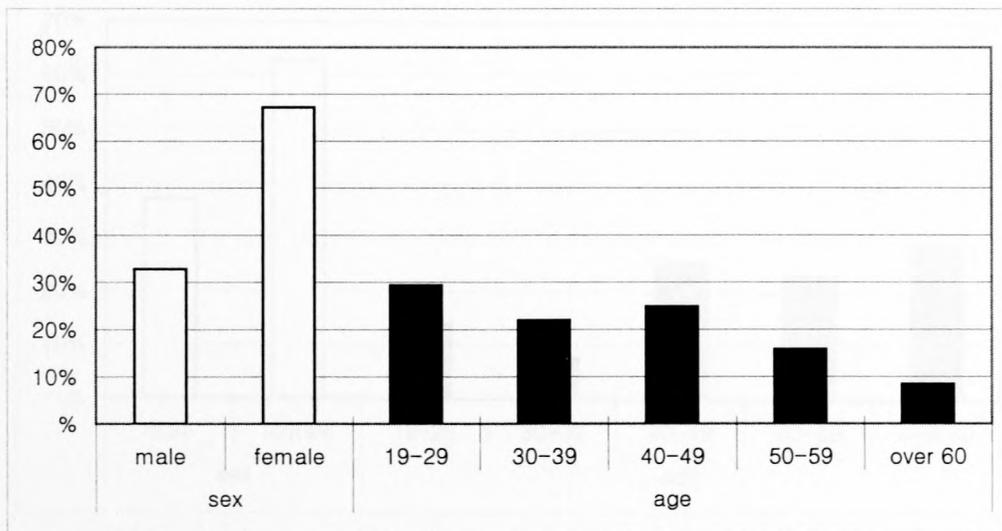
(2) Cities

Table. 6. Cities

		respondents	percentage
sex	male	102	32.8
	female	209	67.2
age	19-29	91	29.3
	30-39	68	21.9
	40-49	77	24.8
	50-59	49	15.8
	over 60	26	8.4
Total		311	100.0

In the cities, the ratio of the females (67.2%) is higher than that of the males (32.8%), but, this ratio is lower than that of the metropolis (76.4%). The ratio of the age range 19-29 (29.3%) is the highest while the highest range in the metropolis is the range of 40-49 (33.6%) and the age groups “40-49(24.8%)” and “30-39”(21.9%) follow.

Fig.6. Bar chart of the cities



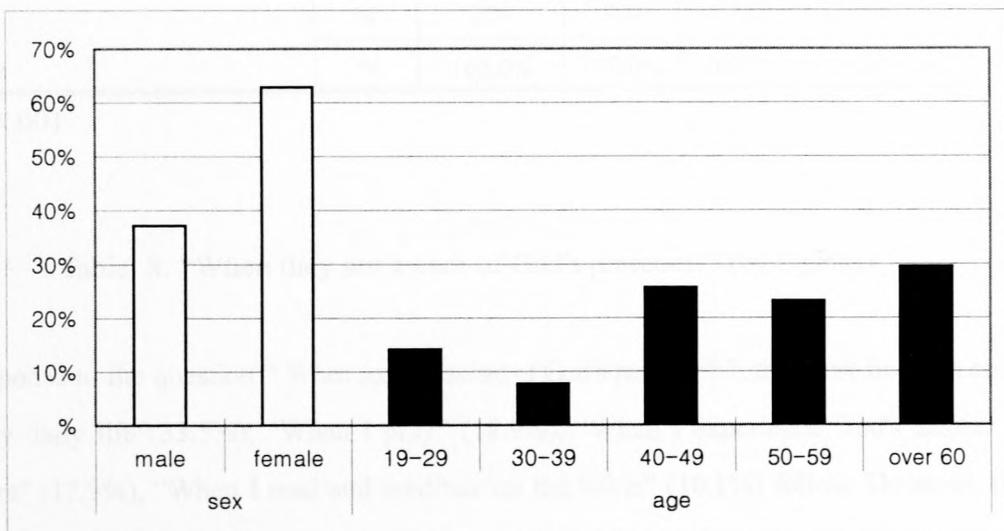
(3) Rural area

Table 7. Rural area

		respondents	percentage
sex	male	29	37.2
	female	49	62.8
age	19-29	11	14.1
	30-39	6	7.7
	40-49	20	25.6
	50-59	18	23.1
	over 60	23	29.5
Total		78	100.0

In the cities, the ratio of the females (62.2%) is higher than that of the males (37.2%), but, this ratio is lowest among three regional classifications. Particularly, the age range over 60 (29.5%) is the highest and the range 40-49(25.6%) and 50-59(23.1%) follow. Therefore, the ratio of old-aged parishioners is relatively higher than in other regions.

Fig. 7. Bar chart of rural area



### 3.3.4 The results of the survey

#### 3.3.4.1 When are you aware of God's presence?

		metropolis	cities	rural area	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
When I pray	N	61	52	13	126	63.544 (.000)***
	%	21.9%	16.8%	16.7%	18.9%	
When I read and meditate on the Bible	N	20	35	12	67	
	%	7.2%	11.3%	15.4%	10.1%	
When I am in the church	N	4	12	12	28	
	%	1.4%	3.9%	15.4%	4.2%	
When I experience God's answer to my prayers	N	41	68	10	119	
	%	14.7%	22.0%	12.8%	17.9%	
When I attend at a worship service	N	10	22	5	37	
	%	3.6%	7.1%	6.4%	5.6%	
When I am in nature	N	5	7		12	
	%	1.8%	2.3%		1.8%	
When I hear a sermon	N	15	18	8	41	
	%	5.4%	5.8%	10.3%	6.2%	
In my daily life	N	114	93	16	223	
	%	40.9%	30.1%	20.5%	33.5%	
etc.	N	9	2	2	13	
	%	3.2%	.6%	2.6%	2.0%	
Total	N	279	309	78	666	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*\*\*p<.001

Table. 8. "When they are aware of God's presence?" (by regions)

In response to the question "When are you aware of God's presence?", the most frequent answer is "in my daily life"(33.5%); "When I pray" (18.9%), "When I experience God's answer to my prayers" (17.9%), "When I read and meditate on the Bible" (10.1%) follow. However, the fact should not be ignored that the parishioners' awareness of God is fairly related to their prayers (36.8%), i.e. "When I pray"(18.9%) and "When I experience God's answer to my prayers"

(17.9%). This reveals the highest ratio among all answers. Furthermore, considering the regional factor, in metropolis, the answering ratio of “in my daily life”(40.9%) is higher than that of the cities (30.1%) or that of rural area (20.5%). On the other hand, in the answer of “When I experience God's answer to my prayers”, the ratio in the cities (22.0%) is higher than that of metropolis (14.7%) or rural area (12.8%). Thus, the results shows that in the question “ When are you aware of God’s presence? “, there was a statistically meaningful difference according to regional classifications. ( $p < .001$ ) As a consequence, it can be said that parishioners in KPBC showed a fair tendency to aware God related to their prayer. Moreover, parishioners in the metropolis relatively more aware of God in their daily life than other areas while parishioners in the rural area relatively more aware of God related to God’s answering to their prayer.

Fig.8. Bar chart of “When are you aware of God’s presence?” (by region)

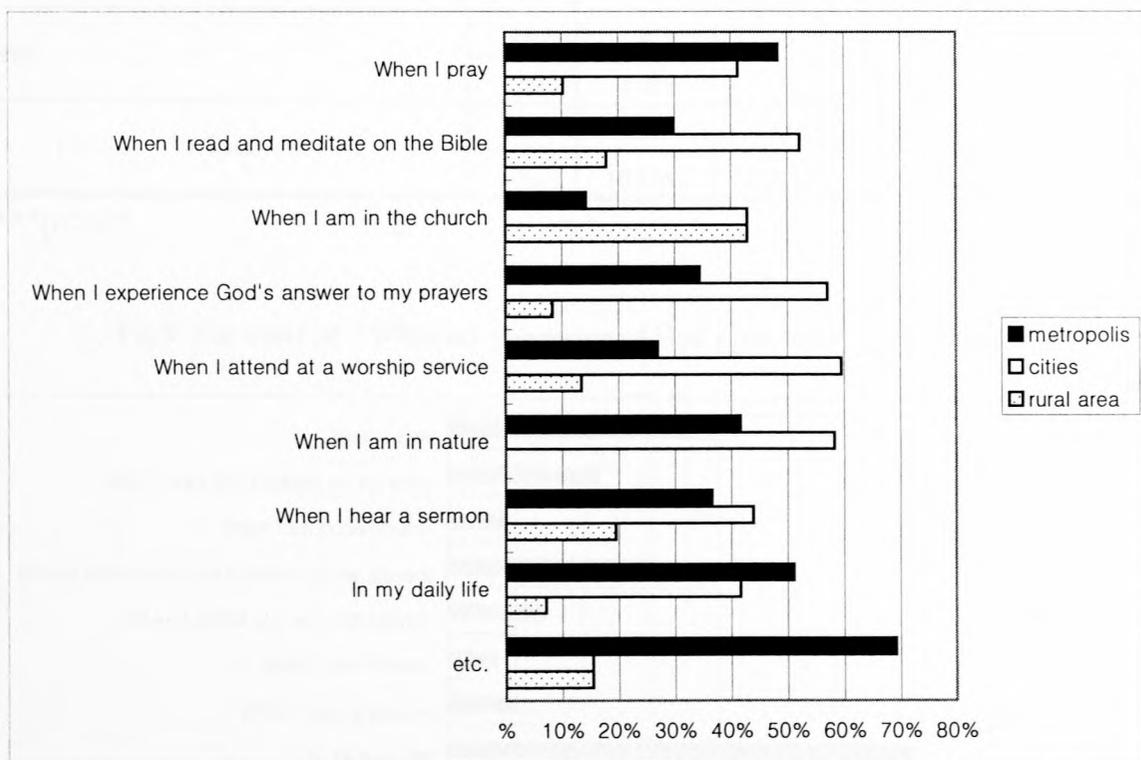
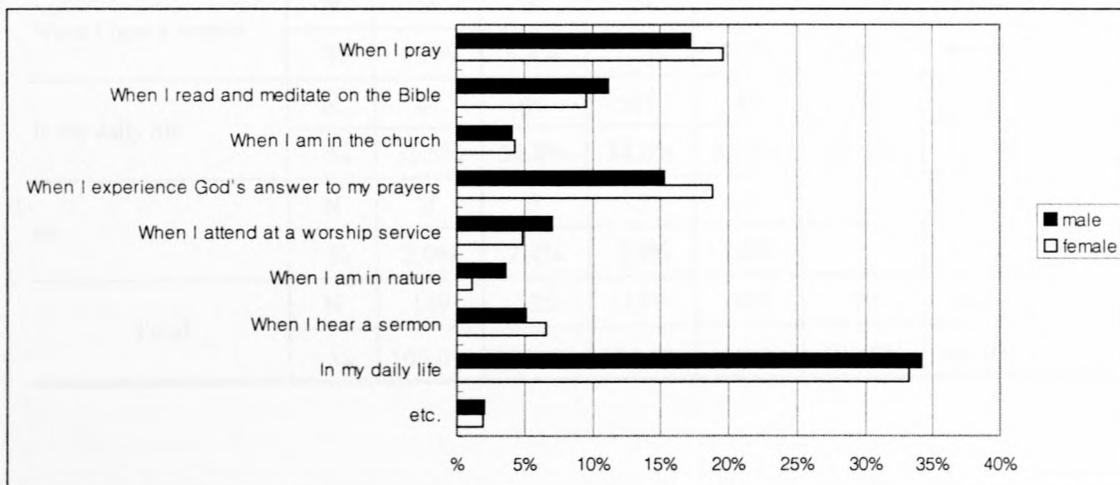


Table. 9. “When are you aware of God’s presence?” (by gender)

		males	females	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (v)
When I pray	N	34	92	126	8.407 (.395)
	%	17.3%	19.6%	18.9%	
When I read and meditate on the Bible	N	22	45	67	
	%	11.2%	9.6%	10.1%	
When I am in the church	N	8	20	28	
	%	4.1%	4.3%	4.2%	
When I experience God's answer to my prayers	N	30	89	119	
	%	15.3%	18.9%	17.9%	
When I attend at a worship service	N	14	23	37	
	%	7.1%	4.9%	5.6%	
When I am in nature	N	7	5	12	
	%	3.6%	1.1%	1.8%	
When I hear a sermon	N	10	31	41	
	%	5.1%	6.6%	6.2%	
In my daily life	N	67	156	223	
	%	34.2%	33.2%	33.5%	
etc.	N	4	9	13	
	%	2.0%	1.9%	2.0%	
Total	N	196	470	666	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*\*\*p<.001

Fig.9. Bar chart of “When are you aware of God’s presence?” (by gender)

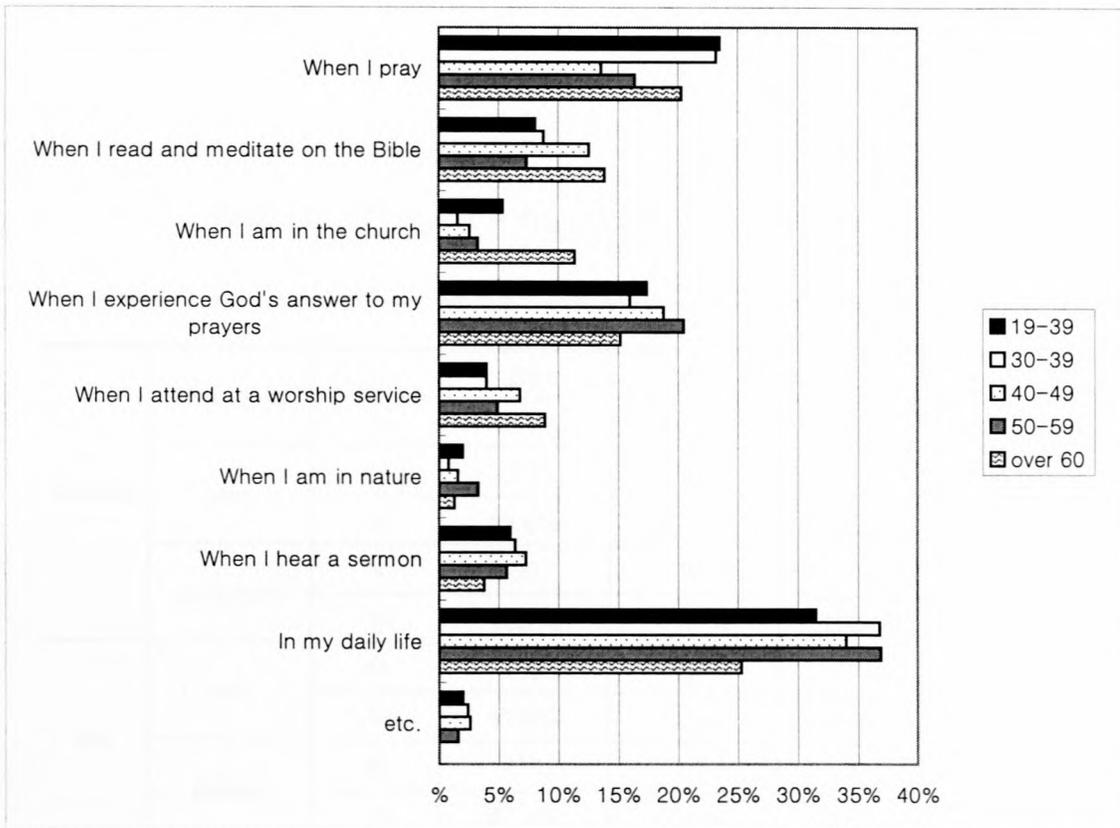


The results show that in the question “When are you aware of God’s presence?” in terms of gender, the ratio of the female parishioners’ awareness of God that is related to their prayers is a little higher (38.2%) than that of the males (32.6%). Furthermore, the results show that in the ratio of the most frequent answer, “in my daily life”, the ratio of the age range (above 60) is relatively lower than other age ranges. However, the difference is not statistically meaningful.

Table. 10. “When are you aware of God’s presence?” (by age)

		19-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	above 60	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
When I pray	N	35	29	26	20	16	126	36.657 (.262)
	%	23.5%	23.2%	13.6%	16.4%	20.3%	18.9%	
When I read and meditate on the Bible	N	12	11	24	9	11	67	
	%	8.1%	8.8%	12.6%	7.4%	13.9%	10.1%	
When I am in the church	N	8	2	5	4	9	28	
	%	5.4%	1.6%	2.6%	3.3%	11.4%	4.2%	
When I experience God's answer to my prayers	N	26	20	36	25	12	119	
	%	17.4%	16.0%	18.8%	20.5%	15.2%	17.9%	
When I attend at a worship service	N	6	5	13	6	7	37	
	%	4.0%	4.0%	6.8%	4.9%	8.9%	5.6%	
When I am in nature	N	3	1	3	4	1	12	
	%	2.0%	.8%	1.6%	3.3%	1.3%	1.8%	
When I hear a sermon	N	9	8	14	7	3	41	
	%	6.0%	6.4%	7.3%	5.7%	3.8%	6.2%	
In my daily life	N	47	46	65	45	20	223	
	%	31.5%	36.8%	34.0%	36.9%	25.3%	33.5%	
etc.	N	3	3	5	2		13	
	%	2.0%	2.4%	2.6%	1.6%		2.0%	
Total	N	149	125	191	122	79	666	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Fig.10. Bar chart of “When are you aware of God’s presence?” (by age)



### 3.3.4.2 If I believe in the omnipotence of God, I can receive and achieve anything

In response to the statement “If I believe in the omnipotence of God, I can receive and achieve anything in my life”, the majority of the respondents (87.2%) said “Yes” while the minority (12.8%) said “No”.<sup>36</sup> In particular, the ratio of “Yes” of the age range (over 60) is a little higher

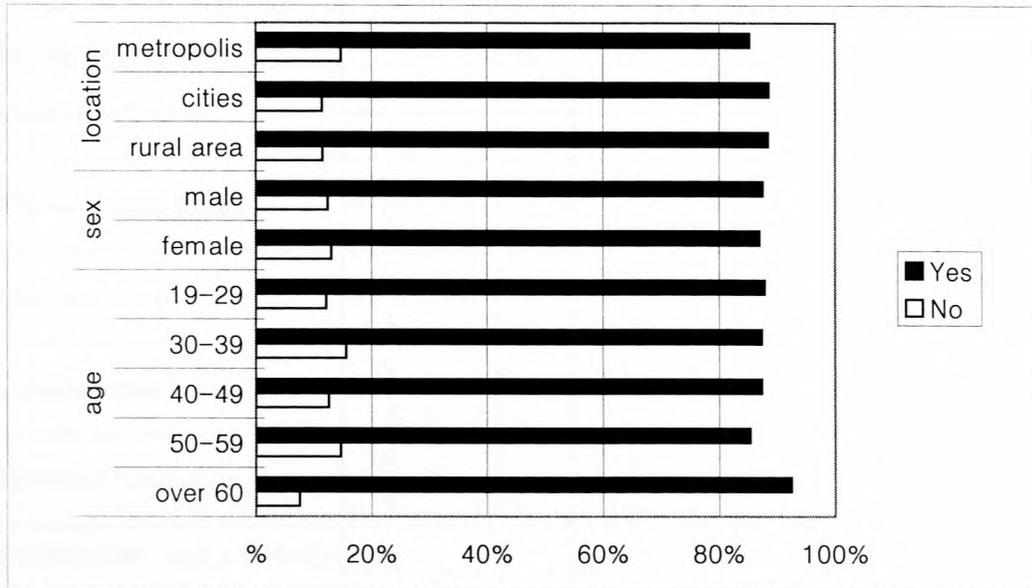
<sup>36</sup> According to Louw, the parishioners who have the idea that faith is an instant formula to solve all problems are apt to think God as a magician. Within this type of faith, if God does not show His magic power in the turmoil situation, it is not due to God’s fault but due to the inadequate faith of parishioners. Louw claims that this type of faith brings out a superficial optimism and opportunism. (Louw 1999a: 343) For this reason, it should not be ignored the fact that the ratio of parishioners within the Korean Presbyterian church who agree with the statement “If I believe almighty God, I can receive and achieve anything” is so high (87.2%) Later, therefore, the causes and results of this type of faith will be discussed in a more detail.

(92.5%) than other ranges, but the difference is not serious. Furthermore, there are no statistically meaningful differences according to factors such as church location, parishioners' age and gender.

Table 11. "If I believe ~, I can receive and achieve anything"

			Yes	No	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
location	metropolis	N	238	41	279	1.580 (.454)
		%	85.3%	14.7%	100.0%	
	cities	N	273	35	308	
		%	88.6%	11.4%	100.0%	
	rural area	N	69	9	78	
		%	88.5%	11.5%	100.0%	
sex	male	N	170	24	194	.041 (.839)
		%	87.6%	12.4%	100.0%	
	female	N	410	61	471	
		%	87.0%	13.0%	100.0%	
age	19-29	N	131	18	149	3.307 (.508)
		%	87.9%	12.1%	100.0%	
	30-39	N	103	19	122	
		%	84.4%	15.6%	100.0%	
	40-49	N	167	24	191	
		%	87.4%	12.6%	100.0%	
	50-59	N	105	18	123	
		%	85.4%	14.6%	100.0%	
	over 60	N	74	6	80	
		%	92.5%	7.5%	100.0%	
Total		Frequency	580	85	665	
		Age %	87.2%	12.8%	100.0%	

Fig.11. Bar chart of “If I believe ~, I can receive and achieve anything”



### 3.3.4.3 The characteristics of the Korean traditional God (*Hanunim*)

In response to the question, “What do you think is the most representative characteristic of the Korean traditional God?,” the most frequent answer is “God can do anything and is responsible for all events”(45.4%). The answer “God blesses human beings”(22.8%) and “God controls the lives and deaths of human beings”(8.1%) follow. Interestingly, in the ratio of the answer “God can do anything and is responsible for all events,” the metropolis showed the highest level (52.0%) compared to the cities (41.6%) and the rural area (37.2%). On the other hand, in the ratio of the answer “God blesses human beings,” the rural area (29.5%) is higher than the metropolis (22.4%) or cities (21.4%) and reflects, statistically, a meaningful difference ( $p < .01$ ). From these results, one could say that within the minds of parishioners in the KPBC, the major characteristics of the Korean traditional God could be described as “the God who can do anything and is responsible for all events and who blesses human beings.”<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> The understanding of God as “the God who can do anything and is responsible for all events and as well as blesses human beings” can be closely associated with the traditional monotheistic God-images of “the heavenly omnipotent Ruler” and this point will be discussed later.

Table.12. The characteristics of the Korean traditional God (by region)

		metropolis	cities	rural	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
God can do anything and is responsible for all events	N	144	128	29	301	33.812 (.006)**
	%	52.0%	41.6%	37.2%	45.4%	
God knows everything	N	13	19	8	40	
	%	4.7%	6.2%	10.3%	6.0%	
God blesses human beings	N	62	66	23	151	
	%	22.4%	21.4%	29.5%	22.8%	
God answers prayers	N	2	20	5	27	
	%	.7%	6.5%	6.4%	4.1%	
God judges human beings	N	8	10	5	23	
	%	2.9%	3.2%	6.4%	3.5%	
God punishes human beings	N	8	8	2	18	
	%	2.9%	2.6%	2.6%	2.7%	
God controls the lives and deaths of human beings	N	17	33	4	54	
	%	6.1%	10.7%	5.1%	8.1%	
God controls the universe	N	20	19	1	40	
	%	7.2%	6.2%	1.3%	6.0%	
etc.	N	3	5	1	9	
	%	1.1%	1.6%	1.3%	1.4%	
Total	N	277	308	78	663	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*\*p<.01

The results in terms of gender show that in the question, “What do you think is the most representative characteristic of the Korean traditional God?,”the ratio of female parishioners’ who think of the Korean traditional God (47.9%) as “God can do anything and is responsible for all events” is higher than that of the males (39.5%). On the contrary, the ratio of male parishioners who think of the Korean traditional God (28.2%) as “God who blesses human beings” was higher than that of female parishioners (20.5%).

Fig. 12. Bar chart of the characteristics of the Korean traditional God (by region)

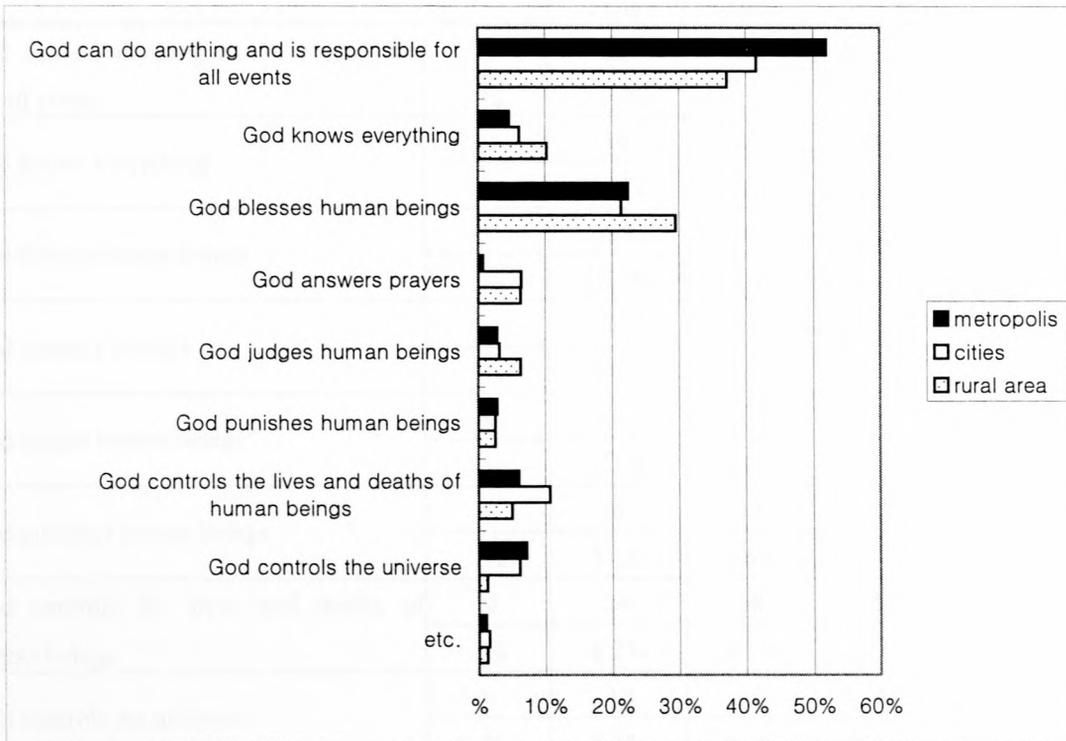


Fig. 13. Bar chart of the characteristics of the Korean traditional God (by gender)

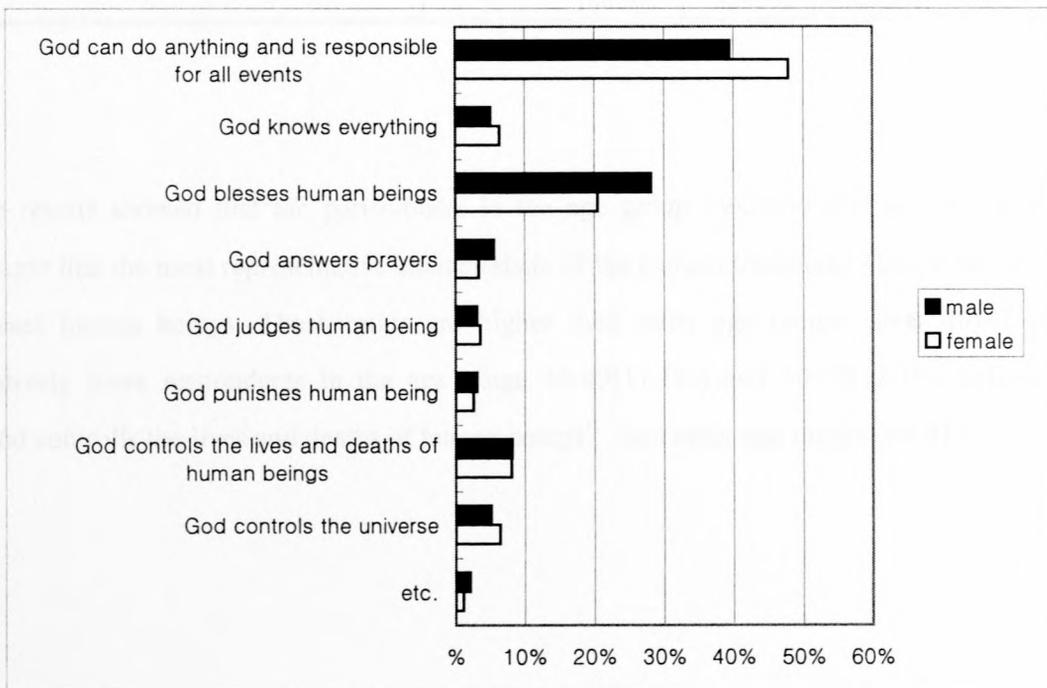


Table 13. The characteristics of the Korean traditional God (by gender)

		male	female	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
God can do anything and is responsible for all events	N	77	224	301	9.359 (.313)
	%	39.5%	47.9%	45.4%	
God knows everything	N	10	30	40	
	%	5.1%	6.4%	6.0%	
God blesses human beings	N	55	96	151	
	%	28.2%	20.5%	22.8%	
God answers prayers	N	11	16	27	
	%	5.6%	3.4%	4.1%	
God judges human beings	N	6	17	23	
	%	3.1%	3.6%	3.5%	
God punishes human beings	N	6	12	18	
	%	3.1%	2.6%	2.7%	
God controls the lives and deaths of human beings	N	16	38	54	
	%	8.2%	8.1%	8.1%	
God controls the universe	N	10	30	40	
	%	5.1%	6.4%	6.0%	
etc.	N	4	5	9	
	%	2.1%	1.1%	1.4%	
Total	N	195	468	663	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

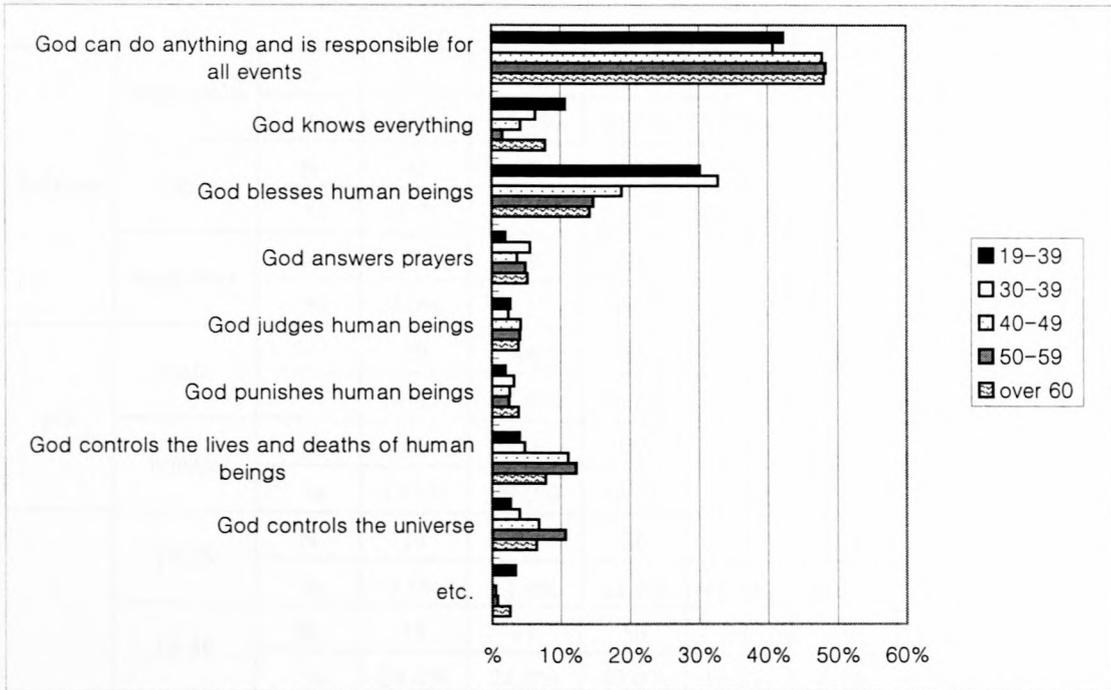
The results showed that the parishioners in the age group 19-29(30.2%) and 30-39(32.8%) thought that the most representative characteristic of the Korean traditional God is the God who blesses human beings. These ratios are higher than other age ranges (over 40). Besides, relatively more respondents in the age range 40-49(11.1%) and 50-59(12.3%) believe that “God controls the lives and deaths of human beings” than other age ranges ( $p < .01$ ).

Table 14. The characteristics of the Korean traditional God (by age)

		19-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	over 60	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
God can do anything and is responsible for all events	N	63	51	91	59	37	301	59.084 (.002)**
	%	42.3%	40.8%	47.9%	48.4%	48.1%	45.4%	
God knows everything	N	16	8	8	2	6	40	
	%	10.7%	6.4%	4.2%	1.6%	7.8%	6.0%	
God blesses human beings	N	45	41	36	18	11	151	
	%	30.2%	32.8%	18.9%	14.8%	14.3%	22.8%	
God answers prayers	N	3	7	7	6	4	27	
	%	2.0%	5.6%	3.7%	4.9%	5.2%	4.1%	
God judges human being	N	4	3	8	5	3	23	
	%	2.7%	2.4%	4.2%	4.1%	3.9%	3.5%	
God punishes human being	N	3	4	5	3	3	18	
	%	2.0%	3.2%	2.6%	2.5%	3.9%	2.7%	
God controls the lives and deaths of human beings	N	6	6	21	15	6	54	
	%	4.0%	4.8%	11.1%	12.3%	7.8%	8.1%	
God controls the universe	N	4	5	13	13	5	40	
	%	2.7%	4.0%	6.8%	10.7%	6.5%	6.0%	
etc.	N	5		1	1	2	9	
	%	3.4%		.5%	.8%	2.6%	1.4%	
Total	N	149	125	190	122	77	663	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*\*p<.01

Fig. 14. Bar chart of the characteristics of the Korean traditional God (by age)



3.3.4.4. How often do you feel that you have committed sins that cannot be forgiven?

Fig. 15. Bar chart of "How often do you feel serious guilt?"

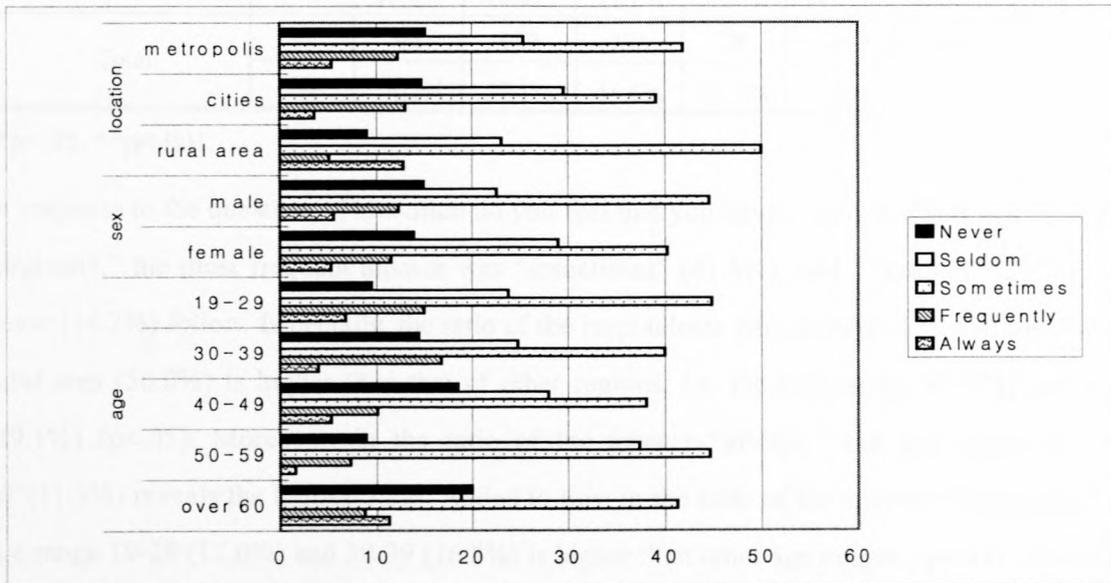


Table 15. “ How often do you feel serious guilt? ”

		Never	Seldom	Sometime	Frequentl	Always	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (D)	
location	Metropolis	N	42	71	117	34	15	279	18.144 (.020)*
		%	15.1%	25.4%	41.9%	12.2%	5.4%	100.0%	
	Cities	N	45	91	120	40	11	307	
		%	14.7%	29.6%	39.1%	13.0%	3.6%	100.0%	
	rural area	N	7	18	39	4	10	78	
		%	9.0%	23.1%	50.0%	5.1%	12.8%	100.0%	
sex	male	N	29	44	87	24	11	195	2.919 (.572)
		%	14.9%	22.6%	44.6%	12.3%	5.6%	100.0%	
	female	N	65	136	189	54	25	469	
		%	13.9%	29.0%	40.3%	11.5%	5.3%	100.0%	
age	19-29	N	14	35	66	22	10	147	34.549 (.005)**
		%	9.5%	23.8%	44.9%	15.0%	6.8%	100.0%	
	30-39	N	18	31	50	21	5	125	
		%	14.4%	24.8%	40.0%	16.8%	4.0%	100.0%	
	40-49	N	35	53	72	19	10	189	
		%	18.5%	28.0%	38.1%	10.1%	5.3%	100.0%	
	50-59	N	11	46	55	9	2	123	
		%	8.9%	37.4%	44.7%	7.3%	1.6%	100.0%	
	over 60	N	16	15	33	7	9	80	
		%	20.0%	18.8%	41.3%	8.8%	11.3%	100.0%	
Total	N	94	180	276	78	36	664		
	%	14.2%	27.1%	41.6%	11.7%	5.4%	100.0%		

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.001

In response to the question, “How often do you feel that you have committed sins that cannot be forgiven?,” the most frequent answer was “sometimes” (41.6%), and “seldom” (27.1%) and never (14.2%) follow. Especially, the ratio of the respondents who answered “sometimes” in the rural area (50.0%) is higher than that of other regions, i.e. the metropolis (41.9%) and cities (39.1%) (p<.05). Moreover, in the ratio of the answer “always,” the age range of “over 60”(11.3%) reveals the highest ratio. Added to this, in the ratio of the answer “ frequently,” the age range 19-29 (15.0%) and 30-39 (16.8%) is higher than other age ranges ( p<.01). Therefore, we notice that the parishioners in the rural area and in the older age group (over 60) feel relatively more guilt towards God.

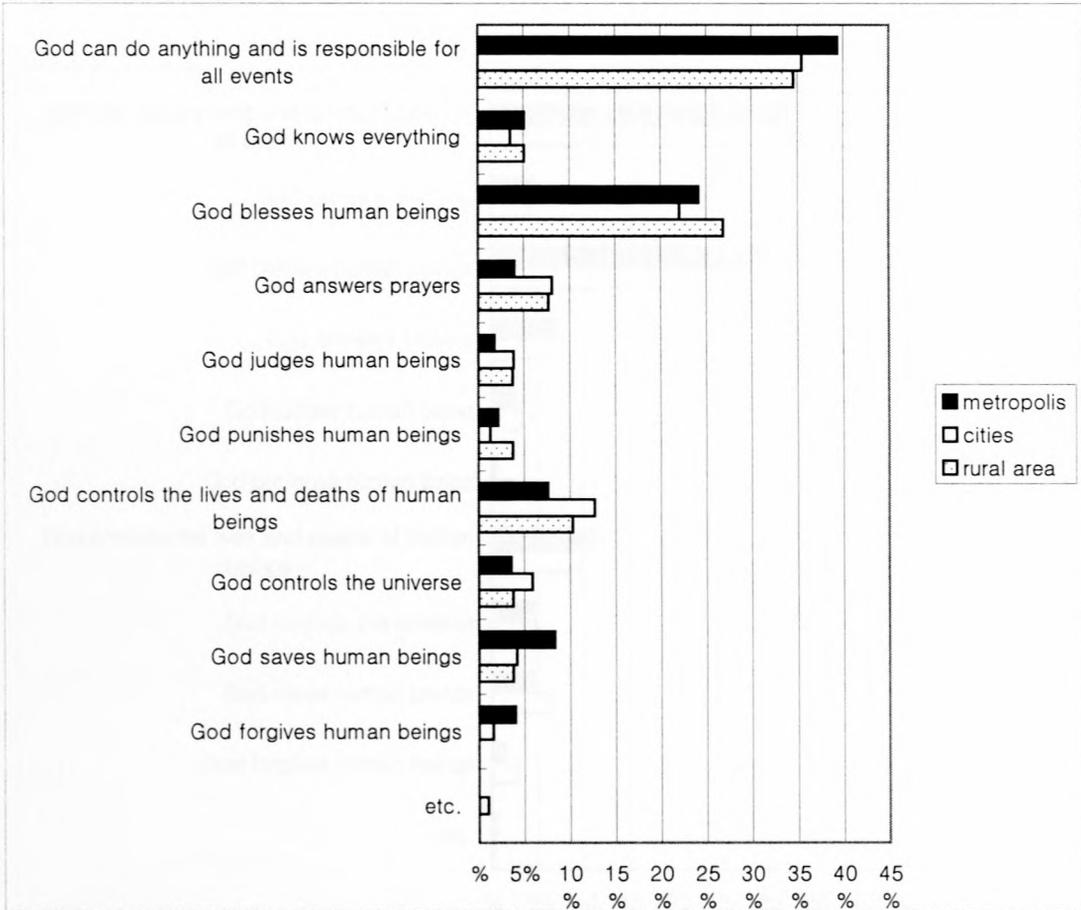
### 3.3.4.5 The correspondence between the traditional God (*Hanunim*) and the Christian God

Table 16. The correspondence between the traditional God<sup>38</sup> and Christian God  
(by region)

		metropolis	cities	rural area	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
God can do anything and is responsible for all events	N	109	109	27	245	30.021 (.070)
	%	39.4%	35.5%	34.6%	37.0%	
God knows everything	N	14	11	4	29	
	%	5.1%	3.6%	5.1%	4.4%	
God blesses human beings	N	67	68	21	156	
	%	24.2%	22.1%	26.9%	23.6%	
God answers prayers	N	11	25	6	42	
	%	4.0%	8.1%	7.7%	6.3%	
God judges human beings	N	5	12	3	20	
	%	1.8%	3.9%	3.8%	3.0%	
God punishes human beings	N	6	4	3	13	
	%	2.2%	1.3%	3.8%	2.0%	
God controls the lives and deaths of human beings	N	21	39	8	68	
	%	7.6%	12.7%	10.3%	10.3%	
God controls the universe	N	10	18	3	31	
	%	3.6%	5.9%	3.8%	4.7%	
God saves human beings	N	23	13	3	39	
	%	8.3%	4.2%	3.8%	5.9%	
God forgives human beings	N	11	5		16	
	N	4.0%	1.6%		2.4%	
etc.	%		3		3	
	N		1.0%		.5%	
Total	%	277	307	78	662	
	N	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

<sup>38</sup> As argued previously, due to the impact of the KTR, before the introduction of Christianity, Korean have always and mainly used the monotheistic God term, *Hanunim*. Therefore, as we confirmed in this empirical research, all parishioners seemed to easily understand the term “the traditional God” in association with the concept of this monotheistic God, *Hanunim*. (In fact, within the questionnaire in the Korean survey form, the researcher adopted the term *Hanunim* in order to designate the Korean traditional God).

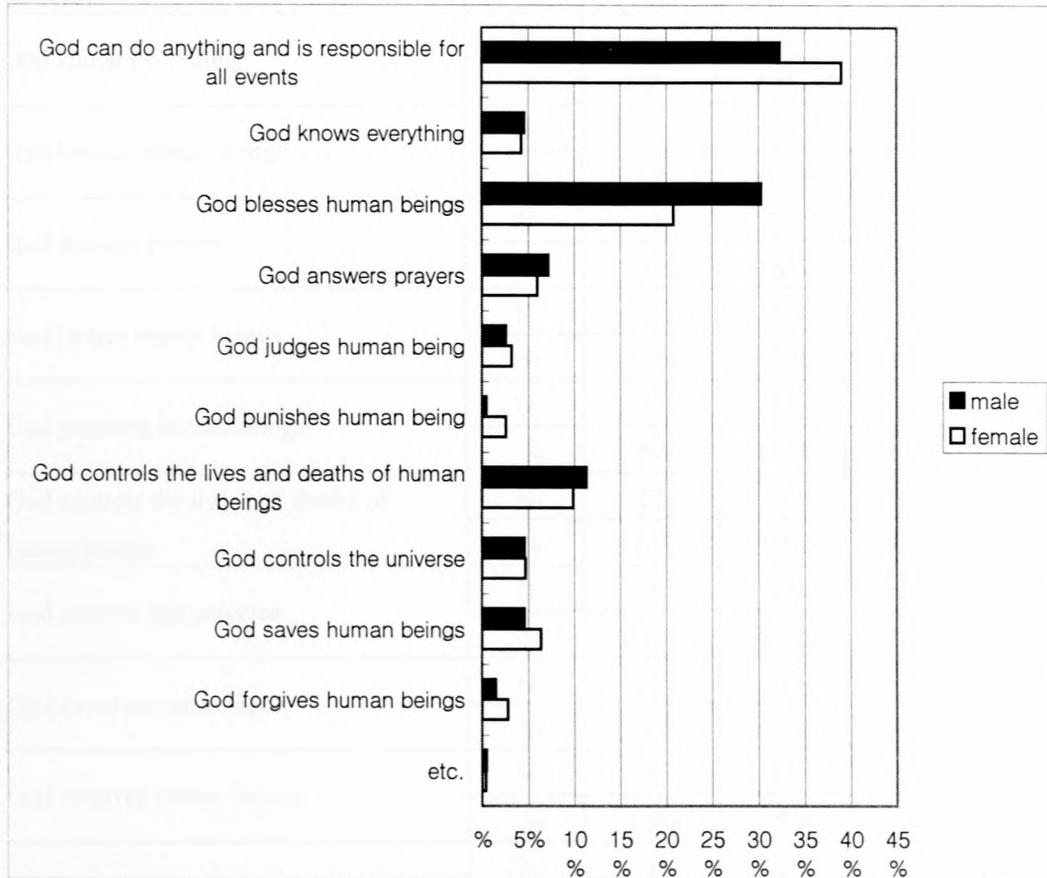
Fig.16. Bar chart of the correspondence between the traditional and Christian God  
(by region)



In response to the statement, "Please choose one item that, in your opinion, is similar in the Korean traditional God and the Christian God," the most frequent answer is "God can do anything and is responsible for all events" (37.0%). The answer "God blesses human beings" (23.6%) and "God controls the lives and deaths of human beings" (10.3%) follow. However, statistically, there is no meaningful difference according to the regional factor.

Fig.17. Bar chart of the correspondence between the traditional and Christian God

(by gender)



In response to the statement, “Please choose one item that, in your opinion, is similar in the Korean traditional God and the Christian God, males(30.3%) thought that God blesses human beings than that of females(20.8%). Moreover, the females’ ratio(39.0%) of the answer is a little higher than that of the male’s. However, these differences were not statistically meaningful.

Table 17. The correspondence between the traditional and Christian God (by gender)

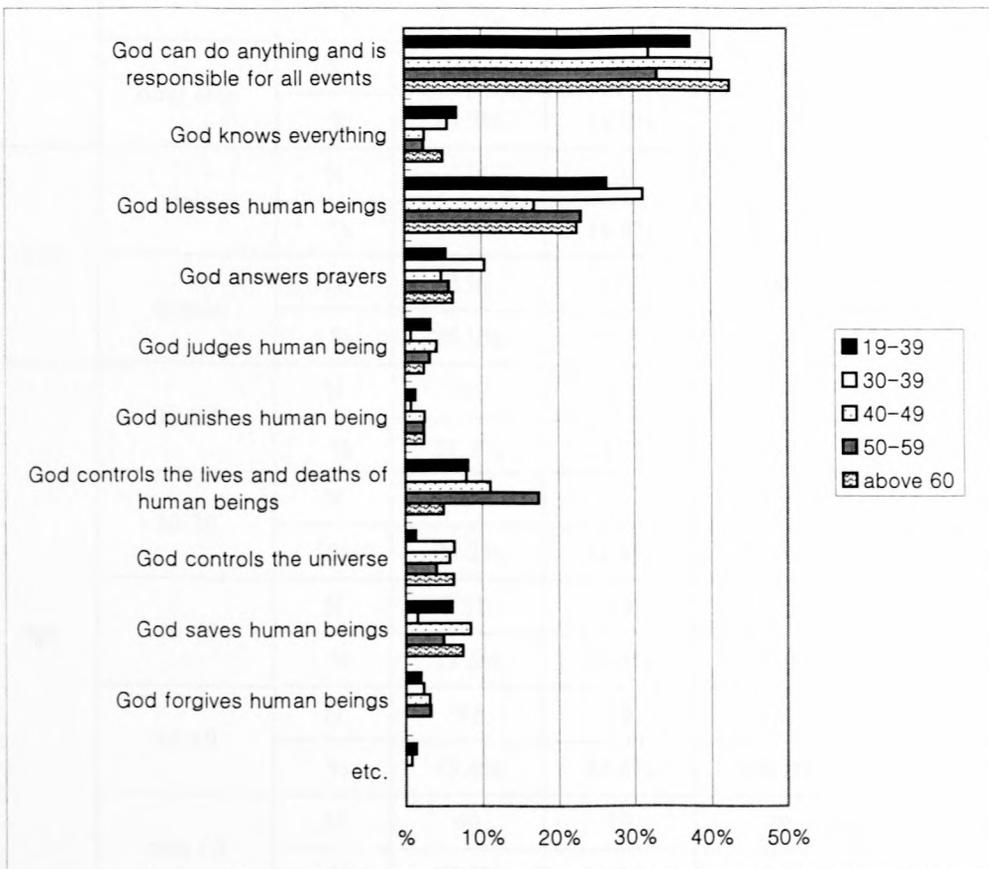
		male	female	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (b)
God can do anything and is responsible for all events	N	63	182	245	12.342 (.263)
	%	32.3%	39.0%	37.0%	
God knows everything	N	9	20	29	
	%	4.6%	4.3%	4.4%	
God blesses human beings	N	59	97	156	
	%	30.3%	20.8%	23.6%	
God answers prayers	N	14	28	42	
	%	7.2%	6.0%	6.3%	
God judges human beings	N	5	15	20	
	%	2.6%	3.2%	3.0%	
God punishes human beings	N	1	12	13	
	%	.5%	2.6%	2.0%	
God controls the lives and deaths of human beings	N	22	46	68	
	%	11.3%	9.9%	10.3%	
God controls the universe	N	9	22	31	
	%	4.6%	4.7%	4.7%	
God saves human beings	N	9	30	39	
	%	4.6%	6.4%	5.9%	
God forgives human beings	N	3	13	16	
	%	1.5%	2.8%	2.4%	
etc.	N	1	2	3	
	%	.5%	.4%	.5%	
Total	N	195	467	662	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 18. The correspondence between the traditional and Christian God (by age)

		19-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	above 60	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
God can do anything and is responsible for all events	N	55	40	76	40	34	245	52.703 (.086)
	%	37.4%	32.0%	40.2%	33.1%	42.5%	37.0%	
God knows everything	N	10	7	5	3	4	29	
	%	6.8%	5.6%	2.6%	2.5%	5.0%	4.4%	
God blesses human beings	N	39	39	32	28	18	156	
	%	26.5%	31.2%	16.9%	23.1%	22.5%	23.6%	
God answers prayers	N	8	13	9	7	5	42	
	%	5.4%	10.4%	4.8%	5.8%	6.3%	6.3%	
God judges human being	N	5	1	8	4	2	20	
	%	3.4%	.8%	4.2%	3.3%	2.5%	3.0%	
God punishes human being	N	2	1	5	3	2	13	
	%	1.4%	.8%	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%	2.0%	
God controls the lives and deaths of human beings	N	12	10	21	21	4	68	
	%	8.2%	8.0%	11.1%	17.4%	5.0%	10.3%	
God controls the universe	N	2	8	11	5	5	31	
	%	1.4%	6.4%	5.8%	4.1%	6.3%	4.7%	
God saves human beings	N	9	2	16	6	6	39	
	%	6.1%	1.6%	8.5%	5.0%	7.5%	5.9%	
God forgives human beings	N	3	3	6	4	-	16	
	%	2.0%	2.4%	3.2%	3.3%	0.0%	2.4%	
etc.	N	2	1	-	-	-	3	
	%	1.4%	.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	.5%	
Total	N	147	125	189	121	80	662	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

In response to the statement, “Please choose one item that, in your opinion, is similar in the Korean traditional God and the Christian God”, regarding the ratio of the answer, “God can do anything and is responsible for all events,” the age range above 60 (42.5%) is a little higher than other age ranges. However, these differences were not statistically meaningful.

Fig. 18. Bar chart of the correspondence between the traditional and Christian God (by age)



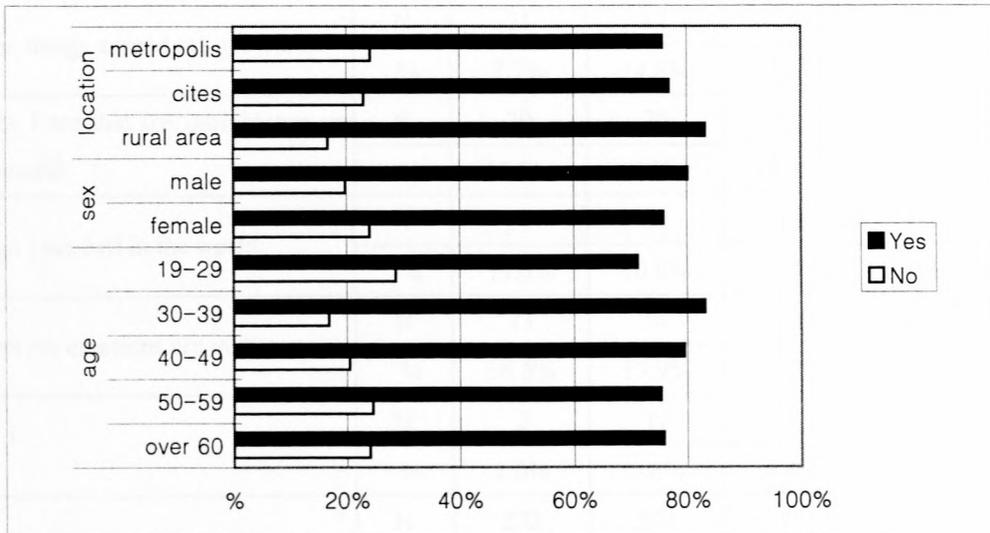
**3.3.4.6 We hardly experience the miraculous power of God due to our poor faith.**

Table 19. "We hardly experience God's miraculous power due to poor faith"

			Yes	No	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
location	metropolis	N	212	68	280	2.028 (.363)
		%	75.7%	24.3%	100.0%	
	cities	N	237	71	308	
		%	76.9%	23.1%	100.0%	
	rural area	N	65	13	78	
		%	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%	
sex	male	N	158	39	197	1.454 (.228)
		%	80.2%	19.8%	100.0%	
	female	N	356	113	469	
		%	75.9%	24.1%	100.0%	
age	19-29	N	107	43	150	6.335 (.175)
		%	71.3%	28.7%	100.0%	
	30-39	N	104	21	125	
		%	83.2%	16.8%	100.0%	
	40-49	N	151	39	190	
		%	79.5%	20.5%	100.0%	
	50-59	N	92	30	122	
		%	75.4%	24.6%	100.0%	
	over 60	N	60	19	79	
		%	75.9%	24.1%	100.0%	
Total		N	514	152	666	
		%	77.2%	22.8%	100.0%	

In response to the statement “ We hardly experience God’s miraculous power due to poor faith,” the majority of respondents (77.2%) said “Yes” while 24.1% of the respondents disagreed with this statement. In addition, there is no meaningful difference according to the region, age and sex. As a whole, these results reveal that parishioners in the KPBC reflect a prominent tendency of the miracle-oriented faith.

Fig. 19. Bar chart of “We hardly experience God’s miraculous power, due to ~”



**3.3.4.7 When do you feel that God is distant, rather than compassionate?**

Table 20. “When do you feel that God is distant?”(by region)

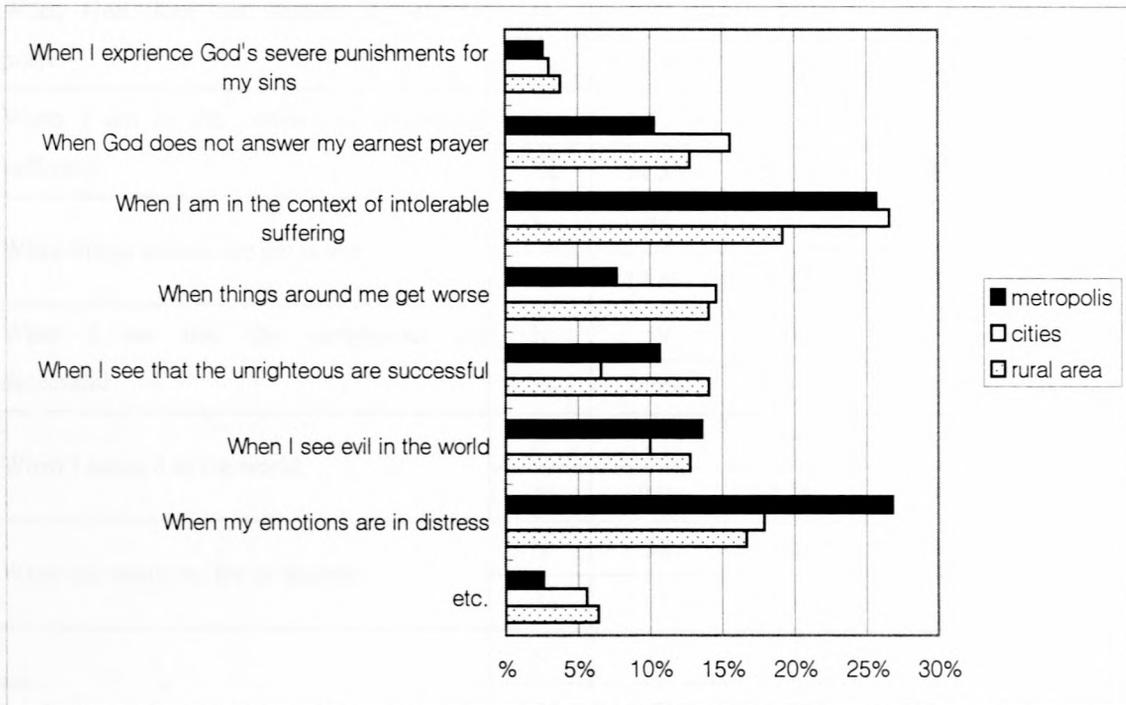
		metropolis	city	rural	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
When I experience God's severe punishments for my sins	N	7	9	3	19	27.551 (.016)*
	%	2.6%	3.0%	3.8%	2.9%	
When God does not answer my earnest prayer	N	28	47	10	85	
	%	10.3%	15.6%	12.8%	13.1%	
When I am in the context of intolerable suffering	N	70	80	15	165	
	%	25.7%	26.6%	19.2%	25.3%	
When things around me get worse	N	21	44	11	76	
	%	7.7%	14.6%	14.1%	11.7%	
When I see that the unrighteous are successful	N	29	20	11	60	
	%	10.7%	6.6%	14.1%	9.2%	
When I see evil in the world	N	37	30	10	77	
	%	13.6%	10.0%	12.8%	11.8%	
When my emotions are in distress	N	73	54	13	140	
	%	26.8%	17.9%	16.7%	21.5%	
etc.	N	7	17	5	29	
	%	2.6%	5.6%	6.4%	4.5%	
Total	N	272	301	78	651	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*p<.05

In response to the question, “When do you feel that God is distant, rather than compassionate?,” the most frequent answer was “When I am in the context of intolerable suffering”(25.3%). “When my emotions are in a distress”(21.5%) and “ When God does not answer my earnest prayer”(13.1%) follow. In particular, in the ratio of the answer, “When I am in the context of intolerable suffering”, the metropolis (25.7%) and the cities (26.6%) are higher than the rural area (19.2%) (p<.05). Additionally, in the ratio of the answer “When my emotions are in a distress,” the metropolis (26.8%) is higher than cities (17.9%) or the rural area (16.7%). All

these differences were statistically meaningful ( $p < .05$ ).

Fig. 20. Bar chart of “When do you feel that God is distant ?”(by region)



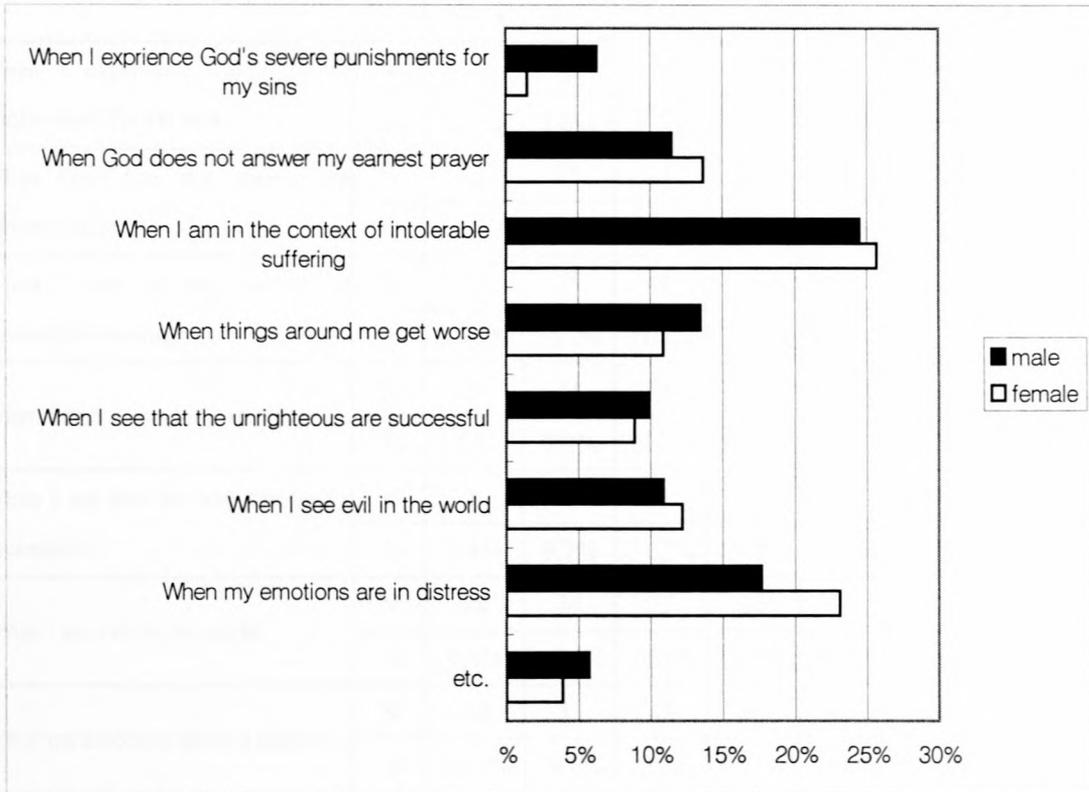
In the results in terms of sex, the ratio of female respondents who answered, “When my emotions are in distress”(23.1%) is higher than male respondents (17.7%). On the other hand, the ratio of male respondents who answered “When I experience God's severe punishments for my sins”(6.3%) is higher than female respondents (1.5%) ( $p < .05$ ).

Table 21. "When do you feel that God is distant?" (by gender)

		male	female	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
When I experience God's severe punishments for my sins	N	12	7	19	14.919 (.037)*
	%	6.3%	1.5%	2.9%	
When God does not answer my earnest prayer	N	22	63	85	
	%	11.5%	13.7%	13.1%	
When I am in the context of intolerable suffering	N	47	118	165	
	%	24.5%	25.7%	25.3%	
When things around me get worse	N	26	50	76	
	%	13.5%	10.9%	11.7%	
When I see that the unrighteous are successful	N	19	41	60	
	%	9.9%	8.9%	9.2%	
When I see evil in the world	N	21	56	77	
	%	10.9%	12.2%	11.8%	
When my emotions are in distress	N	34	106	140	
	%	17.7%	23.1%	21.5%	
etc.	N	11	18	29	
	%	5.7%	3.9%	4.5%	
Total	N	192	459	651	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*p<.05

Fig. 21. Bar chart of “When do you feel that God is distant?” (by gender)



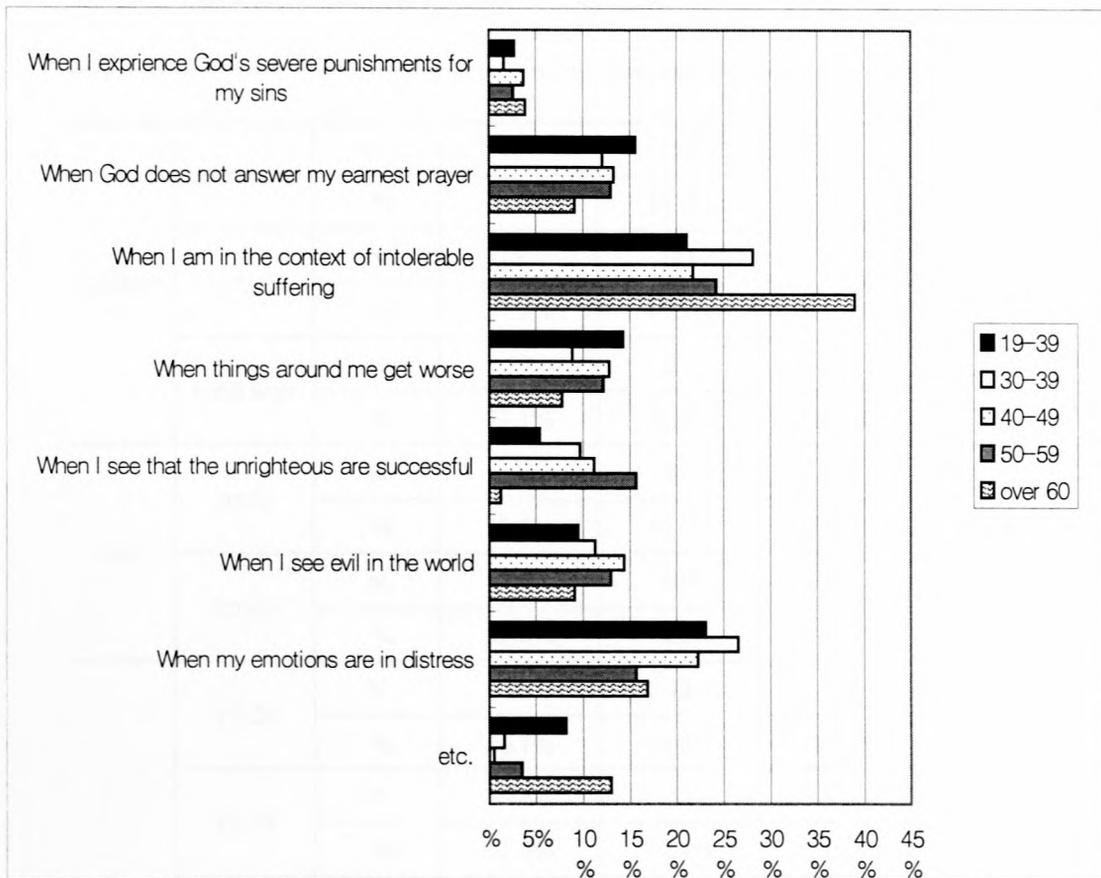
In the results according to age, the ratio of the age group “over 60” who answered “When I am in the context of intolerable suffering” (39.0%) is the highest among all age groups. In the answer “When my emotions are in distress,” the age groups of 19-29(23.1%), 30-39(26.6%) and 40-49(23.3%) showed higher response ratio than other age groups and these are statistically meaningful differences ( $p < .001$ ). In brief, all the above results in terms of the question, “When do you feel that God is distant, rather than compassionate?” indicate that the parishioners in KPBC seriously feel that God is a distant Being, especially when they are in the context of severe suffering or when their emotions are in distress or when God does not seem to answer their prayers.

Table 22. "When do you feel that God is distant ?"(by age)

		19-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	above	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
When I experience God's severe punishments for my sins	N	4	2	7	3	3	19	60.475 (.000)***
	%	2.7%	1.6%	3.7%	2.6%	3.9%	2.9%	
When God does not answer my earnest prayer	N	23	15	25	15	7	85	
	%	15.6%	12.1%	13.3%	13.0%	9.1%	13.1%	
When I am in the context of intolerable suffering	N	31	35	41	28	30	165	
	%	21.1%	28.2%	21.8%	24.3%	39.0%	25.3%	
When things around me get worse	N	21	11	24	14	6	76	
	%	14.3%	8.9%	12.8%	12.2%	7.8%	11.7%	
When I see that the unrighteous are successful	N	8	12	21	18	1	60	
	%	5.4%	9.7%	11.2%	15.7%	1.3%	9.2%	
When I see evil in the world	N	14	14	27	15	7	77	
	%	9.5%	11.3%	14.4%	13.0%	9.1%	11.8%	
When my emotions are in a distress	N	34	33	42	18	13	140	
	%	23.1%	26.6%	22.3%	15.7%	16.9%	21.5%	
etc.	N	12	2	1	4	10	29	
	%	8.2%	1.6%	.5%	3.5%	13.0%	4.5%	
Total	N	147	124	188	115	77	651	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*\*\*p<.001

Fig. 22. Bar chart of “When do you feel that God is distant ?”(by age)



### 3.3.4.8 Suffering is related to God’s punishment for my sins

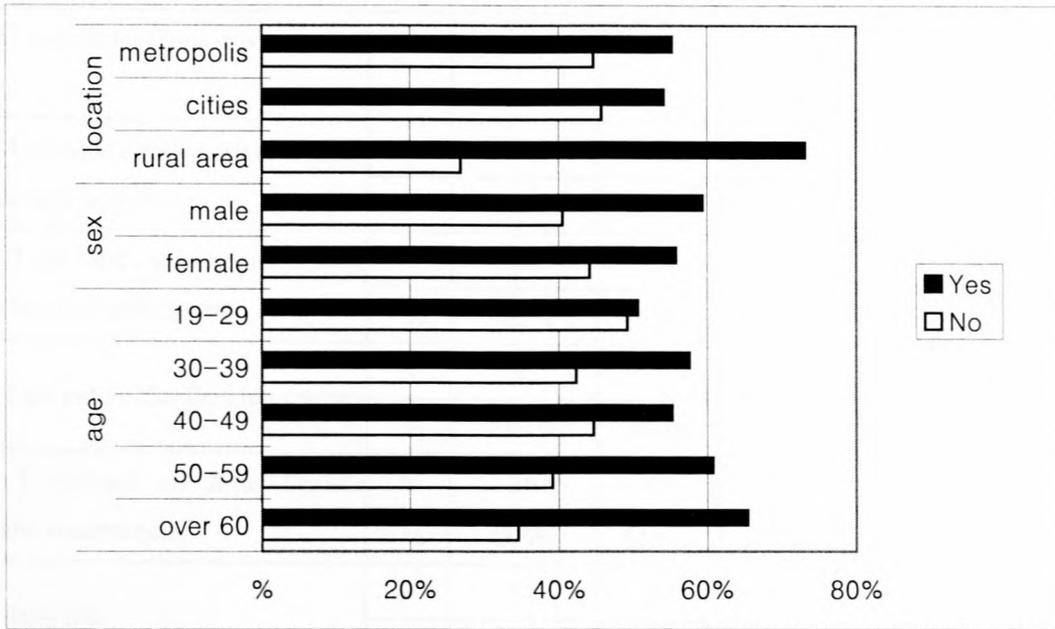
In response to the statement, “Suffering that I have experienced is related to God’s punishment for my sins,” the ratio of respondents who said “Yes” (56.9%) is higher than that of the negative respondents (43.1%). In particular, the ratio of the respondents of the rural area who answered “Yes”(73.1%) is far higher than that of the metropolis (55.3%) or cities (54.2%) and show a statistically meaningful difference(  $p < .01$ ). On the other hand, there are no statistical differences according to the age and sex variation. By and large, all these results reveal that parishioners in KPBC show a noticeable tendency to think of suffering as the result of God’s punishment for their sins. Especially, the parishioners in the rural area seem to be more oriented to this idea.

Table 23. “Suffering is related to God’s punishment for my sins”

			Yes	No	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
location	metropolis	N	151	122	273	9.506 (.009)**
		%	55.3%	44.7%	100.0%	
	citie	N	167	141	308	
		%	54.2%	45.8%	100.0%	
	rural area	N	57	21	78	
		%	73.1%	26.9%	100.0%	
sex	male	N	117	80	197	.708 (.400)
		%	59.4%	40.6%	100.0%	
	female	N	258	204	462	
		%	55.8%	44.2%	100.0%	
age	19-29	N	75	73	148	5.601 (.231)
		%	50.7%	49.3%	100.0%	
	30-39	N	72	53	125	
		%	57.6%	42.4%	100.0%	
	40-49	N	104	84	188	
		%	55.3%	44.7%	100.0%	
	50-59	N	73	47	120	
		%	60.8%	39.2%	100.0%	
	over 60	N	51	27	78	
		%	65.4%	34.6%	100.0%	
Total		N	375	284	659	
		%	56.9%	43.1%	100.0%	

\*\*p<.01

Fig. 23. Bar chart of “Suffering is related to God’s punishment for my sins.”



### 3.3.4.9 When are you aware of the omnipotence (*chunneung*) of God?

In response to the question, “When are you aware of the omnipotence of God?,” the most frequent answer is “In my daily life” (25.6%). “When I see nature that God has created”(23.0%) and “When I experience God's answer to my prayers”(21.7%) follow. However, in the response ratio of the parishioners who think the almightiness of God could be directly related to his power of answering prayer or healing incurable diseases, which may include three answers, “When I experience God's answer to my prayers,” “When I see God's answer to other’s prayers” and “when I see God’s miraculous healing power,” the rural area (58%) is far the higher than that of the metropolis (33.1%) or cities (33.3%) ( $p < .001$ ). On the contrary, in the response ratio of the answer to “In my daily life”, the rural area (11.5%) is lower than that of the metropolis (29.5%) or the cities (25.6%) ( $p < .001$ ).

Table. 24. "When are you aware of the omnipotence of God?" (by region)

		metropolis	cities	rural area	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
When I experience God's answer to my prayers	N	63	60	21	144	45.614 (.000)***
	%	22.7%	19.4%	26.9%	21.7%	
When I see God's great answer to other parishioner's prayers	N	17	21	6	44	
	%	6.1%	6.8%	7.7%	6.6%	
When I see God's miraculous healing power for incurable disease	N	12	22	19	53	
	%	4.3%	7.1%	24.4%	8.0%	
When I see nature that God has created	N	65	76	12	153	
	%	23.4%	24.6%	15.4%	23.0%	
When I meditate on Jesus Christ's death and resurrection	N	36	45	11	92	
	%	12.9%	14.6%	14.1%	13.8%	
In my daily life	N	82	79	9	170	
	%	29.5%	25.6%	11.5%	25.6%	
etc.	N	3	6		9	
	%	1.1%	1.9%		1.4%	
Total	N	278	309	78	665	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*\*\*p<.001

Fig. 24. Bar chart of “When are you aware of the omnipotence of God?” (by region)

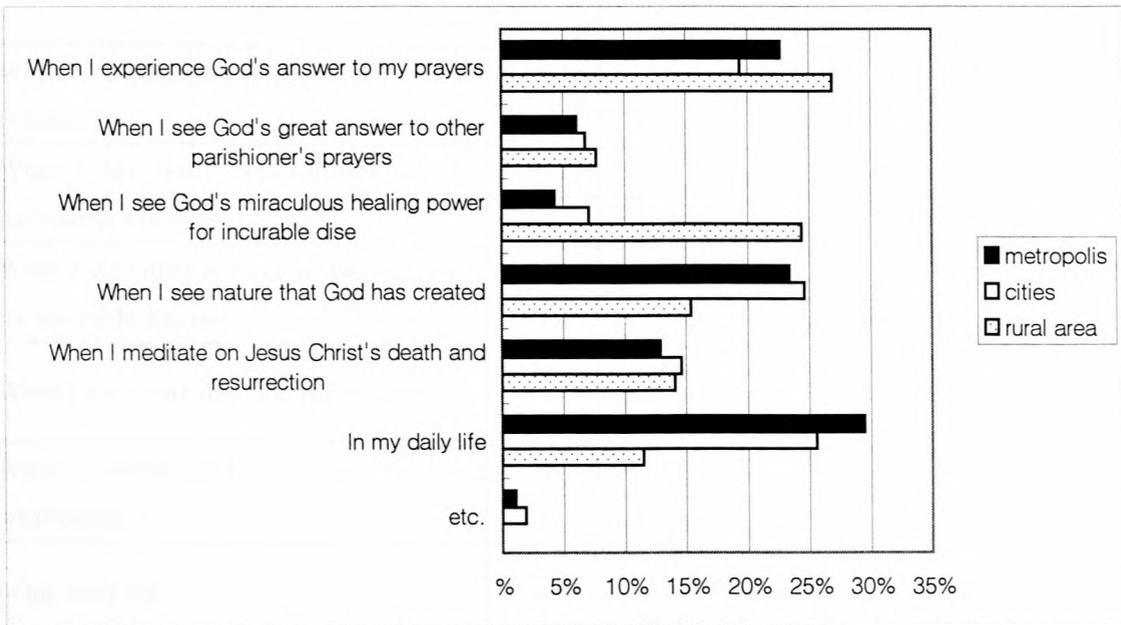


Fig. 25. Bar chart of “When are you aware of the omnipotence of God?” (by gender)

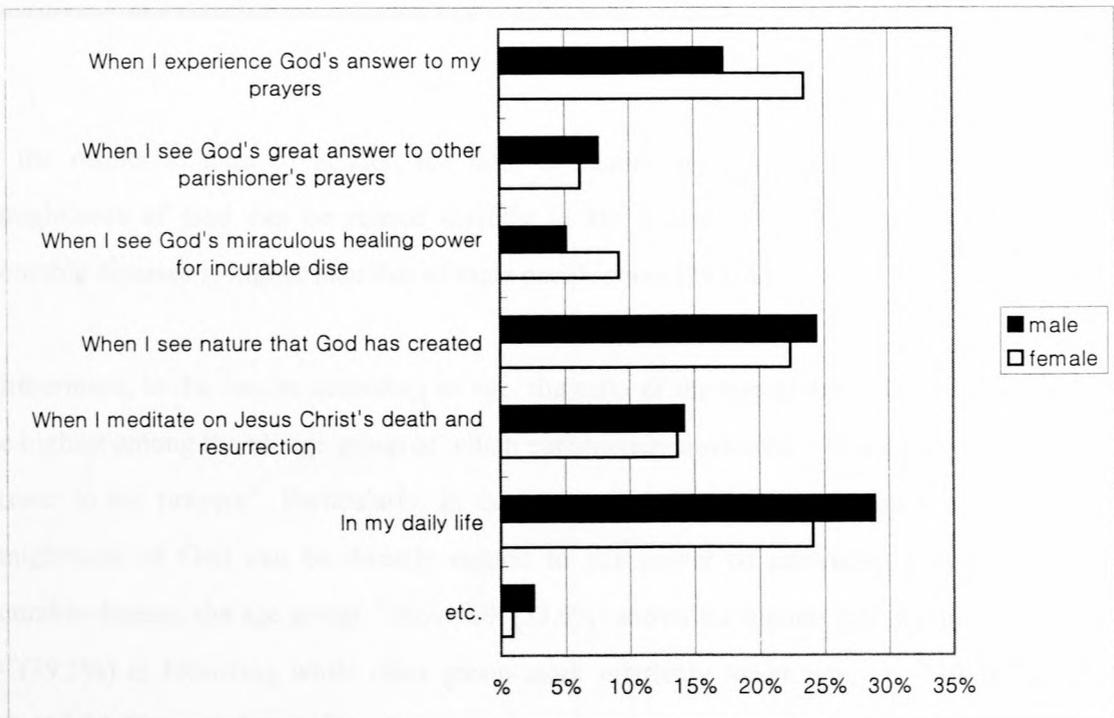


Table 25. "When are you aware of the omnipotence of God?" (by gender)

		male	female	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
When I experience God's answer to my prayers	N	34	110	144	10.259 (.114)
	%	17.3%	23.5%	21.7%	
When I see God's great answer to other parishioner's prayers	N	15	29	44	
	%	7.6%	6.2%	6.6%	
When I see God's miraculous healing power for incurable disease	N	10	43	53	
	%	5.1%	9.2%	8.0%	
When I see nature that God has created	N	48	105	153	
	%	24.4%	22.4%	23.0%	
When I meditate on Jesus Christ's death and resurrection	N	28	64	92	
	%	14.2%	13.7%	13.8%	
In my daily life	N	57	113	170	
	%	28.9%	24.1%	25.6%	
etc.	N	5	4	9	
	%	2.5%	.9%	1.4%	
Total	N	197	468	665	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

In the results in term of gender, the ratio of female respondents (38.9%) who think the almightiness of God can be related directly to His power of answering prayer or healing incurable diseases is higher than that of male parishioners (29.0%)

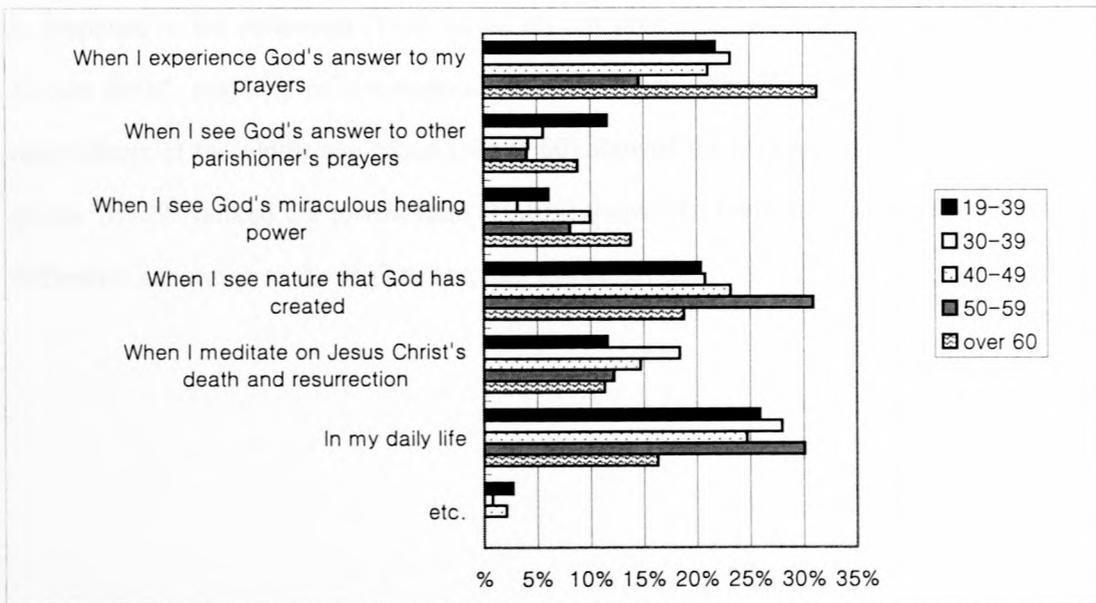
Furthermore, in the results according to age, the ratio of the age group "above 60"(31.3%) is the highest among the all age group of which parishioners answered "When I experience God's answer to my prayers". Particularly, in the response ratio of the parishioners who think the almightiness of God can be directly related to His power of answering prayer or healing incurable disease, the age group "above 60"(53.9%) shows the highest rate and the group "19-29"(39.5%) is following while other group mark relatively lower rate, i.e, "30-39"(32.0%), "40-49"(35.2%) and "50-59"(26.8%) (p<.05).

Table 26. "When are you aware of the omnipotence of God?" (by age)

		19-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	above	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
When I experience God's answer to my prayers	N	32	29	40	18	25	144	41.687 (.014)*
	%	21.8%	23.2%	21.1%	14.6%	31.3%	21.7%	
When I see God's great answer to other parishioners' prayers	N	17	7	8	5	7	44	
	%	11.6%	5.6%	4.2%	4.1%	8.8%	6.6%	
When I see God's miraculous healing power for incurable disease	N	9	4	19	10	11	53	
	%	6.1%	3.2%	10.0%	8.1%	13.8%	8.0%	
When I see nature that God has created	N	30	26	44	38	15	153	
	%	20.4%	20.8%	23.2%	30.9%	18.8%	23.0%	
When I meditate on Jesus Christ's death and resurrection	N	17	23	28	15	9	92	
	%	11.6%	18.4%	14.7%	12.2%	11.3%	13.8%	
In my daily life	N	38	35	47	37	13	170	
	%	25.9%	28.0%	24.7%	30.1%	16.3%	25.6%	
etc.	N	4	1	4			9	
	%	2.7%	.8%	2.1%			1.4%	
Total	N	147	125	190	123	80	665	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

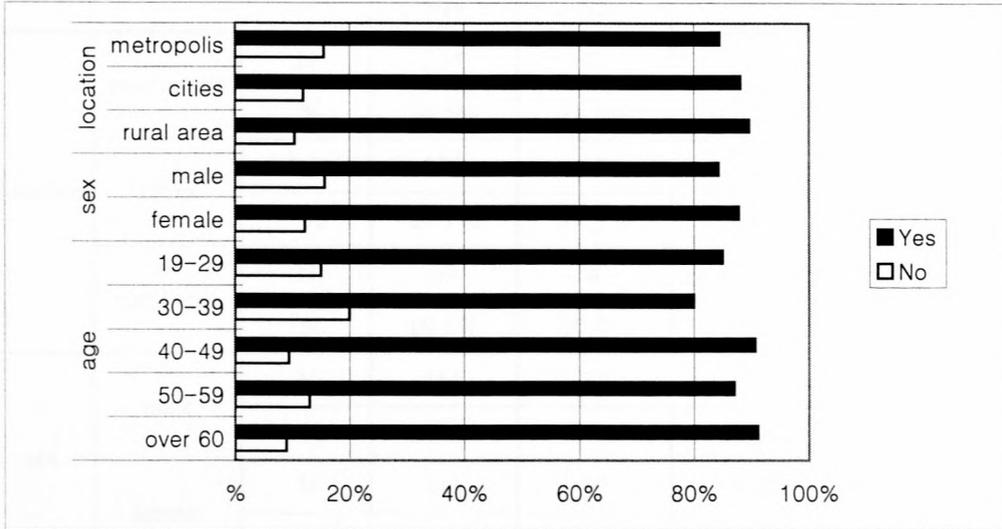
\*p<.05

Fig. 26. Bar chart of "When are you aware of the omnipotence of God (by age)"



### 3.3.4.10 God solves all our problems and heals our suffering

Fig. 27. Bar chart of “God solves all our problem and heals our suffering”



In response to the statement “God solves all our problems and heals our suffering if we have sincere faith”, majority of the respondents said, “Yes” (86.8%). Particularly, the ratio of the respondents of the oldest age group (above 60) showed the highest ratio (91.1%) while the age group “30-39” ranked the lowest ratio (80.0%). However, there was no statistically meaningful difference according to the region, sex, and age variation.

Table 27. "God solves all our problems and heals our suffering"

			Yes	No	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
location	metropolis	N	235	43	278	2.206 (.332)
		%	84.5%	15.5%	100.0%	
	cities	N	273	37	310	
		%	88.1%	11.9%	100.0%	
	rural area	N	69	8	77	
		%	89.6%	10.4%	100.0%	
sex	male	N	166	31	197	1.527 (.217)
		%	84.3%	15.7%	100.0%	
	female	N	411	57	468	
		%	87.8%	12.2%	100.0%	
age	19-29	N	125	22	147	9.104 (.059)
		%	85.0%	15.0%	100.0%	
	30-39	N	100	25	125	
		%	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%	
	40-49	N	173	18	191	
		%	90.6%	9.4%	100.0%	
	50-59	N	107	16	123	
		%	87.0%	13.0%	100.0%	
	over 60	N	72	7	79	
		%	91.1%	8.9%	100.0%	
Total		N	577	88	665	
		%	86.8%	13.2%	100.0%	

### 3.3.4.11 How often do you feel that God is distant?

Table 28. "How often do you feel that God is distant? "

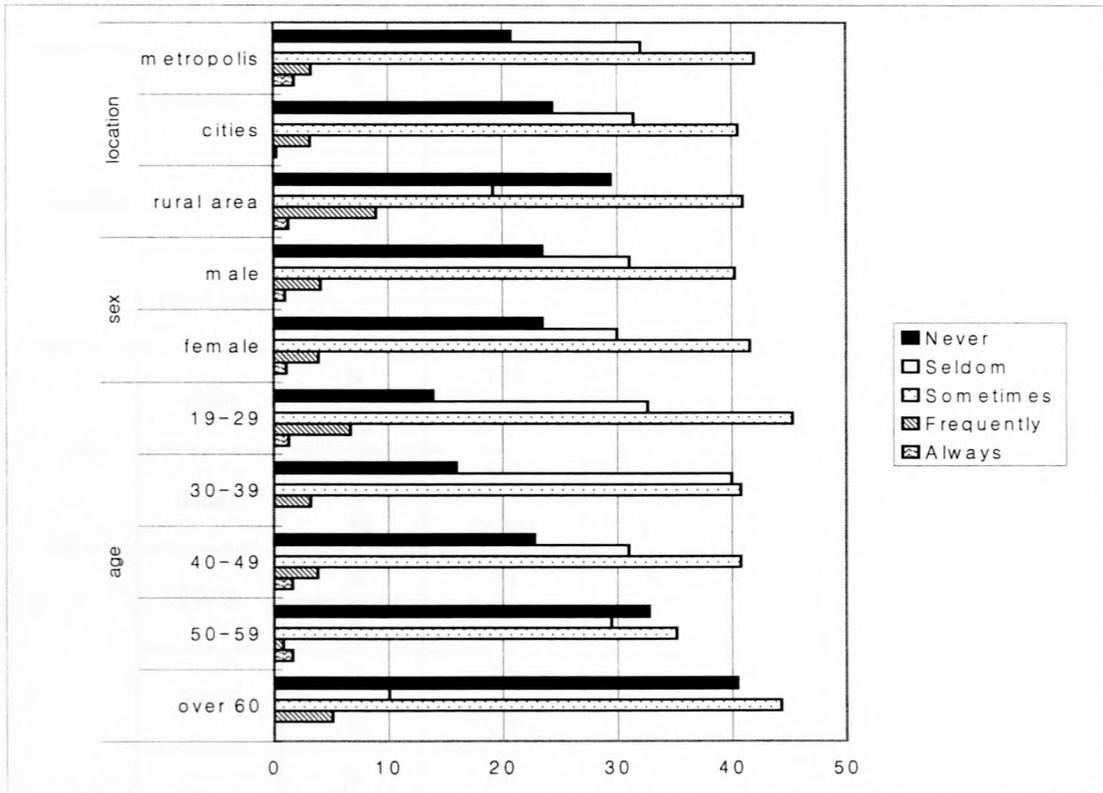
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequentl	Always	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)	
location	metropolis	N	57	88	115	9	5	274	14.610 (.067)
		%	20.8%	32.1%	42.0%	3.3%	1.8%	100.0%	
	cities	N	75	97	125	10	1	308	
		%	24.4%	31.5%	40.6%	3.2%	.3%	100.0%	
	rural area	N	23	15	32	7	1	78	
		%	29.5%	19.2%	41.0%	9.0%	1.3%	100.0%	
sex	male	N	46	61	79	8	2	196	.136 (.998)
		%	23.5%	31.1%	40.3%	4.1%	1.0%	100.0%	
	female	N	109	139	193	18	5	464	
		%	23.5%	30.0%	41.6%	3.9%	1.1%	100.0%	
age	19-29	N	21	49	68	10	2	150	49.193 (.000)***
		%	14.0%	32.7%	45.3%	6.7%	1.3%	100.0%	
	30-39	N	20	50	51	4	-	125	
		%	16.0%	40.0%	40.8%	3.2%	0.0%	100.0%	
	40-49	N	42	57	75	7	3	184	
		%	22.8%	31.0%	40.8%	3.8%	1.6%	100.0%	
	50-59	N	40	36	43	1	2	122	
		%	32.8%	29.5%	35.2%	.8%	1.6%	100.0%	
over 60	N	32	8	35	4	-	79		
	%	40.5%	10.1%	44.3%	5.1%	0.0%	100.0%		
Total	N	155	200	272	26	7	660		
	%	23.5%	30.3%	41.2%	3.9%	1.1%	100.0%		

\*\*\*p<.001

In response to the question, "How often do you feel that God is distant, rather than compassionate?," the most frequent answer is "sometimes" (41.2%). "Seldom" (30.31%), and "never" (23.5%) follow. Especially, the ratio of the respondents who answered "never" in the age group "19-29"(14.0%) and "30-39"(16.0%) reveal relatively low ratios while the age group "50-59"(32.8%) and "over 60"(40.5%) show relatively high ratios. Thus, it seems that

relatively younger parishioners in KPBC exhibits a greater tendency to understand God as a distant Being ( $p < .001$ ).

Fig. 28. Bar chart of “How often do you feel that God is distant? ”



### 3.3.4.12 God guarantees our wealth, health and success

In response to the statement, “God is the almighty Being who guarantees our wealth, health and success.” the ratio of parishioners (74.7%) who responded positively is far higher than that of the parishioners who said “No.” In particular, the answering ratio of the female (76.9%) respondents reflects a higher ratio than that of the males (69.4%) ( $p < .05$ ). What is more, the older age group “50-59” (80.5%) and “over 60” (89.7%) reveal higher positive answering ratios than that of the younger age group “19-29” (64.4%) and “30-39” (70.2%). ( $p < .001$ ). From these

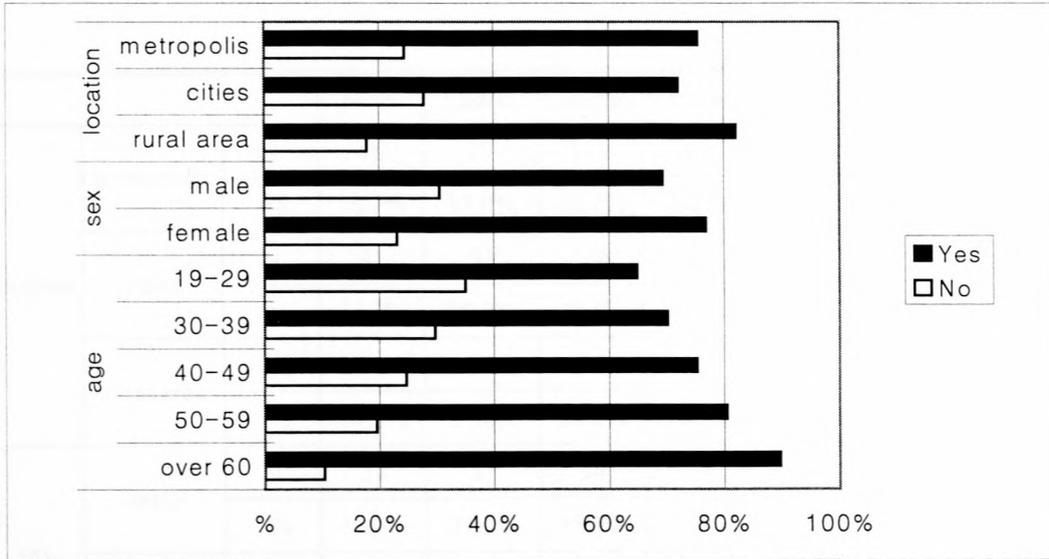
results, we notice that female and older parishioners in the KPBC reflect a stronger tendency to believe God as the Being who guarantees our wealth, health and success.

Table 29. God guarantees our wealth, health and success

			Yes	No	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
location	metropolis	N	206	67	273	3.430 (.180)
		%	75.5%	24.5%	100.0%	
	cities	N	222	86	308	
		%	72.1%	27.9%	100.0%	
	rural area	N	64	14	78	
		%	82.1%	17.9%	100.0%	
sex	male	N	136	60	196	4.096 (.043)*
		%	69.4%	30.6%	100.0%	
	female	N	356	107	463	
		%	76.9%	23.1%	100.0%	
age	19-29	N	96	52	148	20.456 (.000)***
		%	64.9%	35.1%	100.0%	
	30-39	N	87	37	124	
		%	70.2%	29.8%	100.0%	
	40-49	N	140	46	186	
		%	75.3%	24.7%	100.0%	
	50-59	N	99	24	123	
		%	80.5%	19.5%	100.0%	
	over 60	N	70	8	78	
		%	89.7%	10.3%	100.0%	
Total		N	492	167	659	
		%	74.7%	25.3%	100.0%	

\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<.001

Fig. 29. Bar chart of “God guarantees our wealth, health and success”



**3.3.4.13 How often do you feel fear for receiving God’s punishments for your sins?**

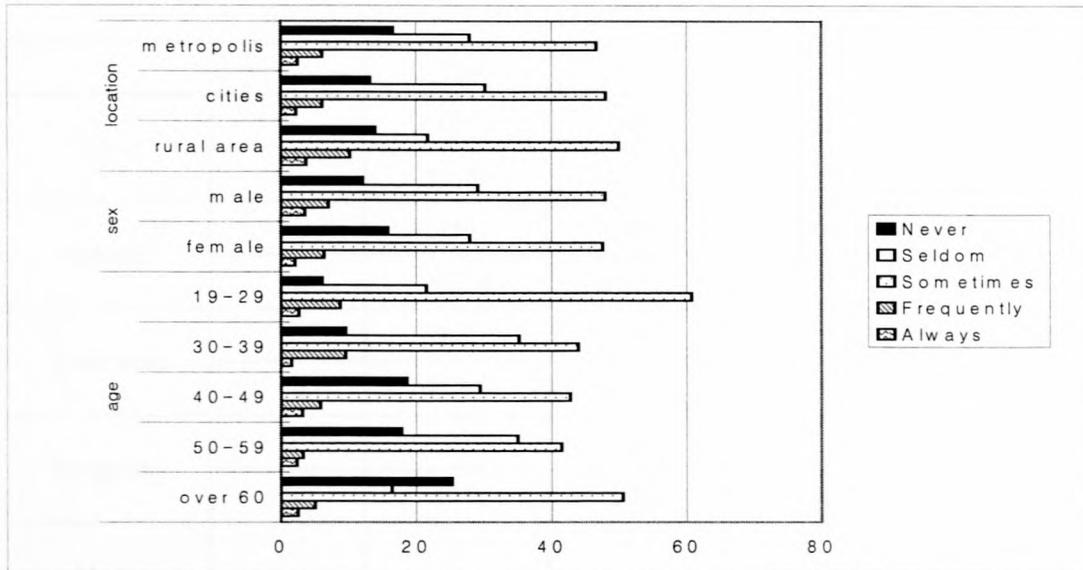
In response to the question, “How often do you feel fear for receiving God’s punishments for your sins?,” the most frequent answer is “sometimes” (47.7%). “Seldom” (28.2%), and “never” (14.8%) follow. Especially, the ratio of the respondents who answered “sometimes” in the younger group (60.8%) is far higher than that of other age groups. On the other hand, in the ratio of the answer “never”, the oldest age group “over 60”(25.3%) reveals the highest rate (p<.001).

Table 30. "How often do you feel fear for receiving God's punishments?"

			Never	Seldom	Sometime	Frequently	Always	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
location	metropolis	N	46	77	129	17	7	276	5.194 (.737)
		%	16.7%	27.9%	46.7%	6.2%	2.5%	100.0%	
	cities	N	41	93	148	19	7	308	
		%	13.3%	30.2%	48.1%	6.2%	2.3%	100.0%	
	rural area	N	11	17	39	8	3	78	
		%	14.1%	21.8%	50.0%	10.3%	3.8%	100.0%	
sex	male	N	24	57	94	14	7	196	2.498 (.645)
		%	12.2%	29.1%	48.0%	7.1%	3.6%	100.0%	
	female	N	74	130	222	30	10	466	
		%	15.9%	27.9%	47.6%	6.4%	2.1%	100.0%	
age	19-29	N	9	32	90	13	4	148	42.700 (.000)***
		%	6.1%	21.6%	60.8%	8.8%	2.7%	100.0%	
	30-39	N	12	44	55	12	2	125	
		%	9.6%	35.2%	44.0%	9.6%	1.6%	100.0%	
	40-49	N	35	55	80	11	6	187	
		%	18.7%	29.4%	42.8%	5.9%	3.2%	100.0%	
	50-59	N	22	43	51	4	3	123	
		%	17.9%	35.0%	41.5%	3.3%	2.4%	100.0%	
	over 60	N	20	13	40	4	2	79	
		%	25.3%	16.5%	50.6%	5.1%	2.5%	100.0%	
Total		N	98	187	316	44	17	662	
		%	14.8%	28.2%	47.7%	6.6%	2.6%	100.0%	

\*\*\*p<.001

Fig. 30. Bar chart of “How often do you feel fear for receiving God’s punishments?”



### 3.3.4.14 The correspondence between Q11 and other questions

What aspect of parishioners’ God-images within the KPBC would relate to the parishioners’ feeling and understanding of God as “the distant Being”? In order to attain an answer to this question, the researcher tried to examine the statistical correlation between Q11, “How often do you feel that God is distant?” and other questions. Consequently, it was proved that Q2, Q8, Q10, Q12, statistically, had no meaningful correlation with Q11, while Q6 and Q13, statistically, revealed an efficient correlation with Q11. To put it more concretely, as evident in the following table, the parishioners who said “Yes” to question Q6, “We hardly experience the miraculous power of God due to our poor faith,” show a higher degree of feeling and understanding of God as “the apathetic and distant Being” than the parishioners who said “No.” That is, in the answer “sometimes” to the question “How often do you feel that God is distant?,” the ratio of the former parishioners(43%) is higher than that of the latter. On the other hand, in the answer, “Never”, the ratio of the former parishioners (20.3%) is lower than that of the latter (33.3%) ( $p < .01$ ).

Table 31. The corresponsence between Q11 and Q6

		Yes	No	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
Never	N	103	50	153	14.834 (.005)**
	%	20.3%	33.3%	23.3%	
Seldom	N	153	47	200	
	%	30.2%	31.3%	30.4%	
Sometimes	N	222	49	271	
	%	43.8%	32.7%	41.2%	
Frequently	N	22	4	26	
	%	4.3%	2.7%	4.0%	
Always	N	7		7	
	%	1.4%		1.1%	
Total	N	507	150	657	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*\*p<.01

Additionally, the parishioners who never felt fear for receiving God's punishments for their sins reflects a lower degree of feeling and understanding of God as "the distant Being", i.e. "Never"(63.3%), "Seldom"(20.4%) and "Sometimes"(15.3%). On the other hand, the parishioners who sometimes felt fear for receiving God's punishments for their sins show a higher degree of feeling and understanding of God as "the distant Being", i.e. "Never"(12.3%), "Seldom"(24.3%) and "Sometimes"(57.2%). In other words, the result proved that the degree of the feeling fear for receiving God's punishments is in accordance with the feeling of God as "the distant and apathetic Being" (p<.001).

Table 32. The correspondence between Q11 and Q13

		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Always	Total	X <sup>2</sup> (p)
Never	N	62	37	40	10	5	154	208.930 (.000)***
	%	63.3%	19.8%	12.8%	22.7%	31.3%	23.4%	
Seldom	N	20	97	76	4	2	199	
	%	20.4%	51.9%	24.3%	9.1%	12.5%	30.2%	
Sometimes	N	15	51	179	21	6	272	
	%	15.3%	27.3%	57.2%	47.7%	37.5%	41.3%	
Frequently	N	1	2	14	7	2	26	
	%	1.0%	1.1%	4.5%	15.9%	12.5%	4.0%	
Always	N			4	2	1	7	
	%			1.3%	4.5%	6.3%	1.1%	
Total	N	98	187	313	44	16	658	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

\*\*\*p<.001

### 3.4 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PGI AND ITS FUNCTION WITHIN THE KPBC: A PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

In this section, the researcher tries to analyze the significance of the existing PGI within the KPBC with the help of the results of our empirical research. In fact, as previously discussed, within the main stream of God-images within KTR, we could find a monotheistic undestading God, who would be depicted as “*the heavenly almighty Ruler and frightening moral Judge*”. Furthermore, this monotheistic God seems to have been more commonly referred to as “*Hanunim*” by all Koreans although this term is related to the Shamanistic God (gods). The adoption of the indigenous term Hanunim enabled Koreans readily to accept the idea of the Christian God in vernacular terms deeply rooted in local life and experience. In this regard, although there might be several reasons why the Korean Christianity experienced extraordinary

growth in membership since its introduction, nevertheless, we can say that the Koreans' traditional monotheistic view of God seems to have been one of the most critical reasons for the growth (Lee, H G 1999:37; Grayson 1985:137; Chung C S 1997:1-2). On the other hand, due to the impact of the monotheistic understanding of God within the KRC, the existing PGI within the KPBC and their theological paradigms seem to be influenced inappropriately in some ways. Therefore, this section will be dedicated to arguing this point, especially from a pastoral perspective.

### **3.4.1 Korean terminology for “omnipotence” and “punishment”: “*Chunneung*” and “*Ch'unbeöl*”**

Not only for all parishioners of the KPC, but also for Koreans in general, the term “*Chunneung*” has been used as an exclusive term in order to designate the omnipotent God. The Korean term, “*Chunneung*,” seemingly equivalent to “omnipotent,” derives from the Chinese characters: “*chun* (全)” that represent “all” or “holistic,” and “*neung* (能)” that means “power.” Therefore, *Chunneung* could be understood as “holistic or all-encompassing power.” At first glance, this interpretation of the Korean term seems to be equivalent to the understanding of “omnipotence” in the New Testament, because, according to Feinberg (2001:278), in the New Testament, the closest term to “omnipotent” is the Greek *pantokrator*: *panto* derives from *pas* “all” and *krator* from *kratos*, “power” or “might.” However, *pantokrator* seems to have been influenced by the Hellenistic idea of strength and violent power (Louw 1989:55). On the other hand, the researcher believes that the notion of the Korean term *Chunneung* should be interpreted in the light of the unique context of Korean religious culture.

In fact, as argued previously, Koreans have had an indigenous and monotheistic God concept for many centuries. This indigenous God was generally called *Hanunim* (consisting of *Hanul* [blue sky] and *Nim* [honorific]), and refers to the head of Korean Shamanistic pantheons, although Koreans also used other indigenous terms, such as *Ch'un*, *Hananim*, *Okhawng-Sangche* and *Hanul*. In other words, Koreans have always used the vernacular term, *Hanunim* (the heavenly one), and this vernacular God, *Hanunim*, has become fundamentally rooted in, and has influenced, the lives and religious experience of all Koreans. Furthermore, the concept of “*Hanunim*” seems to play a decisive role in the way Koreans perceive and experience God. This

concept points to a personal but Supreme Being, who rules heaven and earth. This understanding of God is clearly related to the issue of punishments and rewards for human deeds (Kim, S H 1998:11; Chung, C S 1997:1-3; Yun, S B 1964:248-249; Rha, Y B 1977:141-151). Therefore, as argued previously, within the KRC, God's omnipotence should be understood in the framework of the understanding of God in the KTR, in which God could be depicted as "heavenly almighty Ruler and frightening Judge." In other words, although the Korean indigenous God is omnipotent (the equivalent of the Korean term *Chunneung*), his omnipotence is totally different from the biblical notion of God's power. For instance, a very famous common saying among Koreans concerning God's omnipotence (*Chunneung*) has been: "*Ji Sung imyen Gam Ch'un*" (至成感天), derived from Chinese characters. Although this common saying is not easy to interpret while expressing its whole nuance, it could be roughly described as follows: "If human beings do their best in order to come into touch with the very heart of God, He will be moved and, finally, engage in, and take care of, their wishes and efforts. Eventually, He will solve all our problems and eliminate all our predicaments and suffering, whereby He displays His omnipotent (a Korean term "*Chunneung*") power." In this well-known saying, God is viewed as an "aloof and apathetic Being." Thus, to attain God's loving concern and care for us, we must continue doing our best (for instance, continuous prayer for God) until He becomes a compassionate and sympathetic God.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, for Koreans in general, the term "*Ch'unbeöŭl*" has been used as an exclusive term in order to designate the power of God's judgment and punishment. The Korean term, "*Ch'unbeöŭl*" derives from the Chinese characters: "*ch'un* (天)" that represent "Heaven" or "God," and "*beöŭl*(罰)" that means "punishment." Thus, "*Ch'unbeöŭl*" could be understood as "heavenly punishment," or "God's punishment." As confirmed previously, due to the decisive impact of KTR, Koreans' monotheistic God has been regarded easily as a "frightening moral

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<sup>39</sup> We can confirm this argument against the background of the Korean religious cultural setting in many ways. For instance, within the *Tangun* myth, the significance of God's omnipotence can be understood in the light of the "*Chunneung*" motif (see section 2.2.1.2). Furthermore, due to the decisive influence of the KRC, when things around them go bad, Koreans often bear a grudge against their monotheistic God with the expression of a well-known common saying. That is, "*Hanul* (Heaven) *do musim*(無心: apathetic) *hasiji*," which means "God is too much apathetic (towards us)." In this regard, the researcher believes that this "*Chunneung*" motif also may be easily associated with the issue of theodicy and the pathological phenomena within the KPBC, such as the manipulation of God for selfish-purposes or a prominent tendency of regarding God as a "distant and apathetic Being" (see section 3.4.2; 3.4.4; 3.4.5).

Judge,”who judges and punishes people’s wrong doings without mercy. Therefore, in Korea, if people committed a severe sin, they have been often warned of the serious punishment, “*Ch’unbeöl*,” as a consequence of God’s frightening and merciless judgment for their sins.<sup>40</sup>

Therefore, the researcher believes that, since Christianity was introduced into Korea, due to the impact of the misunderstood doctrine of Western theology and the notion of God’s power within the KRC, the Korean term *Chunneung*, including *Ch’unbeöl*, has greatly influenced the formation of God-images within the KPC, because, when interpreted, it seems that the Greek term *pantokrator* in the New Testament is not totally free from the negative influence of the Hellenistic idea of strength and violent power. In a similar vein, the Korean term *Chunneung* and *Ch’unbeöl* may also provoke a negative influence on the KPCs’ parishioners’ interpretation of God’s power insofar as His power is understood in respect of the power of securing their prosperity and selfish wishes, as well as apathetic domination and control.

#### **3.4.2 The manipulation of God for selfish purposes**

As a result of the previous investigation, we noticed that parishioners in the KPBC display a strong tendency to manipulate God for their selfish purposes. We can undoubtedly say that this tendency originally derives from the human sinful nature; nevertheless, the researcher wishes to contend that this pathological and immature style of faith within the KPBC also reflects the impact of both culture and doctrine. For instance, the Old Testament often describes God as a God who guarantees people’s prosperity (Deut. 7:13-16; Hos. 2:8; Ps. 62; Josh. 5:12). Although the biblical concept of blessing differs totally from that of the KTR, due to the understanding of God’s blessing within the KRC, within the KPBC, God could be hijacked easily in order to serve parishioners’ material wishes and selfish purposes.

In fact, it is generally believed that the parishioners in the KPC have an enthusiastic attitude

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<sup>40</sup> As we previously argued, within the Korean traditional religious setting, God could be easily regarded as the ultimate source of evil in the world and all human suffering and predicaments might be considered as the consequence of God’s punishment for human misdeeds. In this light, the results of the survey in this study indicate that parishioners’ excessive fear of God and the phenomenon of theodicy in the KPBC may reflect considerably Koreans’ fear of “*Ch’unbeöl*,” as a consequence of God’s apathetic merciless judgment and punishment for their sins. We will confirm this point in the next following sectors in this chapter (see section 3.4.3; 3.4.4)

towards God and religion. For instance, according to the “Hanmijun Gallup Korea report”, a survey of which was done among 1000 parishioners in 1998, 65.2% of the respondents replied that they regularly attend the Sunday worship service and 18% replied 2-3 times/month. Furthermore, 65.2% of respondents answered that they prayed every day, while 34.8% did not. Particularly, 29.8% of respondents prayed 11 to 60 minutes per day and 6% of parishioners even prayed more than 1 hour per day. What is more, 46.4% of respondents regularly contributed a tenth of their income, while 33% could not. Moreover, 32.8% of respondents replied that they regularly contributed their tithes without missing a month (Hanmijun Gallup Korea Report 1998: 228, 272, 286). Furthermore, especially the parishioners’ enthusiastic attitude for prayer within the KPBC can relate to the God concepts in Korean Shamanism (Lee, H G 1999:107).<sup>41</sup> Of course, we cannot say that the ardent attitude of the parishioners is caused totally by the God-images of the KTR. Nevertheless, we cannot deny a possibility of the impact of the understanding of God within the KRC on the enthusiastic religious attitude of the parishioners in KPBC.

On the other hand, due to the impact of the KRC, within the existing PGI in the KPBC, we find a noticeable tendency, in which God could be easily hijacked and misused in order to serve parishioners’ material wishes and selfish purposes. For instance, an image of God as “the heavenly omnipotent Ruler” within the KTR seems to have influenced the formation of the parishioners’ tendency to manipulate God for their selfish purposes. In particular, the concept of God as “a prosperity Gurantor,” which might derive mainly from Korean Shamanism, could be understood in terms of the materialistic schema of interpretation. Added to this, modernization, as well as the accelerated process of postmodernization and globalization that has brought about new shifts in the Korean society, may also have influenced the formation of such theological paradigms within the KPBC.<sup>42</sup> According to Shim, Young-hee Kim (2003:41), although

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<sup>41</sup> The researcher does not wish to disregard the importance of prayer in parishioners’ faith and their daily life. However, he believes that the significance of prayer should be identified more in terms of God’s will and purpose than in terms of parishioners’ selfish will and purposes. In addition, he would like to advocate that the value and power of prayer should be emphasized regarding God’s faithfulness to His promise and parishioners’ fruitful life in God’s grace, as well as intimate and loving fellowship between God and them.

<sup>42</sup> According to Louw (2000a:7), the economic / materialistic schema of wealth, achievement, development and affluence, regards God as a safeguard of prosperity and that He can easily be used to serve our selfish purposes and needs. Therefore, in a sense, in terms of Korean Shamanism and the rapid process of modernization and globalization in the Korean society, this schema of interpretation could be

Western society experienced two paradigm shifts from the traditional autocratic agrarian society to postmodern society within a period of 200 to 300 years, the Korean society experienced two drastic social shifts within only 50 to 60 years from from a very severe and conservative Confucianistic society to a very advanced, individualistic and achievement-oriented postmodern society (Shim, Y H K 2003:43).

Louw (2002b:76-79, 2001c:41-42, 2000b:30-33) warns of a negative influence on the church by the economic globalization, which moulds human beings into a new cultural framework. The researcher believes that the KPBC is not free from Louw's warning. Furthermore, due to the process of market economic globalization, within Korean society (like many other countries today) economics has become the new religion that sets the pace, norm and values of humans in the megapolis of the global village (Louw 2000b:31). Thus, due to the impact of the understanding of God with the KRC and misunderstood-doctrine of God within Christianity, as well as the new shifts in the Korean society, God can be easily misused in order to serve parishioners' material wishes and selfish purposes within the KPBC.

According to this research's empirical survey, in response to the question, "What do you think is the most representative characteristic of the Korean traditional God?," the most frequent answer is, "God can do anything and is responsible for all events" (45.4%), followed by "God blesses human beings" (22.8%) and "God controls the lives and deaths of human beings" (8.1%). Furthermore, in response to the statement, "Please choose one item that, in your opinion, is similar in the Korean traditional God and the Christian God," the most frequent answer is "God can do anything and is responsible for all events" (37.0%). "God blesses human beings" (23.6%) and "God controls the lives and deaths of human beings" (10.3%) follow. These results indicate that almost all parishioners in the KPBC consider the major characteristic of the Korean traditional God, described as "the God who can do anything and is responsible for all events," to be closely associated with the God of Christianity.

Furthermore, they reveal a notable tendency to understand God's omnipotence as the power to guarantee material blessings. For instance, in response to the statement, "God is the almighty Being who guarantees our wealth, health and success," 74.7% of the parishioners responded

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adopted in order to understand the existing theological paradigm within the Korean context.

positively. The oldest age group, “over 60,” revealed the highest ratio of positive answers (89.7%). Thus, they seem to have been influenced more by the God-images in the KTR than other age groups. In addition, in response to the statement, “If I believe in omnipotent God, I can receive and achieve anything in my life,” the majority (87.2%) of the parishioners’ responses was “Yes,” while the minority (12.8%) responded negatively. What is more, in response to the statement, “God solves all our problems and heals our suffering if we have sincere faith,” the majority of parishioners (86.8%) responded positively. In fact, the oldest age group (over 60) has the highest percentage (91.1%) of “Yes” answers. Whereas, in response to the statement, “We hardly experience God’s miraculous power due to poor faith,” the majority of the parishioners (77.2%) gave an affirmative response, while 24.1% of the parishioners disagreed with this statement. In other words, most parishioners within the KPBC believe that, if they only have an adequate faith, they can experience the miraculous power of God at any time.

As a result of the empirical and literature survey of this study, we could conclude that both the doctrine of God that overemphasizes His power of securing prosperity, as well as the Korean religious and cultural setting, including the new cultural shifts in the Korean society, have influenced the formation of the view of a functional God within the KPBC. This view can easily provoke an unhealthy style of faith that manipulates God for achieving material wishes and selfish purposes. According to Louw (1999a:342), parishioners, who believe that God and faith guarantee success, health and material wealth, are apt to be disappointed profoundly and fall into doubt when crises deprive them of their success, health and material wealth. Therefore, we contend that there is an urgent need to reframe PGI within the KPBC.

### **3.4.3 Excessive guilt and fear of God**

Due to the image of God as a “frightening moral Judge” in the KTR and an Old and New Testament image of God as a “Judge,”<sup>43</sup> the researcher believes that parishioners in the KPBC present a strong tendency towards excessive guilt and fear of God. In fact, it is not possible to determine whether regarding God as a “frightening Judge” is appropriate or inappropriate.

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<sup>43</sup> This God-image in the Old and New Testament will be reflected in a more comprehensive perspective in the following chapter of this study.

Because, the Bible does reveal God as a holy and righteous Judge. However, if we wish to examine the true notion of God as a “frightening Judge” within the KPBC, we must take the religious cultural background of Korea into account. Previous investigation indicates that, over centuries, the God images of a “frightening moral Judge” within the mainstream God-images in KTR have brought about an excessive guilt and fear of God in Korean minds. For instance, within Korean Shamanism, there was an outstanding tendency to understand and perceive God (gods) as being most fearful and frightening. Therefore, they believed that, if people cannot fulfil God’s will, they would be punished mercilessly by illness, failure in their endeavours, or by damage to their property (Lee, J Y 1981:27; Kim, T G 1978:45). Furthermore, within the mainstream God-images, especially in Korean Confucianism and Taoism, the image of God is that of a “heavenly moral Judge” who judges human beings, curses their evil deeds, and blesses their good deeds (Kim, S H 1993:20-22; Kim, N P 2003:293-302). In addition, as argued previously, in terms of the terminology of “*Ch’unbeöl*,” all human suffering and predicaments could be easily regarded as the consequence of the punishments of apathetic and merciless God for human misdeeds. Similarly, in the Old and New Testaments, we can easily find an image of God as a “judge”, who judges and punishes human transgression and sins, is easily found; sometimes, God is described as vengeful and frightening (Peels 1994:274,275). Accordingly, the image of a “frightening and apathetic moral Judge” derived from the KRC could be synthesized easily with the image of a “Judge” in the Old and New Testaments.

The results of the empirical survey follow:

In response to the question “How often do you feel fear for receiving God’s punishments for your sins?” the most frequent answer was “sometimes” (47.7%); “seldom” (28.2%), and never (14.8%) follow. Responding to the question, “How often do you feel that you have committed sins that cannot be forgiven?” the most frequent answer was “sometimes” (41.6%), followed by “seldom” (27.1%), and “never” (14.2%). In especially the rural area, the percentage of parishioners who answered, “sometimes,” (50.0%) is higher than that of other regions; in the answer, “always,” the age range over 60 reveals the highest percentage (11.3%). To the statement, “Suffering that I have experienced is related to God’s punishment for my sins,” 59.6% of the parishioners responded positively (59.6%). Here, the percentage of rural parishioners who answered “Yes” (73.1%) is far higher than that of the metropolis (55.3%) or

cities (54.2%). Furthermore, parishioners in the older age group had a higher positive percentage. In other words, parishioners in the rural area and the older age group reflected a greater tendency to understand God as “a more frightening Judge.” These results probably prove that the rural and older groups of parishioners seem to have been exposed to the influence of the KRC to a slightly greater extent than other groups. In response to the question, “How often do you feel that you have committed sins that cannot be forgiven?” the most frequent answer was “sometimes” (41.6%), followed by “seldom” (27.1%) and “never” (14.2%). To the statement, “Suffering that I have experienced is related to God’s punishment for my sins,” 59.6% of the parishioners answered, “Yes.” Of special interest, in response to the question, “How often do you feel fear of receiving God’s punishments for your sins?” the percentage of parishioners who answered “sometimes” in the younger age group (60.8%) is far higher than that of other age groups. Thus, parishioners in the relatively younger age group reveal a greater tendency to understand and view God as a “frightening Judge” one could presume that this reflects the impact of patriarchy in Korean society in a sense.<sup>44</sup>

In the light of these schemata, in terms of the impact of the religious and socio-political aspects, it seems that God is regarded as a more distant and aloof Being and thus, God’s power is interpreted mainly in association with the power of retribution, in which there could be a greater schism between God and parishioners in the context of suffering. Accordingly, in short, the image of God as “a frightening and merciless Judge” (seemingly intertwined and derived from both the KRC and doctrine of God) has provoked excessive guilt and fear of God within KPBC parishioners’ minds. In fact, Louw (2000a:344) believes that an image of God as “Judge” could be understood as an appropriate God-image, insofar as “God as Judge” does not imply that one should fear Him in the sense of trepidation. For Louw, “fear of God” means that one should take Him into account and has awe and respect for Him at all times. Fear of God leads to responsible behaviour and a power of true sensitive discernment regarding right and wrong (Louw 2000a:344). However, in contrast to biblical views, within the Korean traditional religious context, an image of God as “Judge” seems to indicate a different significance and meaning, in which God’s judgment can be easily understood in terms of merciless, unforgiving and

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<sup>44</sup> Here, we might see a possible evidence, which indicates the fact that Korean children’s negative images of their fathers may relate to the formation and function of their God-images, in which the connection between God’s Fatherhood and patriarchal domination may arouse more negative associations (Louw 1999a:85). However, this argument should be tested within the Korean context in a greater detail in further research.

retributive power. Thus, we can say that there is a need for providing a new theological paradigm on a more relevant theological basis for the area of pastoral care in the KPBC, for the purpose to enhance intimacy between its parishioners and God, especially in the context of suffering.

#### 3.4.4 The phenomenon of theodicy

On the basis of the results of the survey in this study, the researcher believes that not only the PGI, but also the phenomenon of theodicy within the KPBC reflected both the impact of the doctrine of God as well as the considerable influence of the Korean religious and cultural setting. If we understand simply theodicy as an attempt to justify God in face of evil in the world, for the purpose of resolving the dilemma posed by the relationship between God's love and omnipotence (McGrath 1995:27; Inbody 1997:27; Van der Ven 1993:173; Louw 2000a:11,25,38; 1999a:3), in a strict sense, it might be not easy to clarify clearly and plainly the phenomenon of theodicy as a more philosophical issue within the KTR, since the views of God with the KTR are far much more complicated and different from the theistic view of God in Christianity.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, the researcher wishes to advocate that the phenomenon of theodicy of the PGI within the KPBC reflects considerably the impact of the KTR,<sup>46</sup> especially when reckoning the interconnection between the KTR's view of God and human suffering. On the basis of the previous research, we already confirmed that God within the KTR could be easily regarded as the ultimate source of evil in the world and all human predicaments and suffering might be considered as the consequence of the punishment of an apathetic and merciless God (for instance, "*Ch'unbeöl*") on account of their misdeeds (sins). To put it more precisely, due to the decisive impact of Shamanism, human suffering could be easily and directly regarded as the punishment of the merciless and unpredictable god(s). What is more, in the light of the notion of God in Confucianism and Taoism, we found a metaphysical interpretation of God, in which God could be easily regarded as the ultimate cause or source of suffering and evil in the world with an emphasis on cause and effect principle. In a similar vein,

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<sup>45</sup> Therefore, in the previous chapter, the researcher solely concentrated on investigating the interconnection between the view of God in the KTR and the issue of human suffering.

<sup>46</sup> If we adopt Van der Ven's theological conceptual model, one might note that the phenomenon of theodicy within the KPBC reflects more the apathy and retaliation symbols than the solidarity symbol (cf. Chapter 5: 5.5.3).

the fatalistic idea of “the law of rewards in accordance with human deeds,” of Buddhism could also relate to the formation of the metaphysical interpretation of God in a sense.

In this background, we should pay our attention to our survey results:

As we previously confirmed, according to this research’s empirical survey, in response to the question, “What do you think is the most representative characteristic of the Korean traditional God?,” the most frequent answer is, “God can do anything and is responsible for all events” (45.4%), followed by “God blesses human beings” (22.8%) and “God controls the lives and deaths of human beings” (8.1%). Furthermore, in response to the statement, “Please choose one item that, in your opinion, is similar in the Korean traditional God and the Christian God,” the most frequent answer is “God can do anything and is responsible for all events” (37.0%). “God blesses human beings” (23.6%) and “God controls the lives and deaths of human beings” (10.3%) follow. These results indicate that almost all parishioners in the KPBC consider the major characteristic of the Korean traditional God, described as “the God who can do anything and is responsible for all events,” to be closely associated with the God of Christianity. These results may reflect the fact that within the setting of both KTR and KPBC, God could be easily understood as the ultimate source of evil in the world.

In addition to this, in response to the question, “When do you feel that God is distant, rather than compassionate?” the most frequent answers were, “When I am in the context of intolerable suffering” (25.3%), “When my emotions are in distress” (21.5%), and “When I experience God’s severe punishments for my sins (2.9%). And, to the statement, “Suffering that I have experienced is related to God’s punishment for my sins,” the ratio of respondents who answered, “Yes” (56.96%) is higher than that of the negative respondents (43.1%). In particular, the ratio of the respondents of the rural area who answered, “Yes”(73.1%) is far higher than that of the metropolis (55.3%), or cities (54.2%), and statistically reflect a meaningful difference ( $p < .01$ ).

By and large, all these results seem to reveal the phenomenon of theodicy within the the KPBC that reflect the impact of the Korean religious and cultural setting, in which its parishioners reflect a noticeable tendency to regard God as the ultimate source of evil in the world and their suffering as the consequence of automatic-effecting deeds, resulting in the punishment of their

sins by the merciless God. Therefore, one conclude that the results of the empirical survey in this chapter seem to indicate that the phenomenon of theodicy within the KPBC not only may reflect the considerable impact of the KTR, but also has profoundly influenced parishioners' interpretation of God within the context of their suffering, in which all their suffering and predicaments could easily be regarded as the consequence of the automatic-effecting deeds - thus resulting in punishment by an apathetic and merciless God.

### **3.4.5 Regarding God as a “distant and apathetic Being”**

By identifying the phenomenon of theodicy within the the KPBC, we noticed that it seemed easy for many KPBC parishioners to understand God as distant and apathetic while in their context of suffering, because they displayed a noticeable tendency to regard their suffering as the consequence of automatic-effecting deeds. For instance, in our endeavour to examine the statistical correlation between Q11, “How often do you feel that God is distant?” and q13, “How often do you feel fear for receiving God’s punishment?” the parishioners who never felt fear for receiving God’s punishment for their sins reflect a lower degree of feeling and understanding of God as “a distant Being,” i.e. “Never”(63.3%), “Seldom”(20.4%), and “Sometimes”(15.3%). On the other hand, the parishioners who sometimes felt fear for receiving God’s punishment for their sins reflect a higher degree of feeling and understanding of God as “a distant Being”, i.e. “Never”(12.3%), “Seldom”(24.3%) and “Sometimes”(57.2%). In other words, the results prove that the degree of the feeling fear of receiving God’s punishment is in accordance with the perception of God as “a distant and apathetic Being” ( $p < .001$ ).

In fact, since suffering not only raises questions about God’s existence and fairness, but also unmasks people’s appropriate or inappropriate God-images, suffering can be regarded as a theological issue (Louw 2000a:11). In other words, one could say that people’s views and understanding of God are closely associated with, and influenced by, suffering. Therefore, identifying parishioners’ concepts of God in terms of suffering as a “theological” issue is of great importance. In this light, within the existing God-images in the KPBC, we discovered a strong tendency to view God as a “distant and apathetic Being” in the context of suffering and severe predicaments. For instance, due to the impact of Korean Confucianism and Taoism, we easily

find a kind of metaphysical schema<sup>47</sup> of interpretation, i.e. understanding God as a “heavenly (moral) Ultimate,” in which He could be regarded as an ultimate causal Principle for everything and all events in the whole world. In addition to this, the hierarchical schema, in which God could be regarded as a more distant Being and his actions in suffering are easily regarded in terms of purification / edification and retribution (Louw 2000a:7), can also be applied in order to understand the significance of God-images within the Korean context, because Korea still remains a highly hierarchical society due to the heavy influence of Confucianism. Thus, God can be understood readily in terms of the explanatory model regarding cause and effect;<sup>48</sup> He is regarded as the ultimate cause and source of all our suffering. Furthermore, as argued previously, due to the impact of Korean Shamanism, God can be easily understood as “a frightening, merciless and cruel Judge,” rather than “a compassionate Judge.”

Therefore, in the light of their religious cultural background, many KPBC parishioners reflect the understanding of God as “an apathetic and distant Being,” especially within their context of suffering and severe predicament. For instance, according to the result of our survey, in response to the question, “When do you feel that God is distant, rather than compassionate?” the most frequent answers were, “When I am in the context of intolerable suffering” (25.3%), “When my emotions are in distress” (21.5%), and “When God does not answer my earnest prayer” (13.1%). Also, in response to this question, the most frequent answer was, “sometimes” (41.2%), followed by “seldom” (30.31%), and “never” (23.5%). Furthermore, according to the results of the previous empirical survey (see chapter 5.3.4.14), the parishioners, who believe that to experience God’s miraculous power depends totally on their faith, reveal a greater tendency to regard God as “a distant and apathetic Being.” Added to this, the degree of fear of God’s punishment increases in proportion to the degree of viewing God as “a distant and apathetic Being.”

As a result of our survey, we noticed the following points. Firstly, a fair number of parishioners

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<sup>47</sup> According to Louw (2000a:6), a metaphysical schema interprets God in terms of an immutable and causal Principle or an ultimate Being. Although, this schema should be understood in the light of Western philosophy and thought, nevertheless, we found a similar schema of interpretation within the Eastern idea and philosophy.

<sup>48</sup> As we noticed from the results of the previous survey, many parishioners believe that the most representative characteristics of the Korean traditional God, as well as the Christian God, could relate to the Godly power that controls all the world and is responsible for everything.

in the KPBC regard God as a distant, rather than a compassionate Being when they experience severe trauma and their emotions are in distress. Secondly, parishioners in rural areas and the oldest age group, who seem to have been influenced more by the KRC, reflect a higher degree of guilt than other groups. Thirdly, there is the possibility that parishioners in the younger age group might have more guilt than other age groups due to the impact of the hierarchy and patriarchy in Korean society. Fourthly, a parishioner, whose understanding of God relates more to cheap triumphalism and positivism, displays a higher degree of understanding God as a distant and apathetic Being. Finally, those parishioners, who have greater fear of God's punishment, reflect a higher degree of viewing God as "a distant and apathetic Being."

In short, in the light of the Korean religious cultural background, within the existing God-images in the KPBC, we find a noticeable tendency to understand God as an "apathetic and distant Being" in the midst of suffering, rather than as a "compassionate and pathetic Being." Therefore, one could say that, in the KPBC, reframing the theological paradigm and PGI in terms of God's compassion and pathos has become an utmost urgent and essential task, because pastoral care must be engaged in an understanding of God in order to convey His comfort and to instil meaning and hope (Louw 1999a:3). This is the reason why we must establish a theology of the compassionate God in order to develop pastoral care and counselling ministry within the unique context of the Korean culture.

### **3.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This study aims to identify existing God-images in the KPBC and how they influence parishioners' response to life issues and maturity in faith with regard to the interconnection between their understanding of God and suffering. Therefore, in this chapter, by adopting an empirical approach, the researcher tried to determine the significance of existing God-images and how church members in the KPBC, experience and perceive God. In particular, the researcher examined whether or how culture, traditional religions and the doctrine of God have influenced parishioners' theological paradigm and belief system within the KPBC.

As a result, one could reasonably say that the phenomenon of theodicy within the KPBC reflects the impact of the Korean religious and cultural setting, in which many parishioners in KPBC display a noticeable tendency to regard God as the ultimate source of evil in the world

and their suffering and predicaments as the consequence of judgement and punishment of the merciless and apathetic God for their sins. For instance, especially due to the impact of the KTR, culture and doctrine, as well as a new cultural shift in Korean society in terms of a materialistic schema of interpretation of God, many parishioners within the KPBC displayed a prominent tendency to view God as being functional, in which He could be hijacked easily in order to serve their own material wishes and selfish purposes. Furthermore, due to the impact of Korean Shamanism and Confucianism, many parishioners within the KPBC seem to understand excessively the notion of God as “a Judge” within the Old and New Testaments, within the framework of the Korean traditional religious understanding of Him as “a frightening, apathetic, merciless and even cruel Judge.” What is more, the result of the empirical survey indicates that in terms of the impact of the KTR, many parishioners seem to display a prominent tendency of interpretation of God as “the ultimate cause or source of all our suffering,” in which God is easily understood in terms of a more explanatory model with its emphasis on cause and effect. In fact, as previously argued, we already confirmed that due to the decisive impact of Shamanism, human suffering could be easily and directly regarded as the punishment of the merciless and unpredictable god(s). In addition, in the light of the notion of God in Confucianism and Taoism, we might find a metaphysical/hierarchical interpretation of God, in which God could be easily regarded as the ultimate cause or source of suffering and evil in the world with an emphasis on cause and effect principle. In a similar vein, the fatalistic idea of “the law of rewards in accordance with human deeds” of Buddhism could also relate to the formation of the metaphysical interpretation of God in a sense.

In this regard, for many parishioners within the KPBC, God has become a more “distant and apathetic Being,” especially within their context of suffering and predicaments. Consequently, when crises and suffering damage their material property or health, they seem to easily sink into a state of depression and helplessness. An impact of the Korean religious culture on the theological paradigms of the Korean Church could be depicted as follows:

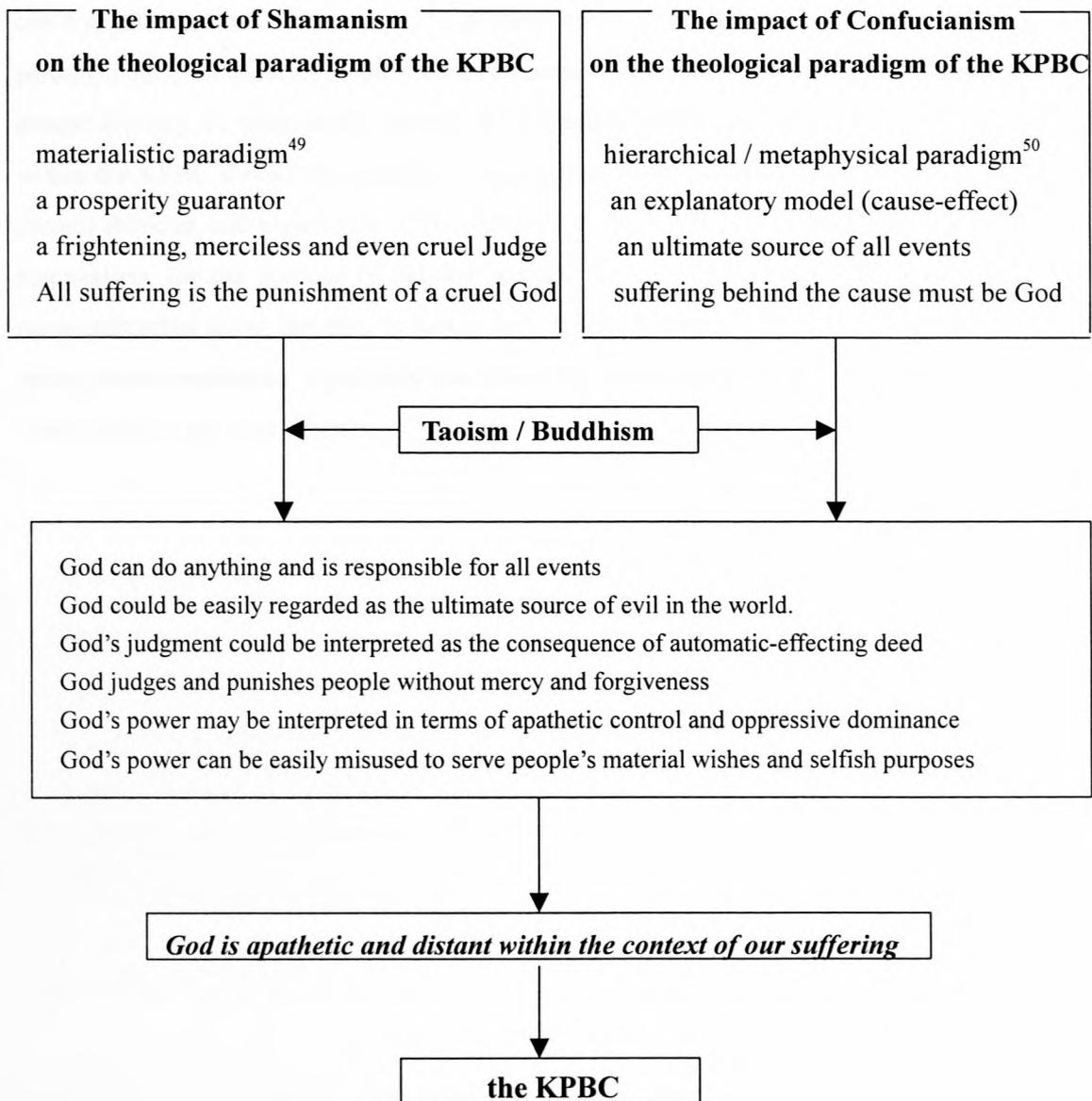


Fig. 31. An impact of the Korean religious culture on the theological paradigms of the KPBC

Therefore, in the light of the Korean religious and cultural setting, in order to convey God's comfort and to instil meaning and vivid hope within the Korean Church (Louw 1999a:3), we

<sup>49</sup> As argued previously, this paradigm could relate not only to the Shamanistic view of God in the Korean religious context, but also to the background of the accelerated process of modernization and globalization in the Korean society.

<sup>50</sup> This metaphysical paradigm should be understood mainly in the framework of the idea and philosophy of the Korean Confucianism and Taoism rather than in terms of Western philosophy and thought.

can hypothesize that, in the area of pastoral care in the KPBC, reframing the theological paradigm and PGI in terms of the God's compassion and pathos has become an essential task of utmost urgency. In other words, against the Korean religious cultural background, pastoral care within the KPBC should try to reframe the existing theological paradigm, which dominates the current thinking and experience of parishioners in the KPBC, by making use of a theology of compassion, for the purpose of helping pastors, not only to diagnose parishioners' faith at a more existential level, but also to foster their spiritual maturity. Therefore, on the basis of the entire above-mentioned arguments the researcher will engage in establishing a theology of compassion in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF COMPASSION IN A PASTORAL HERMENEUTICS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to provide a theological criterion that aims to assess and reframe the existing theological paradigm, that dominates the current thinking and experience of God within the KPBC, in this chapter, the researcher wishes to establish a theology of compassion for a pastoral hermeneutical approach in ministry to parishioners. Particularly, in this study, the researcher would like to adapt a method of “reframing” rather than “reshaping” or “changing.” While a method of reshaping or changing may impose pressure on parishioners to use another or different concepts in the place of their existing concepts, on the other hand, a method of reframing allows them to use the same concept within a different frame or a different context. Thus, reframing could be understood as “changing the frame in which a person perceives events in order to change the meaning.” Of course, we could assume that when the meaning changes, the person’s response and behaviour also change (Capps 1990:10). In this sense, within this chapter, by establishing a theology of compassion, the researcher ultimately wishes to focus on “reframing the existing theological paradigm, which dominates parishioners’ perception of God,” rather than reshaping or changing them.

As a consequence of the results of our survey and core arguments in the previous chapter, at least within the KRC, we could confirm that parishioners’ God-images derive not only from ecclesial, confessional and theological influences, but also originate from the considerable impact of the religious, cultural aspect. For instance, the previous investigation of our survey disclosed that, especially due to the considerable impact of Shamanism and Confucianism in the KTR, many parishioners of the KPBC reflected a noticeable tendency to understand God as an “apathetic and distant Being” in the midst of their suffering, rather than as a “compassionate and intimate Being.” Furthermore, we noticed that this tendency to view God thus seems not only to estrange many parishioners within the KPBC from a vivid and meaningful understanding of God, especially within the context of suffering, but also brings out many pathological problems, for instance, a tendency to manipulate God to achieve their material wishes and selfish purposes.

Therefore, by making use of a theology of compassion, reframing the theological paradigm has become an extremely urgent and essential task within the field of pastoral care in the KPBC.

In this regard, in order to establish a theology of compassion in a pastoral perspective, we will first engage in exploring the notion of divine judgment and power within the Old and New Testament, including exegesis of some biblical texts. In fact, the notion of the compassionate God within the Old and New Teastament could be explored in many theological perspectives and angles. However, in this study, against the Korean religious and cultural context, the researcher would like to examine the notion of compassionate God, chiefly and solely in the light of the notion of divine power and judgment, especially for the purpose of instiling a vivid and true hope among the parishioners within the Korean Church in the midst of their suffering, as well as enhancing their maturity in faith

Furthermore, we shall reflect a theology of compassion as represented by Luther, Kitamori, Moltmann and Louw, especially in a patoral perspective. The reasons for our choice are: Luther's emphasis is more on the existential implication of a theology of the cross: despair and the experience of the absence of God; Kitamori's emphasis is more on the intrinsic dialectic of pain within God; Moltmann's emphasis is more on the ontological and theological implication of the cross: reframing Trinity and the pathos of God; Louw's emphasis is more on the pastoral and hermeneutical implication of the cross: reframing God-images, the human quest for meaning, and its implication for spiritual healing (promissio-therapy)

## **4.2 THE COMPASSIONATE GOD WITHIN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

If one really wants to explore the notion of divine judgment and power in the Old Testament, one should begin by reckoning the chronological development of the ideas of God against the historical background of Israel. Because Israel's religious life is the product of a historical faith—a faith that God has acted repeatedly throughout history for His own purpose and for His people (Chesnut 1968:18). Furthermore, whether God's judgment can be regarded as a direct consequence of Israel's sin or not,<sup>51</sup> in terms of Israel's transgressions, God's judgment can be understood only closely linked to the unique character of her history (Westermann 1979:55).

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<sup>51</sup> This point will be argued in the following.

Hebrew thought and culture cannot be described and understood apart from its total near Eastern context, because the classical Sumerian culture of lower Mesopotamia (2880-2400 B.C.) provided a rich store of traditions, which was common property of many Near Eastern groups, including the Old Testament Hebrews (Chesnut 1968:30). Thus, although the idea of divine judgment is so strongly presented in the Old Testament, we cannot regard it as an idea peculiar to Hebraic thought (Griffiths 1991:24). For instance, in the Hittite myth of Telipinu, a Hattian weather-god, divine anger produced conditions of drought, barrenness or a dangerous flood, which affected all nature, humans and gods (Kühne 1978:163). Consequently, the Hittite worshippers had the status of subjects or servants before their god, who had sovereign power and was the supreme judge. For them, religious duties implied obedient service to the god; and disobedience resulted in harsh punishment. As seen in the areas of Hebraic thought, the essence of sin is disobedience; the servant breaks his master's commands; but confession removes or mitigates the penalty (Furlani 1938:251-262). However, the causes of the gods' anger in Hittite mythology, whether in the narrative sense or in the moral connotation, are not always clear. On the other hand, in the Old Testament, the causes of Yahweh's anger are usually explained in the light of breaking the Israelite covenant (Griffiths 1991:27). According to Chesnut (1968:49), in the Mosaic traditions as depicted in the Ten Commandments, Yahweh is revealed as a holy, just and righteous Being. The concern for justice and righteousness among men, especially from Moses onward, is a striking characteristic of almost every document in the Old Testament. Israel's passion for high morality was due to her conception of a God who was a moral Being. On the other hand, other gods in Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and later Greece and Rome, were regarded as exempt from the moral code. The prophets believed that Yahweh demanded righteousness because He himself is righteousness (Chesnut 1968:50,90).

In a similar vein, M. R. Thomas (1977:20-31) manifests that the oracle of God's judgment has two levels of Old Testament setting:

First of all it takes its frame from the Mosaic Covenant tradition. Secondly, most obviously in sixth century prophecy, its setting is developed tradition of Israelite prophecy as that has synthesized and applied beliefs to actual form of the Mosaic Covenant and related source.

In fact, Israel had a variety of covenant and election traditions in which one stands apart from the others (Gen 12:3, 15:17; 2 Sam 7:8,16; Pss 78:67,132). However, Thomas (1977:22)

indicates the significance of the oracle of judgment in the Mosaic Covenant:<sup>52</sup>

The underlined “if” supplies the condition; it constitutes the theological pivot of this covenant; if the people will obey God, he will hold them in a favoured relationship, and they will receive many blessings; but if the people do not obey, then their relationship with God will be jeopardized, and they can count on every misfortune.

Chesnut (1968:67) particularly points out that, throughout the period of the exodus from Egypt and conquest of Canaan and extending into later history, the idea of God’s judgment upon men and nations appears as an essential aspect of God’s involvement in war.<sup>53</sup> According to the given framework of the covenantal relationship between God and Israel, it is obvious that God was expected to be on Israel’s side unless she committed sin. When Israel won a military victory over her enemies, it was logically interpreted as a judgment of God upon wrongdoers. On the other hand, when Israel committed sin, especially in terms of apostasy, Yahweh gave Israel over to her oppressors. However, because this divine judgment did not permanently rupture the covenant, Israel could expect to regain Yahweh’s favour and protection upon the resumption of covenant loyalty (1968:67).<sup>54</sup>

By 587 Judah was demolished and exiled by Babylonia, and by 722 Israel was demolished and exiled by Assyria. During this catastrophic state, the prophets had to interpret the meaning of these events in theological terms (Thomas M R 1977:83).<sup>55</sup> In other words, they had to discern

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<sup>52</sup> “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob... You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I bore you on eagles’ wing and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all the peoples...” (Exod. 19:3-5) (Thomas 1997:21)

<sup>53</sup> The notion of the vengeance of God can be relevantly understood when this theme is placed in the context of God’s action as King, Judge and Warrior (Peels 1995:277; Miller 1982:103).

<sup>54</sup> It is striking that the Old Testament conceptions of judgment and punishment usually accompany the apocalyptic pictures of the end-time, especially within a picture sketched by several of the eighth- and seventh-century (B.C.) prophets of Israel, in which the Day of Judgment or the Last Judgment is expressed as a day of victory for God’s people over their enemies (Chesnut 1968:69).

<sup>55</sup> In fact, according to Thomas (1977:22), the Mosaic covenantal tradition could be regarded as the heart of the Book of Deuteronomy found in 621 B.C., which sparked King Josiah’s reform (see 2 Kgs. 22-23; Deut. 28). A cursory examination of any pre-exilic prophetic book shows that the most prominent theme in the doom preaching is accusation of transgressions committed.

how Israel interpreted this catastrophic crisis in terms of tension between the reality of their immediate experience of their own situation and their faith confessions of the past that seemed to have failed, as well as the necessity of rebuilding hope for the future. Thus, although they interpreted this catastrophe as God's direct and proportionate punishment for Israel's sin,<sup>56</sup> the prophets not merely dealt with sin, covenant breaking, defilement of the temple, or acts to demonstrate God's Lordship in judgment, as well as salvation, because in Amos, Hosea, Micah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, we see many oracles which have some claims to present the genre, "Oracle of deliverance" (1977:129). Westermann (1979:56) points out that the successive announcements of judgment by prophets, from Amos to Jeremiah and Ezekiel, must be seen closely linked to the beginning of Israel: with the liberation from Egypt and guidance through the wilderness, in which Israel obtained its very existence as a nation by God's act of saving. If Israel forgot God, if it turned against and away from Him, then it would thereby lose the basis of its existence. In this sense, the prophets' accusations and announcements of God's judgment were concerned with Israel's existence. Therefore, Westermann (1979:56) aptly points out that God's act in saving and judging His people are closely linked. Because Westermann believes that although the saving God is now the Judging God in terms of Israel's transgressions, nevertheless, His judgment is aimed, paradoxically, at the saving of Israel (1979:56).

In accordance with Westermann's view, Fretheim (1984:136-137) represents the significance of God's empathetic love regarding Israel's judgment:

God's response to Israel's judgment is to take up the cry of a mourner, or, where suffering without judgment is in view, an empathetic presence... God is not in different to what has happened to the people. God does not view Israel's fate with a kind of detached objectivity... For God to mourn with those who mourn is to enter into their situation; and where God is at work, mourning is not end... Judgment is not salvation, but it is the necessary prerequisite for the salvation of the people. Death is necessary for such a people before life is possible again. In the midst of judgement God works his salvific deed.

Furthermore, in terms of the biblical explanation of the relationship between sin and judgment,

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<sup>56</sup> For instance, about the middle of the eighth century B.C., Amos pronounced harsh judgment upon Northern Israel, saying that her sins would lead to her downfall at hand of Assyria, a disaster that indeed took place with the fall of Samaria in about 721 B.C. (Amos 3:9-12, 5:1-7, 6:1-14, 9:7-10) (Chesnut 1968:99)

Miller (1982:122) wishes to use the term “correspondence” instead of “consequence,” because he believes the biblical description of the relation between sin and judgment is too diverse to be confined in terms of automatically built-in consequence.<sup>57</sup>

Miller (1982:132-139) attempts to categorize several theological views regarding the issue of correlation between the divine judgment and sin, as follows:

- (1) Judgment as the consequence of the fate-effecting deed<sup>58</sup>
- (2) Judgment as God’s retribution
- (3) Judgment as purifying, reclaiming, renewing
- (4) Judgment in the historical process

In respect of the theological principle of correspondence, although a number of biblical passages seem to support the above-mentioned views in various ways, nevertheless, we should at least, acknowledge that God’s vengeance and His love are not irreconcilable notions, in which His wrath and vengeance are variable, while love is constant in His relationship with mankind<sup>59</sup> (Peels 1995:294). Though Yahweh punishes sinners, there is no text in the Old Testament where his justice is equated with vengeance on the sinner. Yahweh’s justice is saving justice where punishment of the sinner is an integral part of restoration. As previously argued, although assertions about God’s saving justice became problematic in the context of the Israelite exile, in many prophets’ exilic and post-exilic writings, we find that God’s righteousness becomes the ground and content of an eschatological hope for the ultimate revelation of divine power to vindicate Israel’s trust and thus lead all nations to acknowledge God’s cosmic lordship, among which His intervention to restore and sustain his people within the covenant (Marshall 2001:52). Additionally, in the oracles of prophets, Jeremiah 9:10-12,17-22, 31:20 and Hosea 11:8,9, we

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<sup>57</sup> In contrast to Miller’s view, as confirmed in the results of our survey, in terms of the Korean religious cultural background, many parishioners within the KPBC seem to understand God’s judgment as the direct and automatic consequence of God’s punishment on account of their sins (misdeeds) with an emphasis on an explanatory model (cause-effect). If we adopt Miller’s categorization, their view seems to be easily related to the view of judgment as the consequence of the fate-effecting deed or the view of judgment as God’s retribution.

<sup>58</sup> Within this view, judgment is directly associated with sin, not by external decision, but by an internal movement of cause and effect. Judgment comes through the deed that applies under the power of Yahweh. Miller (1982:134) aptly points out that this view is not so much a carefully and worked-out interpretation of the causal nexus, and cannot express thoroughly the relationship between sin and judgment.

<sup>59</sup> Baird (1953:163) also concludes that God’s judgment describes His nature in His relation to humans, which is an inseparable totality of love and wrath.

find the motif of God's lament that is connected to the announcement of judgment, in which He suffers under the judgment that He must bring upon his people (Westermann 1979:59).<sup>60</sup> Therefore, in this vein, we can say that God's compassionate love and power in terms of his judgment reaches out to people in their sin, in their forgetfulness of freedom bestowed on them, in their violation of the justice demanded of them (Migliore1983:51).

Throughout the Bible it proclaims the sovereign power of God, thus, one could say that omnipotence or almightiness has certainly been one of the most prominent of all attributes traditionally ascribed to God (Migliore 1983:48).<sup>61</sup> Although it is not easy to find the primary name for God concerning the notion of His power in the Old Testament, a Hebrew word, *el Shaddai*, could be considered the closest as it seems to be equivalent to the English word "omnipotent." However, it is not possible to base one's understanding of the words of the Old Testament on analysis of the etymology and the derivation of the terminology; thus, the meaning of this word must be determined within the context of various texts (Erickson 1998:166; Louw 1989:53,54). For instance, one of these usages is found in the revelation to Abram in Genesis 17:1-18:15. The Lord comes to Abram and identifies himself as *El Shaddai* (Gen. 17:1) and promises the birth of a child, which seemed impossible, as Abram was 100 years old and Sarah 90. Upon seeing Sarah's mirth, the Lord said to Abram: "Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son" (Gen. 18:12,14). In this context, the name, *El Shaddai*, is linked to being able to do anything. In other words, nothing is beyond the reach of God's power (Erickson 1998:166-167).

Furthermore, in Genesis 28:3, Isaac blesses Jacob by referring to the name, *El Shaddai*, God Almighty, to make him fruitful and increase his numbers. Then, in Genesis 35:11, God appears to Jacob and uses this name relating to His being powerful and able to do very great things. Also

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<sup>60</sup> In the light of this point, in the Old Testament, God is totally different from the KRCs' God as a "frightening and apathetic moral Judge," who strictly and mercilessly judges and punishes people according to their deeds.

<sup>61</sup> Geach (1997:7-20) distinguishes between the concepts of "almightiness" and "omnipotence." Whereas the description of the term "almightiness" indicates that God has power over all things, the concept of "omnipotence" reflects God's ability to do anything. Although Geach suggests the concept of almightiness as an authentic part of the traditional Christian belief, nevertheless, this is not certain, since, according to Gijbert (1993:48), the source of the Christian tradition describes God's power more in terms of omnipotence than in terms of almightiness. In this study, however, the researcher uses omnipotence as a comprehensive term without distinguishing between the meanings of these two terms.

in Genesis 43:14, 48:3 and 49:25, like his father, Jacob passed on this same name to his sons. Naomi also spoke of this name, which reflects the conception that God is the ultimate source and cause of the circumstance of life (Erickson 1998:166,167). Furthermore, in the Book of Job, we find a widespread use of this term - no fewer than 31 times, which illustrates the idea that God has both the ability and right to do all things in relation to nature, justice and the like (1998:167). In this light, Erickson (1998:169) summarizes the notion of the power of God whom the Old Testament reveals as the absolute Sovereign, who has the authority and ability to do whatever He chooses. Thus, no task is too difficult for God and nothing can obstruct His plan and work.

Furthermore, Migliore (1983:48) emphasizes God's liberating power in the Old Testament - Israel first celebrates God's power in the story of His surprising liberation of them, a poor and oppressed people. According to Chesnut (1968:50), in the Mosaic tradition, Yahweh is found not only to be faithful, just, and righteous, but also compassionate, especially in terms of the exodus from Egypt. A theme dominant throughout the account of the exodus is that of Yahweh's compassion for his people's suffering: "I have seen the affliction of my people... I know their suffering, I have come to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians" (Ex.3:7-8). God displayed His saving, blessing and compassionate power by delivering Israel out of her oppression (Chesnut 1968:51). Deuteronomy 26:5-9 describes God's power in the exodus, which enables the Israelites to be liberated from Egyptian bondage. Thus, the notion of God's power is distinguished from oppressive and authoritarian power. Rather, it is about the power to set the oppressed free (Migliore 1983:49). However, Migliore (1983:50) believes that God's liberating power should be emphasized in the light of justice. In Jeremiah 22:16 and Micah 6:8, the prophets warn that God's liberating power is abused and corrupted if not viewed as the foundation of human justice. In addition, Migliore (1983:51) points out aptly that God's liberating power should be understood also as compassionate power. He asserts that, according to the Old Testament, God hears the cries of the oppressed, has compassion, and acts to liberate them from bondage. Thus, it is a complete distortion to contrast the God of the Old Testament as a God of raw power and unforgiving justice, with the God of the New Testament as a God of tender love and infinite mercy<sup>62</sup> (Migliore 1983:51).

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<sup>62</sup> The researcher will try to prove this point through the following exegesis on some biblical texts.

Fretheim (1984:72) makes it clear that divine self-limitations regarding power are implicit in the promise which God has made. According to Fretheim, “whenever God makes a promise, God limits the options available for action on any related matter. God cannot use power in such a way as to violate a promise God has made; that would mean unfaithfulness.” Indeed, God does not use His power in a dominant and oppressive way. Rather, God exercises His power in the light of His faithfulness in terms of the promise. Furthermore, God’s sovereign and blessing power should not be understood in terms of magical power in fiction, or a framework of deterministic universal fatalism and a mechanical necessity (Clowney 1995:327). Through his expositional survey of the book of Jonah, Ortlund (1995:41-46) maintains that God’s sovereign power should be understood in the light of His compassionate love. The drama of the book consists primarily in God’s saving pursuit of Jonah, in which Jonah first experiences his own disobedience and God’s salvation in chapters 1 to 2, then describes the Lord’s actions and argument in chapters 3 to 4 (1995:43). As Ortlund (1995:44-45) proposes, particularly in Jonah 3:10 and 4:2,11, we see not only God’s mysterious compassionate and sovereign power, but also his intention to shock us with the headstrong obstinacy of the human heart, the heart steeped in biblical truth and rich with covenantal privilege. In addition, we should reckon the uniqueness of God’s blessing power in the Old Testament. In fact, like the divine power of fertility, blessing is one of the oldest and most widespread motifs in the religions of all peoples. In this sense, God’s work in blessing seems to be connected to similar elements in other religions. However, God’s blessing power displays its uniqueness in the sense that his saving work, in respect of his faithful promises, cannot be separated from his blessings (Westermann 1979:52). God’s blessing, which is His quiet, continuous, flowing and unnoticeable work, is realized in a gradual process, as in the process of growing, maturing and fading. In particular, God’s blessing cannot be understood apart from His salvific work in association with His faithful promise (Westermann 1979:44-51).

In short, on the basis of His holiness and righteousness, God judges and punishes sinners for the purpose of purifying, reclaiming and renewing them, as well as promoting their holy and fruitful life in the covenantal grace of God. Thus, it seems reasonable that God’s His judgment should be understood more in terms of a saving justice, namely, restorative and reconstructive justice than in terms of a punitive and destructive justice. In other words, God’s judgment and punishment cannot be thoroughly understood while disregarding His compassionate love and

covenantal grace. Furthermore, in the Old Testament, God's power is not described as the power of oppressive control, as well as authoritative and apathetic dominance. Rather, it is represented as the sovereign power in respect of God's compassionate and sacrificial love, as well as His faithfulness and covenantal grace (Migliore 1983:66).

### **Yahweh's compassion and holiness: Exegesis of Hosea 11:8-9**

The book Hosea is one of the earliest prophetic books. Only Amos preceded Hosea's preaching in time. Like Amos, Hosea announced God's judgment against the Northern Kingdom of Israel for failure to be faithful and obedient in their covenantal relationship with God. In addition to this, Hosea highlights this broken relationship and views the consequence of God's judgment as the end of the nation. However, unlike Amos, Hosea concentrated more intensively on the issues of coupling his message of judgment with a message of hope and renewal. Hosea clearly contended that the character of God was not exhausted by divine anger and punishment (Birch 1997:8)

The Book of Hosea can be divided into two equal parts: chapters 1 to 3 and chapters 4 to 14. Autobiographical material of chapters 1 to 3 forms one section, and chapters 4 to 14, containing the remaining prophetic pronouncements, comprise the other. This second section may be further separated into two divisions: chapters 4 to 11 and chapters 12 to 14 (Anderson 1980:57,58; Catlett 1988:166). Each major section of the Book of Hosea ends with a hope and renewal, in which chapter 3 serves this function in the first section (chapters 1-3), and chapter 11 plays this role in chapters 4 to 11. In particular, chapters 4 to 11 begins with the phrase, "Hear the word of the Lord" (4:1) and ends in 11:11 with the concluding formula, "says the Lord." The final segment, chapters 12 to 14, also ends with a speech of hope in 14:4-9 (Birch 1997:97).

In chapter 11, Yahweh's self-disclosure through the speech of Hosea displays His compassionate love for Israel as strongly as any passage in the book.<sup>63</sup> Yahweh tells of his love for the "child" Israel, the child's rebellion against him, and the punishment that must inevitably follow. But the

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<sup>63</sup> In fact, the genre of this entire passage is a historico-theological accusation, according to the summarized statement in v.7 (Wolff 1982:193).

punishment will not be mortal (Stuart 1987:187). Limburg (1988:38) posits that the situation addressed assumes that some Israelites are already captive in Assyria (v.11), probably referring to the deportation in 733 B.C. (2 Kings 15:29-31; Hosea 1:1,2). The capital, Samaria, and the hill country of Ephraim were spared this fate when Hoshea, who took the throne, murdered Pekah (732-724) and immediately paid tribute to appease Assyria. The cities of Israel were not yet destroyed but would be shortly (v.6) and the people taken captive. Thus, the piece may fit well into the middle years of Hosea (732-722), just before King Hoshea's ill-fated decision to make an alliance with Egypt (Birch 1997:9; Limburg 1988:188).

Hoass (1997:24) believes that the Egyptian theme becomes the framework of the chapter.

v 1: Called from Egypt.

v 5: Return to Egypt.<sup>64</sup>

v 11: Again out of Egypt.

This is a well-known framework in Hosea (see 2:17; 7:11,16; 8:13; 9:3,6; 12:2,10,14 and 13:4). Thus, we affirm that the Exodus-tradition has a strong position in historical retrospect. However, in chapter 11, "Egypt" becomes a theme used historically (past), symbolically (present), and eschatologically (future). In this light, both the calling out of Egypt and the judgment are seen as the work of God. Verses 1 to 7 may be viewed as a unit of words of doom, followed by the reaction in God's own heart, (vv. 9-11) (Hoass 1997:24).

Chapter 11 moves through four parts:

**verses .1-4:** The past: out of Egypt. Here, the parent/child imagery is introduced in order to develop the history of God's relationship with Israel with the lens of that image (Limburg 1988:39). That is, verses 1 to 4 tell of Israel's past, weaving together Yahweh's saving acts and Israel's sin. Israel's election was an act of Yahweh's love and will to have Israel as His son. Though the son proved prodigal and unfaithful, that love was not exhausted during repeated

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<sup>64</sup> Limburg (1988:39) notes that "return to Egypt" appears to have a double meaning. That is, as a result of the Assyrian conquests of 733. B.C. and the deportation of a portion of the people, some citizens of Israel might have fled to Egypt as refugees. However, in the context of the whole chapter, Egypt is a symbol of bondage.

deeds of fatherly tenderness (Mays 1969:151). The motive for God's deliverance of Israel out of Egypt and God's calling of Israel as a son is clear. "I loved him" (v.1). From its opening lines, this chapter establishes a testimony to divine love - the love of parent to child, given freely long before the child can reciprocate with any understanding and, as we shall see, love given continuously even when it is rejected. Hosea should be regarded as the first to base God's relationship to His people on love - freely given love prior to any reciprocal relationship like a covenant (Birch 1997:99).

**verses . 5-7:** From tender beginnings, the text turns abruptly to the tragic present. Israel has refused to return to God (v. 5) and they have brought upon themselves desperate circumstances that will result in a return to Egypt, as well as a submission to Assyrian rule (v. 5). The return to Egypt is an ironic theme, which Hosea uses often to indicate future judgment against Israel (7:16; 8:13; 9:6), in the light of the deliverance from Egypt that established God's love for Israel (v. 1) (Birch 1997:99). Limburg (1988:39) seems to understand the oracles in verses 5 to 7 within the framework of the immediate future. However, according to Birch (1997:99), the double bondage to Egypt and Assyria of verse 6 is not just Hosea's vision for the future but also a current reality already happening to Israel. Because verse 6 may indicate that the violence of the Assyrian sword is already being felt in the land, perhaps reflecting the bitter Assyrian invasion of 733 B.C., when many fled as refugees to Egypt while many others were forced to submit to Assyrian rule (Birch 1997:99). Therefore, we can say that these verses sketch the present plight of Israelites who have left their God and still clung to another god who could not save them (Mays 1969:151).

**verses . 8-9:** God refuses to give up on Israel and displays His compassion toward Israel.<sup>65</sup>

**verses . 10-11:** The story which began by recalling the deliverance of a "son" from Egypt now returns to that theme with the promise of the son's deliverance from another bondage in the future. The story end thus: out of Egypt, back into Egypt due to rebellion; then out of Egypt, back home again because of the Lord of compassion (Limburg 1988:40).

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<sup>65</sup> Exegesis of Hosea 11:8-9 will follow in greater detail.

### *Detailed analysis*

v.8 In this verse, Yahweh does not automatically relinquish His people. God's response to the denials recorded in verses 1 to 7 does not prevent Him from continuing to refer to "my people." In verse 8, we glimpse the agony in the mind of God as He searches for some way to evade the response to which He has committed Himself in the covenantal curses (Anderson 1980:587-588). In the first place, we find a particularly impressed speech, as indicated by the tone set by the first word,  $\eta\alpha$ . The usage of this word has a certain change within it, providing an adversative undertone. Thus, in our passage, self-caution combines with the address to the defendant within the context of legal dispute, in which the defendant witnesses the plaintiff's own inner struggle. Therefore, the abrupt change in verse 8 should not be interpreted in such a way as to require the separation of these verses from verses 1 to 7. Yahweh's self-caution and remission of punishment in verses 8 to 9 presupposes a discussion of Israel's former deeds in verses 1 to 7 (Wolff 1974:194). In fact,  $\eta\alpha$  can be used both in interrogative speech and in introducing an exclamation. It is often a rhetorical device expressing the following emotions, which are especially far more common in Jeremiah: "a) the impossible; b) dismay, bewilderment; c) accusation; or d) scorn. As an exclamation it implies either a) certainty; b) mockery; or c) lament" (Hoass 1997:24). Although the verbal forms may vary somewhat, in our passage, we find a clear tendency for the perfect tense to be used in scornful exclamations, or laments, while the imperfect tense is used for expressing dismay, bewilderment, and leading to the answer: impossible (Hoass 1997:24).

Furthermore, in verse 8, God asks how he could ever treat the son He loves as he did the cities of the plain, Admah and Zeboiim, which He destroyed. These are two of the cities that are presented in Genesis in conjunction with Sodom and Gomorrah. The terms "Admah" and "Zeboiim" always occur as a fixed pair in Scripture and, except for Hosea, appear in conjunction with Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 10:19, 14:2,3; Deut. 29:22) (Catlett 1988:168). The verb  $\eta\eta$  used here for God is the same as that in Genesis 19:25,29. The difference between Yahweh's actions in Genesis and His response in Hosea is clearly present in Hosea's use of  $\eta\eta$ . Genesis 19:25,29 uses this term to describe the manner in which Yahweh destroyed the cities of the plain: He overthrew them. In Deuteronomy 29:22 the destruction of Admah and Zeboiim is specifically listed along with Sodom and Gomorrah and the reason given for the destruction is

that Yahweh overthrew the cities in His anger. But, in Hosea 11:8-9, Yahweh refuses to act according to His anger. Rather, Yahweh will overthrow (הפך) His heart instead of overthrowing the cities of Israel or destroying Ephraim (1988:169). Therefore, we notice that Hosea employs the language of Genesis and applies it in a much different way. With His compassion, Yahweh refuses to destroy the people of Israel the way He destroyed the cities and the inhabitants of the plain (1988:169-170).

That the word נחומי occurs here is of the utmost importance in order to understand the notion of God's compassionate love.<sup>66</sup> According to Hoass (1997:147), the conjectured word *nihumai*, as a noun derivative is extremely rare: “ 1) *Noham*, Hos 13,14, compassion; 2) *Naeharnah*, Job 6,10, Ps 119,50, comfort; 3) *Nihumim*, Zach 1,13, Isa 57,18 (and here Hos 11:8), comfort.” Only the Targum of our Hosea-text replaces it with *Rahamim*. As for the verb-forms of this root, *naham* would mean “having pity, compassion”(the *nif.*) or “to comfort” (the *piel*).

Thus, Hoass (1997:147), who wishes to keep the MT interpretation in verse 8, proposes a few optional interpretations as follows:

- (a) Retaining its meaning of repentance, remorse, intent to judge his people, which would be parallel to the expression of God's repentance after the Flood, Gen. 9:11; 8:21.
- (b) Focusing on God's remorse over the election of Israel, the judgmental aspect being intertwined with God's compassion.
- (c) Expressing the emotional upheaval.
- (d) Holding to the lexicographical support for “comfort,” claiming that this phrase exposes the two wills of God, that of judgment and that of comfort.
- (e) With or without emendation, translating with “compassion” (Mitleid).

Although it is not easy to rule out any of the above-mentioned interpretations, if we consider the context of verses 1 to 7, we may prioritize the theme of God's remorse over His election of Israel and judgmental aspect in terms of His compassion and pity, or the overall theme of emotional upheaval (Anderson 1980:589; Hoass 1997:147; Birch 1997:100; Landy 1995:143).

**v. 9:** Though Yahweh has every right under the covenant to eliminate Israel from the earth, as we notice the fourfold use of “not” לא in the verse, He will not do so. Instead of carrying out His

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<sup>66</sup> Only one conjecture (נחומי of MT) is suggested as replaced by נחמי in BHS. The plural form *nihumim* is only known in Isa. 57:18 and Zech. 1:13, where the meaning obviously is “comfort.” Among commentators there is an overwhelming majority who hold “compassion” to indicate either a conjecture, or to hold a unique translation (Hoass 1997:144; Anderson 1980:589).

“fierce anger,” destroying Ephraim and coming out to them “in wrath,” Yahweh now announces that He will restore Israel due to his character’s inclusion of grace and compassion (Stuart 1987:181). Yahweh is not “a man in your midst.” Indeed, He is the Holy One. However, it is immediately controverted by the following phrase: “in your midst holy.” Here, we notice that God’s transcendence, signified by “holy” in our passage, is no more than his condescendence and immanence (Landy 1995:143).

Furthermore, in terms of the interpretation of the word שׁוּב, Wolff (1974:202) manifests that this word cannot indicate a second destructive action; rather, this word denotes not only the repetition of action, but also the restoration of the previous condition. However, Stuart (1987:182) points out that Wolff’s interpretation is an unsuccessful attempt without an understanding of the eschatological context, if we consider a historical perspective in terms of the destruction of the nation in 722 B.C. Therefore, according to Stuart, this word should be interpreted in the light of a hope, which is part of the expectation of the covenant itself (Deut. 4:29-31; 32:43; Hosea 6:1-3) and of the pre-exilic prophet. That is, this word does not relate a promise of mercy to those alive in Hosea’s day, but to their descendents, the remnant that will follow (Stuart 1987:182).

### ***Theological implications of Hosea 11:8-9***

Through the exegesis of Hosea 11:8-9, we notice a rare insight into God’s suffering heart in which His compassion is expressed in the announcement that punishment will not be the final stage in the Lord’s dealing with His people. The declaration, “I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst,” particularly articulates two dimensions of God’s reality, i.e. His transcendence and condescendence. That is, God is the “Holy One,” emphasizing the “wholly other” or His “transcendent dimension.” The condescension of the Holy One receives its final expression in the coming of God in Jesus Christ (Limburg 1988:41,42). God is in tension between a desire (drive) to overcome evil, destroy the destructible forces, cast out the apostate, on the one hand, and the desire (drive) of this salvific will to rescue the remnant (rest), the penitent people, even the unrepentant and apostate people.<sup>67</sup> In the light of our text, we confirm

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<sup>67</sup> According to Kitamori (1966:21, 119-129), the pain of God reflects his will to love the object of his wrath. For Kitamori, God suffered in the sense that He should forgive and love those who do not deserve to be forgiven. Kitamori’s view will be examined in greater detail in the following.

that both God's wrath and love stand in full strength (Hoass 1997:149). However, in terms of the issues of God's compassion, Hoass (1997:149) aptly raises the following questions: "Although our passages concern and display God's compassion in some ways, nevertheless, it is still uncertain whether God's compassion reaches beyond the prerequisite of repentance? Is God's compassion actually dependent on the repentance of the apostate people, or is his compassion exhibited without this precondition? What is the internal order of related issues: threat of judgment, compassion/long suffering, repentance and actual judgment?" Of course, as Hosea referred within this text, we cannot find any logical conclusion. Thus, the researcher believes that we can find some clues to the answers of these questions in our following exegesis.

### **Yahweh's judgment and deliverance: Exegesis of Jeremiah 31:31-34**

While the first part of Jeremiah (1-24) is a demonstration that there could be no hope of salvation for Judah except through the judgment of exile, the second part (26-45) of the book concentrates on what lies beyond the exile and, in it, hope for the future opens up in a new way. The second part, chapters 30 to 33, possesses a clear unit of theme, namely salvation of the covenantal people. For this reason these chapters have become known as the "Book of Consolation" (McConville 1993:79). In particular, in chapter 31, the Book of Consolation concludes with a series of five short salvation oracles, which form a chiasm centred on verses 31 to 34, the promise of the new covenant (Keown 1995:126). However, there has been much debate on the issue of the identity, meaning and provenance of the "new covenant." For instance, the sectarians of Qumran understood themselves to be the men of the new covenant, but this new covenant for them was nothing more than the Mosaic covenant with strong legalistic tendencies. The other group was the Christians, who saw the fulfilment of Jeremiah's words in the emergence of the Christian church (Thomson 1980:580).

However, Brueggemann (1991:69-70) warns that this issue has been frequently preempted by Christians in a supersessionist fashion, as though Jews belong to the old covenant now nullified and Christians are the sole heirs of the new covenant. Thus, in this text as it has reached us, the new covenant would be made with Israel and Judah, that is, with the whole of Israel (Thomson 1980:580). Furthermore, it has been debated whether this text could be attributed to Jeremiah, to the Deuteronomic redactor of the Book of Jeremiah, or to the very late post-exile piety. Some

scholars believe that these chapters were located in the late post-exile. However, it seems to be more reasonable to accept the view that, apart from some editorial reworking, the passage goes back to Jeremiah (Thomson 1980:580; Clement 1973:190; McKane 1996:7,817).

The first (vv.23-26) and fifth (vv.38-40) oracles are about Jerusalem. But the second (vv.27-30) and fourth (vv.35-37) form a contrasting pair, in which the responsibility of each person for sin contrasts with God's enduring commitment to the survival of Israel as a nation. The logical tension between these two affirmations will be resolved by the initiation of new covenant, which includes forgiveness of sin (v.34) and transformation of the human party to the relationship (v.32). These entire oracles supplement, explain, and draw out the implication of the primary poetic compositions that precede them and, they are more future-oriented than the rest of the Book of Consolation (Keown 1995:126-127). Regarding its context in Jeremiah, verses 31 to 34 both provide an initial climax within the Book of Consolation and take its cue from expectations around earlier contents, especially in 24:7. There Yahweh promised: "I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord." And in verses 33 to 34 up to this point we have observed a case building for Yahweh's intervention on the grounds of Israel's inability to obey him (McConville 1993:97-98). An eschatological formula, "the days are surely coming," begins the second section, verses 27-30, as well as the third, verses 31-34 and fifth (vv.38-40), in which this salvation proclamation promises the end of the sufferings of judgment. In particular, in the third and central unit (vv.31-34), the Lord promises to make a new covenant with Israel and Judah and to forgive their sin. A change in speech pattern will also be a consequence of the fulfillment of this promise. They will "no longer" (לא עוד) catechize one another saying, "know the Lord" (v.34). The covenant formula also appears within the promise (v.33; cf. 30:22;31:1,9) (Keown 1995:127).

### *Detailed Analysis*

**Verse 31.** The formula employed, "the days come"(v.31, וְהָיָה יָמֵים בָּאִים), is that of verse 27 and the new covenant is a future expectation not a present reality. Rudolph contrasts this with verse 33 ("after those days") and explains the latter as "after Ephraim's return from exile." Rudolph supposes that "the house of Israel" (vv.31,33) means "Ephraim" and not "all Israel" on the basis of the absence of any mention of Judah in verse 33. It is more common practice to say that the

date of making this covenant is unspecified and the parties to the covenant are identified in the third person as “the house of Israel” and “the house of Judah” (McKane 1996:817-818; Keown 1995:131). To “make (literally ‘cut’ כרת) covenant” is a divine deed that can be promised for some time in the future, like the repopulation and rebuilding of the land promised in verses 27 to 28. The Lord initiates making this new covenant by promising it far ahead of time. The goal of covenant renewal had been to avoid total destruction under the effects of the curse, but in 31:28 the end of the destruction has already been announced. Just as the Lord had voiced the people’s lament for them and then answered it in 30:12-17, here the Lord initiates the covenant renewal and promises a new covenant instead (Keown 1995:131).

**Verse 32.** The new covenant (v.31) will not be like the covenant that the Lord made with Israel’s and Judah’s ancestors of the exodus generation (v.32). This means that “the Sinai covenant fundamentally changed.” The metamorphosis consists in the circumstance that the new covenant will not be broken and written on the heart, not on the table of stones (Sinai) or in a book (McKane 1996:818). In fact, God’s people, Israel, have violated the substance of the covenant by their apostasy, and the curse has come into effect (30:12-15,23-24). As a result, the exodus ancestors, Jeremiah’s audience and all the generations in between broke the former covenant (פרר hiphil). We find the primary background of this verse in 11:1-7 and 7:21-34. These passages interpret the incitements against the people in the rest of the book as evidence of covenant breaking and the disaster they suffer as a judgment that results from it (Keown 1995:131). However, here was a crisis for Israel’s faith that Jeremiah understood clearly. Jeremiah asked, “Can the Nubian change his skin or the leopard its spots?” It was indeed a spiritual dilemma. A new covenant was needed because they broke the first covenant despite the fact that Yahweh had undertaken a mighty act of deliverance on their behalf, seizing them by the hand and leading them from Egypt (Thomson 1980:581). The true meaning of *וּאֲנִי בְעַלְתִּי בָם* (v.32) is unclear. There have been some interpretations: “because they broke my covenant I assert my authority over them” (Duhm), “and I had to exert my authority over them” (Rudolph). Also, “although I was a husband to them” or the like appears in KJV, RV, RSV, but JE interprets “though I was patient with them” (McKane 1996:819). However, on the basis of the usual usage of *בְּעַלְתִּי*, meaning, “I was a husband” or “I was Lord,” “though I was Lord over them and was their God, they broke my covenant” could be possible,<sup>68</sup> because, the figure of Yahweh as the

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<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, Keown (1995:131) believes that “although I had mastered them as a husband,”

husband was known in prophetic teaching since the time of Hosea (Hos.1-3), and Jeremiah used this figure in chapter 3. Thus, the interpretation, “I was Lord,” may suit the covenant context better (Thomson 1980:581).

**Verse 33.** The promise unites the two houses of verse 31 into the one “house of Israel.” The term, house of Israel, could be regarded as a new title for the people scattered in the diaspora (Clement 1973:191). As argued previously, “after those days” in verse 33 indicates sequence, a later time (cf. vv.29,31). Furthermore, the new covenant summarizes the substance of the relationship between the Lord and Israel. Through the endowment of a new covenant with well-directed ethical energy, people can practise righteousness, which is entirely an outcome of “grace” (McKane 1996:820). The first covenant document was written by God on two stones and given to Moses to be taken to the people (Exod. 31:18; Deut. 4:13, 5:22, 10:1-4). Moses writes “this law” and gives it to the priests and elders (Deut. 31:9-13). However, the stone can be broken and scrolls can be lost or ignored (Exod. 32:19; 2 Kgs. 22:8; Jer. 36:23). Therefore, Keown (1995:133) maintains that when God writes the Divine Law (תורה) on people’s hearts, mediators are bypassed and the limitation of written documents is superseded. The metaphor of writing on the heart displays how the external limitations and vulnerability of the old system of written documents and human mediators will be eliminated (Keown 1995:134). If God’s law is written in the heart, there can be no conflict between human desire and God’s will, since the love of God is with all the heart and soul (Deut. 30.6) (McKane 1996:820). According to Keown (1995:134), the metaphor of writing on the heart is found in one other place in Jeremiah, i.e. in 17:1. The hearts of the people of Judah are depicted as tablets that require the hardest writing instrument because the inscription on them is not the Lord’s law but the people’s sin, the commitment of their will against the Lord. Such people can no more start doing good than a leopard can change its spots (13:23). In the context of Jeremiah, only a metaphor of surgery and writing by God’s own hand (31:33) can overcome their stubbornness and prepare them for loyal obedience (Keown 1995:134).

**Verse 34.** A deliverance oracle in the form of a change of speech pattern begins this verse and describes the consequences of having the Lord’s instruction written on the heart. (Keown

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becomes clear due to the fact that this verb means to “marry,” with the emphasis on the rights and authority that the husband exercised over his wife (e.g. Gen. 20:3; Deut. 21:13, 22:22, 24:1).

1995:134). Indeed, intermediaries like Moses, priests, and prophets would no longer be needed because all will know (יָדָעוּ) Yahweh, from the least to the greatest (Thomson 1980:581). Keown (1995:134) posits that the content of the covenant agreement would be between “my torah” (v.33) and “knowledge of Yahweh” (v.34). In the book of Jeremiah, “the Lord’s law or instruction” usually refers to the revelation of God’s will and way, in the form of commandments, statutes, and words that must be heeded (6:19, 9:12-13, 16:11, 26:4, 32:23, 44:10,23). Furthermore, like other formulations of a covenant and renewal in the Old Testament, the book of Deuteronomy includes a recitation of the covenant partner’s history, how the Lord had saved the people of Israel and entered into a covenant with them in order to give them the land (Keown 1995:134). Brueggemann (1991:71,72) posits that “knowledge of Yahweh” could denote “a cognitive capacity to recite the saving tradition” or “affirmation of Yahweh as sovereign Lord with readiness to obey the command for justice that are the will of Yahweh.” For Brueggemann, the ability to recount the saving tradition and to obey divine commands are aspects of “knowledge of Yahweh.” This knowledge of Yahweh, which will obtain universally in Israel and Judah, is linked with forgiveness of sins. Yahweh will not keep a record of His people’s wrong-doings and will erase their sins from His memory. Thiel (1981:28) suggests a possibility of the necessity of human response in terms of God’s forgiving grace by remarking that “forgiveness” may be inferred from “repentance.” However, it is common practice to say that there is no doubt about accepting the fact that Yahweh’s gracious forgiveness is given unconditionally to His people (McKane 1996:823; Keown 1995:135; Thomas 1977:180).

### ***Theological implications of Jeremiah 31:31-34***

On the basis of the exegesis of Jeremiah 31:31-34, we acknowledge that the “new” covenant promised in verse 31 is not a fixed theologumenon in the Old Testament, which labels the future, changes the relationship between God and His people in many ways (Keown 1995:130). Nevertheless, we notice that the “new covenant” wrought here by God concerns the Israelite community. It was formed anew by God among exiles who were now transformed into a community of glad obedience. Thus, we may say that Christians come derivatively and belatedly to share the promised newness (Brueggemann 1991:69-70). However, this is not to deny Christian participation in the newness, but Christian participation is utterly grounded in Jewish category and claims, and can have participation on no other terms. Moreover, this Jewish

mediation of newness is left open as an act of profound grace to all who come under these commandments and allegiance to this God (Brueggemann 1991:73). Furthermore, we note that new covenant in this passage is not based on human repentance or their knowledge of God. Rather, it is based on God's initiative and unconditional grace, as we find in Jeremiah 31:33, "I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their heart" (cf. Jer. 24:7). That is, God creates both salvation and preconditions for it, both repentance and preconditions for it, both forgiveness and preconditions for it, both a new election and preconditions for it. The twin structure of retribution and conditionality of God's lines of action, resting on a tension over what man will do, are utterly swept away and absent from this new era (Thomas 1977:178-180). Nevertheless, we should note the fact that the promise of verse 33 was for an obedient attitude towards the law. Human accountability in terms of the law is still present and the law is still the norm for ordering the relationship (Thomas 1977:178-180). The central attention and focus in this passage is whether Israel is willingly to obey the law that God has so graciously given (Clement 1973:191). Clement (1973:192) maintains that from this passage, we can see how later Judaism gradually became conscious of a tension in the understanding of divine election between the ideas of gift and obligation.

Therefore, in the light of this new covenant, there will be common, shared access to this knowledge, which manifests fundamental egalitarianism in the community. No person has superior, elitist access, and no one lacks what is required. All share fully in the new relation due to God's initiative grace (Brueggemann 1991:72). In particular, in terms of the concluding statement of this passage, Brueggemann's conclusion (1991:72) is remarkable. It says, "All the newness is possible because Yahweh has forgiven. Indeed, beginning again in and after exile depends upon Yahweh's willingness to break out of a system of rewards and punishments, for the front of Israel and Judah could never be satisfied by punishment. God has broken the vicious cycle of sin and punishment; it is this broken cycle that permits Israel to begin again at a different place with new possibility. This is an uncommon statement, utterly Jewish, utterly grace-filled; upon it hangs the whole of reconstituted Judaism out of exile. Jewish faith is deeply rooted forgiveness." Therefore, Brueggemann (1991:71) points out that, throughout this passage, we find genuine solidarity, expressed in the covenant formulary.

### 4.3 THE COMPASSIONATE GOD WITHIN THE NEW TESTAMENT

As discussed previously, in this section, in order to establish a theology of compassion in a pastoral perspective, we will explore the notion of compassionate God in the New Testament with its focusing on the significance of divine power and judgement. Firstly, in our endeavour to find one dominant term regarding God's power in the New Testament, the Greek *pantokrator* could be chosen as the closest term. This term is a compound word, formed from two different words: *panto* from *pas* "all," and *krator* from *kratos*, "power" or "might" and meaning roughly the same as El *Shaddai* in the Old Testament. (Feinberg 2001:278; Erickson 1998:169). Although there is still some debate about the degree of influence of Greek philosophy on the doctrine of God in Christianity, nevertheless, it is difficult to wholly deny its impact on the tendency to form a one-sided understanding of God as a transcendent Being (Frame 2001:31; Sanders 1994:59,60; Berkof 1979:107,108; Forster 1990:50-51).

According to Erickson (1998:169), in the New Testament, this word appears ten times, of which nine are in the Book of Revelation and one in 2 Corinthians 6:18 - the one instance outside Revelation, in which God, identified as the Lord Almighty, promises to be a Father. In particular, in one of the occurrences in Revelation (1:8), God identifies Himself by the name of "Almighty." Furthermore, Erickson (1998:169) maintains that a narrative passage that teaches God's all-powerful nature is the annunciation to Mary in Luke 1. While the angel appears to Mary and announces God's promise regarding childbirth, Mary declares His power: "For nothing is impossible with God" (v.37). This declaration indicates that this all-powerful God can overcome anything. Here, in the New Testament as in the Old, we note assertions of God's ability to do anything, whether a miracle in the realm of nature, the ability to change the human heart, as well as the whole course of history (Erickson 1998:169-170).

Migliore (1983:53) points out aptly that, in the New Testament, we find the real meaning of God's power in Christ and His Spirit:

The New Testament is based on Israel's faith in God and His lordship over all things. The God and Father of Jesus Christ is the God of Israel. Jesus does not proclaim a new God but the same God whose word was spoken by the prophets of Israel .... What is new in the New Testament is not merely a new teaching about God, but it is the personal presence of God in Jesus of Nazareth .... In

Jesus' action, passion, and resurrection Christians find the decisive revelation of the reality and power of God.

Migliore (1983:53) believes that Jesus' intimate addressing God as "Abba" (dear Father) is a sign of the radically new understanding of God and of His divine power. As Migliore proposes, the God whom Jesus calls "Father" is not a God who oppresses, but a God who loves and forgives, so that people can be free. For instance, in the Sabbath debate in Mark 2, we notice that God's power is not presented by ignoring human dignity: "It is proper to do good on the Sabbath" because "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (v.27). That is, God's power is not the power of repression and fear. Rather, it is a liberating force and empowering power by which the dignities of the powerless are esteemed (Migliore 1983:54-55). Prior (1987:93-106) argues that the power, which is shown in Jesus' ministry of healing the helpless and His casting out demons should be understood in the light of the servant nature of Jesus. Furthermore, Jesus brings about a revolutionary change to the meaning of power, which deeply disturbs all existing concepts of power and authority, while Gentile rulers lord it over the Jews. Jesus says, "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant" (Mark 10:42-45). For Jesus, true power does not lie in dominating others, but in service. It is not mastery over slaves, but the power of self-giving love. In Luke 4, although Satan persuades Jesus to use his power for Himself (Luke 4), Jesus refuses to use His power for selfish purposes (Prior 1987: 34-38; Migliore 1983:55).

In addition, in the event of the cross, those surrounding the dying Jesus mock him with the words: "He saved others; let Him save Himself" (Luke 23:35-36,39). In these scenes of the passion narrative, we also see a vast contrast between the concept of Jesus' power and that of those who mock Him. Their concept of power is totally self-centred. However, in the event of the cross, Jesus reveals the true power as self-giving love, rather than dominant, oppressive and self-centred power. In this sense, the drama of the Gospel requires a revolution in our understanding of God's power: His power is "made perfect in weakness" (1 Cor. 1:18-24); the power of love of the crucified Lord is "the power of God for salvation" (Prior 1987:160-161; Migliore 1983:57-58). Gräbe (2002:235) asserts that, within the Pauline perspective, God's power is interpreted in the light of the primary metaphor of Christ's crucifixion (in weakness) and resurrection (in power). Gräbe (2002:234) believes that, in terms of the notion of God's power, Paul emphasizes the power of the Spirit and Christ's resurrection (Phil. 3:9-10).

Furthermore, Migliore (1983:58,59) aptly urges us to find God's true power in the Spirit and the resurrected Christ:

The Spirit sent from the resurrected Lord is the power of God at work among us, reminding us of the story of Jesus, breaking our bondage to self-centeredness and exploitation of others, and freeing us for a new life of inclusive friendship and community with God and with our fellow human beings.

Furthermore, as the researcher believes, the notion of divine judgment relates the significance of God's righteousness. Marshall (2001:38) maintains that the key phrase "the righteousness of God" appears eight times in Romans (1:17, 3:5,21,22,25,26, 10:3), as against twice in the other Pauline letters (2 Cor. 5:21; Phil 3:9) and three times in the rest of the New Testament (Matt. 6:33; James 1:20; 2 Peter. 1:1). In particular, the centrality of divine righteousness in Romans, which also is apparent in Paul's more than 50 formal quotations of Old Testament texts, indicates the fulfilment of God's saving righteousness in relation to Israel (Marshall 2001:59; Hays 1989:34-38).<sup>69</sup> For Paul, divine justice is a saving and reconciling justice and, additionally, the death and resurrection of Christ represents the concrete realization and visible demonstration of God's justice. Paul regards the cross and resurrection as the focal point of God's justice. On the other hand, the Gospel writers see Jesus' entire life and ministry to be a demonstration of also divine justice (Haughey 1977:264-290; Marshall 2001:69). For instance, in terms of Jesus' use of the concept of "justice," Baird (1953:167-168) finds a prominent tendency of emphasizing God's condemnation and wrath upon sin. Baird (1953:170) recognizes Jesus' crucifixion as the greatest revelation of God's judgment (Mark 8:33; 12:6; 15:34).

In fact, Guntons (1988:87-93) attests that in Anselm's understanding of atonement, we find an axiom that, if injustice remains unpunished, God's integrity and credibility are questionable. Thus, justice requires the satisfaction of God's demands, in which the death of Jesus outweighs in value and therefore compensates for all the sins of humanity. According to Travis (1995:22), the Reformers shifted the focus from satisfaction to more strictly penal categories by speaking of Christ undergoing vicarious punishment to meet the claims of God's punitive justice; Calvin

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<sup>69</sup> Nebe (1992:144) maintains that Paul's main emphases are on the aspect of God's righteousness as (1) a gift of salvation and (2) the power that generates salvation within the larger framework of God's righteousness as a decided salvation concept, which is connected to a relational and forensic eschatological concept.

writes: “This is our acquittal: the guilt which held us liable for punishment was transferred to the head of the Son of God” (*Institutes* II. 16.5). In a similar vein, Morris (1966:382-388) affirms the retributive understanding of the penalty that Christ bore on the behalf of humanity.<sup>70</sup> According to Travis (1995:37), in Paul’s view, in His death the cross, Christ not only experienced retributive punishment on behalf of humanity, but also entered into and bore on our behalf the destructive consequences of sin. For Travis, it is also true that “Christ was judged in our place”- that Christ experienced divine judgment for our sins in the sense that He endured the God-ordained consequences of human sinfulness.<sup>71</sup> In this light, we can maintain that God sent His only Son as bearer of divine judgment on behalf of humanity.

Meanwhile, within the ministry and teaching of Jesus, we see His compassionate and forgiving love for sinners. For example, according to the Gospel witness, Jesus demonstrated the saving power of forgiving and non-retaliatory love. He refused to condemn the woman apprehended for adultery (John 7:53-8:11), He forgave the sins of other supplicants (Mark 2:5; Luke 7:47), He rejected the use of violence against His opponents (Matt. 26:52; Luke 22:51) and He forgave even his own executioners (Luke 23:34). He prayed not for the justice of swift retribution on his abusers but for their pardon, for God’s higher justice (Marshall 2001:72). Although Jesus refers to “unforgivable sins” (Mark 3:28-30), the unforgivable sin, in fact, is refusal to accept the forgiveness that God offers. It is unforgivable because there is no way for us to accept forgiveness, if we refuse to acknowledge our own need of forgiveness (Jones 1995:297).

According to Marshall (2001:162), divine judgment in the New Testament may be temporal or eschatological in character. Whereas some references to divine judgment display a temporal character, which is usually depicted in terms of reformatory and educative purpose (Heb.12:5-11; Titus:2-11-12; Rev. 3:19)<sup>72</sup>, on the other hand, most references to divine judgment are

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<sup>70</sup> Marshall (2001:44) insists that the identification of divine righteousness with God’s vindictive or punitive justice has had a complex and often distorting effect on Christian thinking about justice.

<sup>71</sup> Travis (1995:38) posits a more careful use of a retributive framework in terms of God’s judgment. The danger with a retributive framework of thought is that it tends to regard sins as individual deeds, each requiring a corresponding penalty. However, the retributive doctrine is right in its insistence that forgiveness cannot take place without a cost being borne.

<sup>72</sup> God’s temporal judgments are intended to awaken sinners to their dangerous predicament and, thus, escape final loss, by the way in which God continually delays ultimate judgment to leave a way for repentance (Rom. 3:25; Acts 17:30-31) (Marshall 2001:169).

eschatological (Marshall 2001:175). Although there is no uniform conception of final judgment and its consequences to which all New Testament authors subscribe, nevertheless, a sufficient number of common or similar convictions emerge in their writings to give us reasonable insight into how they understood eschatological judgment. At the end of the age, all people, both living and dead, both “righteous and unrighteous,” will appear before the judgment seat of God or Christ, where each will receive “recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.” A separation will occur. While the righteous will depart into eternal life with “rewards,” “prizes” or “treasure” in heaven, the unrighteous will go to experience eternal punishment (Marshall 2001:176). Kreitzer (1987:99) observes that most references speak of the eschatological content of God’s coming wrath and of the retributive judgment of God on the last day. Nevertheless, Marshall (2001:178) warns that the New Testament descriptions of the final judgment, as a matter of God’s assessing and recompensing human works, could easily be understood as teaching that divine justice is essentially and ultimately retributive justice. Indeed, the idiom employed in the New Testament to depict final judgment includes notions of wrath, vengeance, and punishment. (Marshall 2001:189). However, we should recognize that there is no contradiction between God’s love and justice throughout the Bible, God’s basic orientation to humanity is one-of self-giving love, while conforming the demands of His holiness to those of His steadfast, redemptive love. God’s justice is His love in action and His love is the driving force of His justice (Brill 1995:292-295; Baird 1953:163; Marshall 2001:176; Wright 1997:110-111).

In terms of an issue of understanding a character of eschatological judgment, Volf’s (1996:193) assertion is remarkable:

God will judge, not because God gives what they deserve, but because some people refuse to receive what no one deserves; if evil doers experience God’s terror, it will not be because they have done evil, but because they have resisted to the end the powerful lure of the open arms of the crucified Messiah.

In short, although we find the same God whose word was spoken by the prophets of Israel in the New Testament, we find a revolutionary, but true concept of God’s power within the ministry and teaching of Jesus Christ and His Spirit, especially in the light of the event of Jesus’ death and resurrection. Thus, God’s power should not be understood in terms of

apathetic control and oppressive authority based on self-centeredness. Rather, it should be interpreted in terms of His compassionate and self-giving love. Furthermore, in accordance with the Old Testament, the New Testament also portrays God as the divine and righteous Judge. Although God's righteousness and justice require the satisfaction of His demands, nevertheless, God gave His only Son to us and Christ was judged and punished in our place. God sent Christ as bearer of divine judgment on behalf of humanity. Therefore, in the light of the event of Christ's death and resurrection, as well as Jesus' teaching and ministry, it seems problematic to interpret God's power and judgment merely in the framework of the apathetic and retributive vindication. Rather, God's power and judgment could probably be understood more in terms of God's compassionate and covenantal grace, as well as sacrificial love as well.

### **The power and wisdom of God in the cross: Exegesis of 1 Cor 1:22-25**

Paul writes this letter not as a private individual but as an apostle, because we observe certain formalities of the epistolary style: the opening (1:1-3) with the fixed basic form and variations of it in individual cases; the proemium (1:4-9); and the concluding greeting. Unlike Galatians and Romans, in this letter, Paul does not attempt to arrange the content in a systematic order. However, Paul relates one topic after another on the basis of the existential issues in the Corinthian Church: the form of the community (unity of groups), the theme of freedom (sexual ethic, the attitude to idols and to sacrificial food), the theme of structure of divine service, the theme of charismata and hope (Conzelmann 1975:6-7). According to Pickett (1997:59), Paul's objective in 1 Corinthians 1 to 4 is to reform the Corinthians' conduct that it be governed by "the word of the cross." This point is confirmed by his use of the verb *παρακαλέω* (1:10), which Paul employs when setting forth the main purpose of his letter. There are two passages where Paul uses this verb to recommend the cause of his reader's action. In 1.10 he "urges" (*παρακαλώ*) that there "be no dissensions [*σχίσματα*] among you, but you be in the same mind and the same judgment."<sup>73</sup> This *παρακαλέω* construct is used in 4:16 to bring it to a close: "I urge you, then, be imitators of me." Following this exhortation is the statement in verse 17 in which Paul explains that the reason he sent Timothy was to remind them of his "ways in Christ." Therefore, if we adopt the view that the exhortations in 1:10 and 4:16 convey both

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<sup>73</sup> In fact, Paul heard from "Chloe's people" that various groups within the community the had created discord by claiming allegiance to different Christian leaders, namely Paul, Apollos and Cephas (1:11-12). According to Welborn (1987:87), the word *μερίς* (1:13) is the customary term for "party" in Greek.

Paul's purpose in writing and how to accomplish it, then the unity he desires could be somehow connected with "his ways in Christ," which is defined by the "word of the cross" (1:18-25) (Davis 1984:68-69; Pickett 1997:59).

Furthermore, Rooyen (1995:2,3) posits that the major problem of the first four chapters of 1 Corinthians is the nature of the wisdom (σοφία) against which Paul polemicizes. Particularly, regarding the wisdom terminology in the context of 1 Corinthians 1-2, Paul raises his own questions about the validity of "the wisdom of the world," which relates mainly to the sense of rhetorical eloquence and technique for persuading the hearers regarding their social status and influence in the Greco-Roman context, by emphasizing that his weakness and rhetorical inferiority occasioned the display of God's power, because, for him, God's power stands in direct opposition to the Greco-Roman comprehension of rhetoric (1 Cor. 1,2) (Pickett 1997:59). Therefore, following his initial appeal for unity in the Church (1:10-17), Paul here (1:18-25) endeavours to disclose the antithetical opposition between human wisdom and the "word of the cross." Here, the cross is interpreted as an apocalyptic eschatological event, God's shocking intervention to save and transform the world. Thus, the new age and creation has broken in the old world in which God's decisive action in Christ death and resurrection has inaugurated the apocalyptic end times (Olson 2002:811; Hays 1997:10, 26; Brown, A R 1996:430). In this section, Paul offers the *logos* of the cross, which reveals the true wisdom and power of God, over against the wisdom of *logos*, the cultured speech symbolizing power as the worldly views things (Olson 2002:810).

### ***Detailed analysis***

**Verse 18.** Verse 18's connections begin with γάρ that links this verse to verse 17 and introduces only verse 18. Here, Paul propounds the thesis: Ο λόγος ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ, "the word of the cross," an exhaustive statement of the context of the gospel. The catch word, λόγος, provides the link with verse 17 over against the σοφία λόγος (Conzelmann 1975:41; Robertson 1911:17). This message, "the word of the cross," may be an abbreviation of the message of the crucified Christ, because for Paul, a message about Christ is a message about the cross; the only Christ whom he knows is Christ, the crucified. When this cross is preached, men react in different ways and God judged them differently. Although both ἀπόλλυσθαι and σώζεσθαι are eschatological terms, the

judgment that is to be realised, is already manifest in the present (Best 1980:16). Paul simply assigns those who reject, and those who receive “the word of the cross” to two classes corresponding to the issues of faith and unbelief. The contrast between δύναμις θεοῦ and μωρία belong to the very core of Paul’s teaching. What ultimately saves is not σοφία, but the δύναμις θεοῦ. Therefore, the cross is indeed the true power of God.

**Verse 19** is proof of what is stated in verse 18 according to a quotation from the LXX.<sup>74</sup> Paul’s use of γέγραπται always refers to the Old Testament Scripture (here, Isa. 29:19). It is evident that the spoken word here is the wisdom of this word. Although there are men who boast of their wisdom and understanding, true wisdom is obtained from God alone. God’s concern is to demonstrate that no human wisdom can avail before Him but He does not simply disregard this wisdom. Rather, He has made it foolish.

**Verse 20.** According to Rooyen (1995:113), this verse is characterized by three difficult terms σοφός, γραμματεὺς, συζητητής, in which their use has been occasioned by Paul’s use of a *florilegium*. Of the terms the most striking is γραμματεὺς.

Best (1980:20) provides various interpretations in respect of these terms as follows:

- (a) Until verse 22, there is very little about the Jews in 1:18-25, and, when they are introduced, they seem to be only a side issue; therefore, it is improbable that all three terms are to receive a Jewish connotation. (b) Perhaps the Corinthians had ascribed the terms to the three party heroes. Paul could certainly be the scribe, Apollos could either “be the scribe or the wise man, but we cannot attach any of the descriptions easily to Peter.” (c) They may be intended to be a categorization of learned men as understood generally by culture. The first would then be the Greek philosopher, the second the Jewish scribe and the third might be the sophist (Greek or Jewish). Alternatively the first term might be generic, the second refer to the Jewish wise man and the third to the wise man of the Gentile world. (d) They may be used to distinguish three particular forms of activity of learned men: firstly, one who is knowledgeable in philosophy, secondly, one who is able to express himself in words, and thirdly, one who can put across his arguments effectively in a dispute. The strong Jewish associations with the second term make this improbable. (e) Since all these solutions present problems, it is probable that what we have is a repetition of terms about learned men in order to show

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<sup>74</sup> Only κρύψω is replaced by ἀθετήσω. Although it is not easy to give the reason for substitution, it may be in accordance with Paul’s usual freedom of citation, or due to Psalm 32:10 (LXX) (Rooyen 1995:113; Robertson 1911:19).

that all forms of human learning are included when God is said to reject wisdom and understanding (v. 19).

From the passage, we can classify the first of these terms under the domain of learning. That is, γραμματεὺς refers to the acquisition of information – a person who has acquired a high level of education. On the other hand, σοφός belongs to the semantic domain of understanding. Nevertheless, both these domains overlap and involve both the acquisition and process of information. Therefore, we may say that while the first and second refer to the extent of knowledge of learned men, the third refers to their activity in the expression of that knowledge (Rooyen 1995:114; Best 1980:20).

Τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου is not an objective genitive after συζητητής, i.e. it is not a matter of disputing about this world. The genitive indeed qualifies all three terms, in which all three categories of learned men belong to this world (Best 1980:21). Here, Τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου is equivalent to τοῦ κόσμου. Three personal experiences sum up the phrase, “the wisdom of the world.”<sup>75</sup> Paul does not say, “God shows that the world is foolish,” but “God makes its wisdom foolishness.” The use of the aorist tense sets forth that here is revealed what the world long was and did, and how God reacted to this (Conzelmann 1975:43).

**Verse 21.** As the main thought, this verse introduces God’s refutation of the world’s wisdom by means of what the world holds to be folly. We find a double antithesis here: (a) σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ- τοῦ κόσμου and (b) σοφία- μωρία. God’s attitude, as stated in verse 20, is now explained; it is a reaction to the world’s attitude (Conzelmann 1975:41-42). The phrase εὐ τῆ σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ, “in the wisdom of God, is somewhat controversial. Barret (1968:53) argues that in the first phrase σοφία refers to a scheme, or plan, prepared and enacted by God for the salvation of mankind and that in the second phrase it refers to the σοφία τοῦ κόσμου of the preceding verse. Others regard ἐν in a temporal sense: during the epoch of wisdom, i.e. when God still manifested his wisdom directly; that means before the fall.<sup>76</sup> However, here Paul is concerned not with the

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<sup>75</sup> Best (1980:21) posits that this worldly wisdom could be the wisdom of the Greek philosophical tradition, or a more or less developed form of Greek gnostic teaching, esoteric truth in the Mystery Cult, or the wisdom based on the Jewish tradition.

<sup>76</sup> Conzelmann (1975:45) contrasts the interpretation of ἐν in a spatial sense with the view of ἐν in a temporal sense.

antecedent, but with God's consequent will, not with a prelapsarian but with a postlapsarian decree. Therefore, ἐν must not be interpreted in a temporal sense, but must rather be interpreted in a spatial sense, in spatial terms, in the midst of wisdom. Here we perceive that a distinction between different epochs in salvation history is of no significance. Also that Paul is working with motifs of the Jewish wisdom teaching, which was associated with the Torah or the whole tremendous scheme of the world history and saving history that was bound up with the Jewish theology of wisdom (Rooyen 1995:115; Von Rad 1962:445; Conzelmann 1975:45). Paul began attacking wisdom in verse 19 with the quotation from the Old Testament, and in verse 20 he said that God has turned the wisdom of the world into folly. Now he picks up this word μωρία and uses it in the antithetical statement: God has saved men by God's folly. As in verse 18, Paul might have said that God was pleased to save through the word of the cross, but God's choice of μωρία, which continues the theme of verse 20, brings out the antithesis to the διὰ τῆς σοφίας of verse 21. In this way, Paul indicates that what God has done, does not stand in continuity with the *sophia* of the world (Best 1980:26).

**Verses 22-24** form one sentence in which verses .22 and 23 are parallel and together sustain the thought of either verse 20, or more probably verse 21.<sup>77</sup> In either case Paul is marking more precisely between the wisdom of the world and the foolishness of God. ὁ κόσμος is now explained as consisting of Jews and Greek. Paul's division of cosmos into Jews and Greeks is therefore an attempt to create comprehensiveness: here is the totality of humanity (Rooyen 1995:116; Best (1980:27). On the basis of the fact that the Jews are aware of wisdom as a way of approach to God, Best (1980:27) raises a question: why should the Jews suddenly be introduced as those who asked God for a sign?; why should they not also have been considered under the heading of wisdom? According to Weiss (1910:62), Jews are introduced because the party of Apollos drew on the Jewish Wisdom tradition, in particular by supplying elegant scriptural proofs for the necessity of the Cross, and he views signs with the sense they have in the Fourth Gospel. Clearly the signs that are given and explained in that Gospel are not those for which the Jews asked. Even if one supposes that the Corinthians' conception of wisdom is derived from Hellenistic Judaism, this still does not explain the reference to signs at this point. According to Best (1980:27), the reason for using "Greek" instead of "Gentile" in this verse might be because Paul is writing to a city which regards itself as Greek and because wisdom is

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<sup>77</sup> ἐπειδὴ, while causal, has only a loose connecting effect; cf. Best (1980:27).

associated more easily with the concept “Greek,” while “Gentile” would include barbarians. “Greek” functions here in a twofold way denoting both a religious and a cultural entity. Therefore, Paul’s division of κόσμος into Jews and Greeks, therefore, is an attempt to create comprehensiveness; here is the totality of humanity apart from the Christians (Best 1980:27-28). Similarly, Barrett (1968:54) maintains that two clauses of verse 22 give us the two expressions, religious and unreligious of the man in the world who is alienated from God and manifests his rebellion in anthropocentric existence. Rooyen (1995:116) points out that we should not view these attitudes as though provoked by the preaching of the Gospel, which would make verse 23 the basis for verse 22. The *σημεῖα* and *σοφία* are characteristic of the way these people live and characteristic of their approach to God. Verse 23 stands in an antithetical parallelism to verse 22. Jew and Greek may be different in their approaches to God, but they form a unit when compared with Paul’s approach - we preach Christ crucified. Christ is used here as a name and not as a title so that the emphasis lies not on it but on *ἑσταυρωμενον* (Rooyen 1995:116). According to Rooyen (1995:116), it is appropriate that Paul uses the word *σκάνδαλον* for the Jew and not for the Greek. Because the Jews see redemptive value in many things: the law, circumcision, the prophets, and his descent from Abraham, thus, for them, accepting redemptive value in a crucified man would mean their rejection of the redemptive value of these other privileges. The Greeks, however, seeks wisdom, and for them the cross is folly.

**Verse 25** gives a reason for what has preceded, but it is not clear whether Paul wishes to set forth a general rule for the way God behaves, or reinforces what he has already said by means of an additional reason. In two clauses, Paul uses neuter adjectives instead of substantives. Since the abstract nouns were available and were not used, we may suspect that when he used the neuter adjectives, he was thinking of God’s particular action in the cross. Even if a general rule is being stated, it is linked to the particular event of the cross through the whole context of the passage. Indeed, it is in the cross that God’s folly and weakness prove to be wiser and stronger than the wisdom and strength of men (Best 1980:37; Weiss 1910:34; Rooyen 1995:117). The foolishness of divine love is wiser than the wisdom of human pride. God achieves the mightiest ends by the humblest means and the Gospel of Christ, not with the world’s strength and splendour, but with all that the world despised as mean and feeble (Spence & Exell 1913:8). The weakness of God, particularly, is the weakness of the death of Christ. Indeed, this foolish and weak thing is the event of the cross itself. In human experience, death is the ultimate weakness,

but the death of Christ is more powerful than all human strength. Paul's acquaintance with Christ caused him to change all his previous ways of thinking; now, he understood that wisdom and strength were to be found in weakness, life in Jesus' death (Orr & Walther 1976:160).

### *Theological implications of 1 Cor 1:22-25*

As a consequence of an exegesis of 1 Cor 1:22-25, we notice that Paul announces God's apocalyptic intervention in the world, for the sake of the world. The apocalyptic perspective is signalled by the way in which Paul describes the encounter between world and Gospel (v.18). Paul views God's judging and saving activity as underway at the present moment. Paul continuously insists throughout the letter on the not-yet-completed character of salvation in Christ. In fact, the term "wisdom" in the Corinthian setting can refer both to the possession of exalted knowledge and the ability to express that knowledge in a powerful and rhetorically polished way, which has not reckoned with the full implication of the Christ event and especially with the significance of the cross. Therefore, Paul emphasizes that God has brought a new age and transcended the existing wisdom, through the foolishness of the cross and God's true power and wisdom (Hays 1997:27,28; Davis 1984:74).

Furthermore, we see that Paul's use of wisdom and foolishness creates an ironic system of values that serves his apologetic intention. Paul's use of paradoxical irony brings about a reinterpretation not only of the cross, but also of his authority.<sup>78</sup> Paul's reinterpretation of the cross by means of wisdom and foolishness refracts the definition of folly not to signify the absence of power. The paradox then being that, in its powerlessness, foolishness expresses the value of power and God's wisdom. In other words, the paradox between the categories wisdom and foolishness signifies God's power. What was perceived as mutually exclusive is now firmly bound together. Wisdom and foolishness cannot be separated, because wisdom is always qualified by certain foolishness. The same holds true for weakness and strength (Rooyen 1995:243). Therefore, Wisdom and foolishness are two strategic values through which, the cross

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<sup>78</sup> According to Rooyen (1995:243), Paul's paradoxical irony also brings about a reinterpretation of his own authority. His weakness no longer signifies an unqualified powerlessness, but becomes a powerful category in that it is a sign of God's own approval. Paul's forceful concession of his weakness at the same time exposes his source of power. His lack of wisdom and eloquence, therefore, not only exposes his foolishness but his source of power. As a result, the one who takes this concession seriously must also be prepared to accept Paul's authority, recognizing God's power in the apostle's foolishness and weakness.

is depicted in a paradoxical way. It also enhances Paul's own authority and plays an important role in constructing his person, which, in the end, contributes towards the establishment of an *ethos* (in this case unity), prompting further interaction from the readers. Paul's reinterpretation of wisdom and foolishness enlarges the value of strength and weakness beyond the scope of what the reader normally would expect from these categories. The foolishness of the message about the cross is actually pure wisdom, and the wisdom of the world is nothing but foolishness. The same reversal of values is found in the calling of the Corinthians. In 1:26 their powerlessness manifests the power of God to save in and through their human condition of weakness and low status. God's wisdom, foolishness and power therefore promote a change in Paul's readers, calling into question their system of values. For Paul, the cross event furnishes the essential paradigm of God's paradoxical acts (Rooyen 1995:244).

Thus, one can say that the folly of the cross displays God's compassionate love and identification with our suffering in terms of weakness, failure, and a scandalous death by crucifixion (Cousar 1990:45-46; Berkof 1979:134). Particularly, in his theological view of this passage, Louw indicates a more pastoral implication of the paradoxical meaning of the cross. According to Louw (2000a:65), in terms of humiliation, affliction and misery, the cross discloses that the "how?" of God's wisdom is the crucified Christ, because God reveals His power in a paradoxical way in the cross in terms of weakness and vulnerability. In the folly of the cross, due to His compassion and pathos in Christ, God suffers with us and for us. Therefore, suffering becomes a feature of God's faithfulness to His promise (Louw 2000a:98). Indeed, this passage could be represented for reshaping the conventional pattern of power.

### **Jesus' judgment and power in the fig tree: Exegesis of Matthew 21:18-19**

Although it is not easy to find consensus in terms of the analysis of the structure of Matthew, most scholars seem to agree that the book Matthew has a fivefold structure, which can be found in the five books of the Pentateuch, as well as the five books of Psalms. Additionally, we see that each of five major teaching discourses, which end with the phrase "when Jesus finished all these sayings"(7:28, 11:1, 13:53, 19:1 and 26:1), may have been meant to include a preceding narrative in each instance (ch. 3-4, 8-9, 11-12, 14-17 and 19-22). Our passage is found in the fifth narrative, which concentrates mainly on describing the commencement of Jesus' passion in

Jerusalem, as well as the beginning of the end (Hagner 1993:11-13). Due to Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, the Galilean ministry came to end and all that remained were the events, the deeds and teaching in Jerusalem that were the preliminary goal and climax of the entire Gospel narrative (Hagner 1993:591). In particular, the first thing Jesus did in Jerusalem was to go to the temple as the messianic king and judge, to purge it of practices that mocked its divinely intended purpose.

The narratives of Matthew (21:1-22) and Mark (11:1-26) are parallel, nevertheless, Matthew's wording is considerably different from Mark's. In its arrangement, Matthew (21:12-17) moves this narrative forward chronologically, putting it before the cursing of the fig tree (vv.18-19), rather than sandwiching it between the cursing of the fig tree and its withering, as in Mark. Whereas Mark (11:11,12,15) explicitly put the cleansing on the day after the entry, Matthew implies that it took place immediately after the entry. Matthew generally presents a shorter version of Mark's expulsion scene (e.g. Mark 11:16 is lacking), but records Jesus' events of healings within the temple that provoked a challenge to the chief priests and scribes (Telford 1980:70). Furthermore, whereas Mark 11:13 informs us that Jesus approached the tree to see if it had fruit, Matthew omits this particular. In addition, no Matthean parallel is found regarding the phrase "for it was not the season for figs" (Mark 11:13). The miraculous element, particularly, is heightened in Matthew 21:19, where the fig tree withers immediately; and one assumes that the tendency of the tradition was to magnify Jesus' power <sup>79</sup> (Davies 1997:147-148).

According to Hagner (1993:603-604), in its context immediately following the cleansing of the temple, the withering of the fig tree serves an enacted parable of judgment upon unfruitful Israel. The miracle in terms of the withering of the fig tree could make sense only when understood as an anticipation of the destruction of the temple and the end of national Israel. After the part of the prophetic sign of the cursing and withering of the fig tree, the discussion about the power of faith follows (vv.20-22). Hagner (1993:606) attests that the two apparently unrelated main points of this pericope (Matt. 21:18-22), the acted-out parable of judgment against unfruitful Israel and the power of prayer to those who believe, may have been kept together in the tradition,

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<sup>79</sup> Here, some scholars think that no difference exists between both accounts and the interval conveys no more than the tree's withering (stated explicitly by Matthew) was only seen to have happened the following day (cf. Telford 1980:74).

because the issue of power of prayer could be understood in terms of the possibility of the disciples' fruitfulness in contrast to Israel. Thus, Hagner (1993:607) maintains aptly that it is clear that the wonderful promise of verses 21 to 22 points to the miraculous power available to the disciples to fulfil their calling, that is, in the living of Christian life in fruitful discipleship.

### *Detailed analysis*

**Verse 18.** Unlike Mark's narrative (11:20), here *πρωί* does not specify which morning is being discussed. Mark (11:12-14,20-24) makes it clear that this episode happened in two stages, over a two-day period. Blomberg (1992:317) attests that, without contradicting Mark, Matthew improves the style by telling the story all at once and keeping the focus on Jesus entering Jerusalem as the judging Messiah. *ἔπανάγων* means "returns." The reference to Jesus becoming hungry provides the occasion for Jesus' approach to the fig tree<sup>80</sup> (Davies 1997:150).

**Verse 19.** In terms of the surprising curse, "*εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*," "forever," with the connotation of final judgment and its harshness, and the immediate withering of the tree, Hagner (1995:605) posits that what occurs here is a prophetic sign that points beyond itself to a far more grievous kind of barrenness. Because *παραχρήμα* is used elsewhere only in Luke 10 and Acts 7, always in connection with a miraculous or striking event, therefore Mneile (1961:303) posits that Matthew uses this word in order to heighten Jesus' supernatural power. Furthermore, it is bad to suggest that, at finding no fruit, Jesus was merely venting His disappointment upon the tree. We can rather assume that Jesus' action must have had a purpose of teaching some truth to the disciples. Regarding the seriousness of the lack of *καρπός*, if we consider Matthew 3:10, 7:19 and the parable of eschatological judgment that follows later in this and the next chapter (Matt. 21:43, 22:3 and the whole of ch. 23), we could attain the key to understand the application of this prophetic act to Israel (Hagner 1995:605). Although it is not easy to avoid doubt whether Jesus would have employed an act of destruction to teach some lesson, or only as a warning of punishment could have its full force, most commentators seem to agree that the withering tree designates a symbolic denunciation of Jerusalem, Jewish nation and/or those in charge of the temple (Davies 1997:151-152; Mneile 1961:303; Albright 1987:260; Hagner 1993:604). In fact, according to Telford (1980:212), the fig-trees' casting off its leaves was a descriptive motif for

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<sup>80</sup> "*πελευαν*" is used in reference to Jesus only elsewhere in Matthew 4:2, 25:34-46 (Hagner 1995:605).

the End-time of God's Judgement (Isa. 34:4) The fig also appears in figurative imagery in Matthew, Luke and James, which say that it is impossible to obtain figs from thistles (Matt. 7:16), from thornbushes (Luke 6:44), or from vines (James 3:12). This is used analogously to support a spiritual lesson. And each of three remaining fig-tree passages, i.e., the Markan parable (13:28-32), the reference to Nathanael "under the fig tree" (John 1:48-50) and Luke's own barren fig-tree parable (13:6-9), displays its own significance. For instance, Luke's parable (13:1-9) indicates that a period of grace had been offered to Israel before judgement. Jesus had repeatedly called upon his people to produce the fruits of repentance, because the fate of nation, as of the barren fig tree, rested ultimately on its response to the call (Telford 1980:212,229).

### ***Theological implication of Matthew 21:18-19***

On the basis of exegesis of Matthew 21:18-19, we first note that the story of the withering of the fig tree falls between two paragraphs concerning the temple, in the first of which Jesus protests and in the second, the priests protest against Jesus. So the immediate context encourages us to interpret the cursing of the fig tree as a prophetic act of judgment. The divine wrath had begun to manifest itself against the Jerusalem temple, and the way was being prepared for another people who would produce genuine fruit. Furthermore, in terms of the extravagant promise for prayer (vv.22-24) and the reference of the temple as "a house of prayer" (Matt. 21:13), for Matthew, the old temple had passed away and its place was taken by the ecclesia. Thus, the sequence in 21:12-22, judgement of the old place of prayer, and the promise of prayer's efficacy within the church reflects the course of salvation history, as well as the replacement of a fixed holy space by a portable community (Davies 1997:153-154). Furthermore, we confirm that the story of the withering of the fig tree clearly provides the figurative image of Jesus' eschatological judgment towards the unfruitful Jewish people and the strictness of their Jewish religion, as well as Jesus' supernatural power. The divine wrath and judgement had begun to manifest itself against the temple in Jerusalem, and the way of being endowed with the power of God was being prepared for another people who would produce genuine fruit. In fact, the idea of sterility and the absence of fruit in the Old and New Testament are usually to describe the sinful state of God's people (Hare 1993:243; Hill 1972:294; Davies 1997:153). On the other hand, Luke's (13:6-9) parable in terms of the barren fig tree indicates God's redeeming patience in judgment, in which a period of grace had been offered to Israel before judgment. Jesus had

repeatedly called upon his people to produce the fruits of repentance, because the fate of Israel, as of the barren fig tree, rested ultimately on the nation's response to the call (Telford 1980:228-231).

Although it is not easy to determine from our passage whether the acted-out judgment against the unfruitful Israel and Jesus' instruction in terms of the power of prayer could be directly related or not, nevertheless, this power cannot be understood regardless of the premise of people's fruitful life. This passage does not offer the disciples or the Christians of Matthew's church (or even of the modern church) the promise that, if only they believe, they will be able to anything they want, perform any miracle, or astound the world with wonders or even miracles that make good sense. Instead, the wonderful promise in terms of the miraculous power of prayer will be available to the disciples and even contemporary Christians only on the prerequisite condition of fulfilment of their calling, that is, in the living of a Christian life in fruitful discipleship (Hagner 1993:607). In short, this passage indicates the significance of Jesus' power and judgment in a different way. Although Jesus enacted his power and judgment against the unfruitful people, he prepared a new way for other people, who would produce genuine fruit. Jesus' instruction and promise in terms of the power of prayer should be understood in terms of the prerequisite of people's fruitful life. This passage may be probably used to stir up people's accountability regarding God's law, in which their fruitful life might be promoted in the light a relevant interpretation of Jesus' power and judgment.

### **4.3 THE NOTION OF A COMPASSIONATE GOD IN PASTORAL THEOLOGY**

Previously, we explored the notion of the compassionate God in the New and Old Testament chiefly in association with the significance of the divine power and judgment, for the purpose of establishing a theology of compassion to accomplish a pastoral aim. Here, we shall survey, the views of God's compassion in terms of the interpretations of the TCR of four theologians, i.e. Luther, Kitamori, Moltmann and Louw, especially in a pastoral perspective.

Against the traditional Western philosophical concept of the immutability of God, Steen (1991:278-311) postulates that an apathetic God, who remains the distant observer of our misfortune, is justly experienced as cynical and is readily dismissed by contemporary people.

Thus, as Steen manifests, God's response to suffering should be found in His sympathy and compassionate love, in which He heals our suffering by sharing in it.<sup>81</sup> In this sense, in order to build a more relevant theology of compassion, the researcher is convinced that it would be necessary to reflect the above mentioned four theologians' views of the notion of the suffering God<sup>82</sup> and the TCR in terms of reinterpreting God's power, focusing especially on their pastoral implications for our suffering and quest for meaning. As we hypothesized previously, the reason for our choice is that the view of a theology of compassion of each of the four theologians (i.e. Luther, Kitamori, Moltmann and Louw) displays its own theological stance.

The reasons for our choice are: Luther's emphasis is more on the existential implication of a theology of the cross: despair and the experience of the absence of God; Kitamori's emphasis is more on the intrinsic dialectic of pain within God; Moltmann's emphasis is more on the ontological and theological implication of the cross: reframing Trinity and the pathos of God; Louw's emphasis is more on the pastoral and hermeneutical implication of the cross: reframing God-images, the human quest for meaning and its implication for spiritual healing (promissio-therapy). Therefore, the researcher believes that reflection on the four theologians' theology of compassion can play a decisive role to bring about a reframing of the theological paradigms against Korea's unique cultural context.

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<sup>81</sup> Weinandy (2000:62) believes that God's passionate love and compassion, and forgiveness should be found in the framework of the Wholly other.

<sup>82</sup> We see a great, wider scope of understanding God's suffering. See König (1982:51-62), Pollard (1955:353-364), Sarot (1990:363-375, 1995:155-168, 1996:225-240) J M Russell (1988:221-232), Jüngel (1988:3-13), Attfield (1977:47-57), Weinandy (2000:2-18), Ngien (2001:31-64), Tinder (1986:108-113) and Burnell (1985:19-28). However, according to our investigation concerning the interpretation of God's suffering on the cross, the theologians' arguments could possibly be summarized in the following four categories. The first category, which follows the view of *patripassianism*, maintains that God the Father Himself suffered, not God the Son. The second view is that Christ suffered on the cross according to his human nature, not to his divine nature. That is, the Son of God suffered only as a man, not as a God. The third view is that the Son of God suffered, not merely as a man, but as a whole Being. The fourth view, which goes further than the third view and presents a higher ontological interpretation of God's suffering, is that His suffering determines and even defines directly the very Being of God. If we opt for the above mentioned categorization, while Moltmann's view seems to be concomitant with the fourth category, Luther's view could possibly be classified in the third category, which might also be closer to the view of the researcher. However, since this study does not focus on speculating on the notion of a suffering God in a mere rationalistic manner, the researcher attempts to concentrate more on the pastoral implication of the notion of a suffering God and the TCR in association with the reinterpretation of God's power in human suffering and our quest for meaning.

### 4.3.1 Luther's paradoxical view : An existential approach

Martin Luther first used the term, "the TC," in 1518 in the series of statements prepared for the Heidelberg disputation (Causar 1990:7). Theses 19 to 21 particularly disclose Luther's profound theology of the cross.<sup>83</sup> Here, a dramatic contrast between theologians of glory and the theologians of the cross is evident. That is, theologians of glory operate on the assumption that creation and history are transparent to the human intellect, that one can see through what is done and what happens so as to peer into the "invisible things of God." On the other hand, theologians of the cross believe that the cross is not transparent, but more like a mirror, thus, one cannot see what is "behind" the cross. For Luther, the true knowledge of God is to be founded in God's revelation of Himself through Christ and the cross. Referring to 1 Corinthians 1:21,25, Romans 1:20 and John 14:6,9,<sup>84</sup> Luther asserts that, because humans misuse the knowledge of God, God wishes to be recognized in suffering and the cross. Accordingly, he who endeavours to find the visible reality of God in creation does not deserve to be called a theologian.

Therefore, one could say that the idea of the hidden God (*Deus absconditus*) is closely connected to the TC, since God is revealed in the cross of Christ and the God who is crucified is the God who is hidden in His revelation (Loewenich 1976:28; McGrath 1985:161). In fact, Thesis 20 of Luther's Heidelberg disputations indicates that God's revelation is a concealed and indirect revelation: *Sed qui visibilia et posteriora Dei per passiones et crucem conspecta intelligit* (He deserves to be called theologian, however, who comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the cross)<sup>85</sup> (Loewenich 1976:18). Here, Luther mentions Exodus 33:23 to demonstrate and explain the nature of this concealed revelation, in which Moses was unable to view God's glory directly, but able to see only the *posteriora Dei*

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<sup>83</sup> LW 31, 52-53.

<sup>84</sup> LW 25,157; LW 31, 52.

<sup>85</sup> See the English translation of Thesis 20 in *Luther's work* (LW. 31, 52): "He deserves to be called a theologian, however, who comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the cross." This translation, which renders "*visibilia et posteriora Dei*" as "*the visible and manifest things*," is clearly unacceptable and, on the basis of this translation, it is impossible to speak of the hiddenness of God's revelation. Thus, "*the rear parts of God*" instead of "*posteriora Dei*," should be suggested instead of "*manifest things*" (Garcia 1987:250; McGrath 1985:148).

(the rear part of God). For Luther, God manifests himself in a hidden way (Garcia 1987:252). If there is to be a revelation of God, the visible God must become the hidden God who is hidden in suffering, misery and weakness. God's power reveals itself in weakness and God's wisdom exhibits foolishness.<sup>86</sup>

However, the term, "the hidden God" (*Deus absconditus*) is not the best term to use in describing Luther's TC. Rather, he considers the crucified God (*Deus crucifixus*) to be the one who creates the dimension of faith. Therefore, we should emphasize the crucified God to bring forth Luther's dimension of faith. To the world, the hidden God reveals Himself in weakness and foolishness rather than in honour, power and riches. This is the locus of God's "hidden" revelation. We can only truly recognize God in his suffering and weakness on the cross (McGrath 1985:166; Garcia 1987:254-259). Since God reveals himself in weakness and suffering on the cross, this can create a new paradigm of the concept of God.<sup>87</sup>

Hall (1986:105) aptly states that the TC intends to eschew the models of power, triumph, victory, and conquest that Christian doctrine has too consistently employed in its endeavour to interpret the meaning of God's work in Jesus Christ. However, for Hall, the TC does not intend simply to discard the metaphor of power, he rather wants to reframe it. In fact, the cross is the supreme demonstration of God's solidarity with us in this world of suffering. In other words, God chose to enter this world and to share its sorrow and pain, and He chose to suffer death on a cross and display Himself publicly and visibly as the humiliated, abandoned, powerless, dying Christ. In addition, the cross exhibits its real meaning through the resurrection. The real weakness of the crucified Christ demonstrated the strength of the resurrection and this displays the transformational power of divine activity (McGrath 1995:26, 1988:103,106).

Furthermore, Luther's TC must be reflected in association with the notion of "*Anfechtung*" in order to discover its pastoral implication. In other words, the researcher intends to investigate

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<sup>86</sup> In Luther's theology, the meaning of the hidden God can be summarized as follows: first, the idea of a hidden God is very intimately connected to Luther's TC. Thus, the hidden God is the God whose nature and work can be recognized only "under the opposite form." Secondly, the hidden God is none other than the revealed God. In other words, God is hidden for the sake of revelation. Thirdly, the hidden God is no product of speculation; rather, He is the crucified God (Loewenich 1976:29-31).

<sup>87</sup> LW. 31, 52.

Luther's understanding of the relationship between the passion of Christ and God's suffering, since this could be closely associated with the issue of reframing PGI, particularly in the face of human predicament and suffering. According to McGrath (1985:170), *Anfechtung* is a state of helplessness and hopelessness, which, for Luther, includes two aspects of the concept: the objective assault of spiritual forces upon believers and the subjective anxiety and doubt that arise within them as a consequence of these assaults.

Thus, here we can say that the notion of *Anfechtung* is directly associated with the *opus alienum*. For Luther, revelation is recognizable only in Christ's suffering and cross. As discussed previously, in Christ we can truly find the crucified God (*Deus crucifixus*) for us. Moreover, Luther mentions that God makes himself known through the passion of Christ (*Passio Christi*) (Garcia 1987:259,260). For Luther, the passion of Christ displays not merely a noetic dimension, but a very practical, experiential dimension. Luther believes that God makes Himself known through His active suffering, rather than passivity, and brings us to experience the total humiliation and suffering that Luther calls the *opus alienum* (God's alien work) in order to experience his *opus proprium* (God's proper work) (Loewenich 1976:29; Garcia 1987:260; McGrath 1985:150). That is, through experiencing God's strange work, the sinner is able to appropriate God's proper work and by experiencing *Anfechtung*, the sinner learns to trust only in God and become justified. For this reason, *Anfechtung* could be referred to as "delicious despair" (McGrath 1985:152).

Thus, for Luther, there is a close connection between our suffering and Christ's suffering, since, for us, the crucified Christ experienced precisely our same crisis of *Anfechtung*. Believers are able to comprehend this "marvellous exchange" (*comercicum admirabile*) between our suffering and Christ's suffering only through their faith, not by their reason (Ngien 1994:1; Louw 2000:77-78). Added to this, Luther believes that Christ's suffering cannot be separated from God's suffering. Luther's doctrine of *communicatio idiomatum* provides the most complete reciprocity between the divine and human natures and the mutual sharing of God's attributes.<sup>88</sup> In the light of *communicatio idiomatum*, one could say that, in Christ, God Himself suffered on the cross<sup>89</sup> (Tinder 1986:111; Ngien 1994:17,175; Moltmann 1993:232; McWilliams 1985:14).

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<sup>88</sup> LW 37:210-211.

<sup>89</sup> Luther protests against a mere verbal *communicatio idiomatum*. Rather, he proposes the divine-human

Luther rejects the idea of the death of the Crucified One being treated as an event that affected only “the true man” but not “the true God.” For Zwingli, God remains untouched in His sovereignty by taking Christ’s human nature, and Christ suffers and dies only according to His humanity, his veil of flesh. On the other hand, Luther cannot accept the separation between the divine and human in Zwingli’s Christ.<sup>90</sup>

In the light of his doctrine of *communicatio idiomatum*, Luther asserts as follows: <sup>91</sup>

For by this fact (*communicatio idiomatum*) the proper attributes of each nature are attributed to the person of Christ. For even if he is identical with the Father, nevertheless, because he became incarnated, suffered, and was crucified, all things were made subject to him by the Father. In the Person of Christ is God and man: insomuch as God is God, He did not suffer, because God is not capable of suffering, but inasmuch as He is man, He suffers. Nevertheless, because God and man in one person cannot be separated, we are compelled to say the Christ as true God and true man suffered for us and the whole person is said to have died for us.

Here, we notice that, for Luther, God suffers in the person of Jesus Christ, not according to His divine nature, but according to His human nature. Nevertheless, God and man are so closely united in the one Person of Christ that the suffering is true of the whole person. In other words, the Father does not “suffer” in the sense of firsthand “cross-bearing” for our sins and dying. For Luther, only the incarnate Son, one person of the Trinity, in whom the entire Deity dwells, suffered on the cross, not the Father. Only in this sense, we could say that he affirms *theopaschitism*, but rejects *patripassianism*.<sup>92</sup> In fact, Luther maintains that God suffers and

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unity in Christ, in reality, from the action of the Son of God (Fiddes 1988:29; Moltmann 1993:232).

<sup>90</sup> LW 23, 101.

<sup>91</sup> See LW 38, 254.

<sup>92</sup> Condemned as a heresy in the third century, *patripassianism* is an idea that the Father suffered along with Christ, since He was present in, and identical with, the Son. It could be regarded as a variation of modalism, which provides a modalistic solution to the mystery of God’s Trinity and Oneness and rejects any distinction among the three members of the Trinity, i.e. Father, Son and Spirit. Furthermore, *theopaschitism* was also condemned as a heresy due to its emphasis on God’s suffering regarding the divine nature of Jesus Christ. However, this term has been used historically as a more comprehensive term during the past few decades. It not only includes *patripassianism*, but also is found in “modern theology” in the British and German tongues. Therefore, Luther’s tendency to affirm *theopaschitism* must be distinguished from the contemporary usage of this term (König 1982:55; Sarot 1990:374; McWilliams 1985:12; Ngien 1994:152). In this research, the researcher also would like to affirm the

dies on the cross, united with the Person of Jesus Christ.<sup>93</sup>

However, the researcher would like to emphasize that Luther's position must be distinguished from the ontological interpretation of Moltmann's trinitarian TCR, because Luther's idea of God's suffering could be understood only within the framework of his doctrine of the incarnation and of the economic Trinity. In addition, Luther resists the idea that tends to anchor God's suffering love in the pre-incarnation Trinity and extra-incarnation Trinity (Ngien 1994:162,163; 2001:63). On the other hand, Moltmann's interpretation of the TC focuses more on how suffering affects God's inner-trinitarian life. In other words, unlike Luther's view, Moltmann's interpretation of the suffering God reaches into even the immanent Trinity while eliminating the distinction between God *ad intra* and God *ad extra*. While Moltmann's TC reveals how God may be in-for-Himself, it is certain that Luther's interpretation displays and emphasizes the God who is with us and for us (Louw 2000a:78,79).

However, in this study, the pastoral implication of Luther's TC for human suffering and our quest for meaning is far more important than a mere a rationalistic speculation of Luther's TC. According to Tinder (1986:108), Luther's TC contains not a single doctrine or abstract theory, but an overriding concern to explore and illuminate the nature of Christian Life. Luther believes that we can attain God's unlimited consolation due to the fact that Christ suffers in, and with, us when we suffer. Although there has been a trend that focuses on merely reducing and eradicating human pain and conflict in pastoral care, nevertheless, for Luther, suffering can be regarded as the essential ingredient in Christian life (Tinder 1986:111,112).

In short, the significance of Luther's TC in pastoral care could be summerized as follows:

- We can say that Luther's TC could create a new, even reversed concept of God's power, since it seeks God's power in suffering and weakness and calls us to destroy the idols of oppressive power by conforming to the way of the crucified God.
  
- Luther's TC highlights the notion of "*Anfechtung*," in which he tries to emphasize the passion

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*theopaschitic* approach only in accordance with Luther's position.

<sup>93</sup> See LW 22, 491-492.

of Christ and God's suffering in the face of human suffering and predicaments. For Luther, the passion of Christ displays not merely a noetic dimension, but a very practical, experiential dimension. Luther believes that God makes Himself known through His active suffering, rather than passivity, and brings us to experience the total humiliation and suffering that Luther calls the *opus alienum* (God's alien work) in order to experience his *opus proprium* (God's proper work). That is, through experiencing God's strange work, the sinner is able to appropriate God's proper work and by experiencing *Anfechtung*, the sinner learns to trust only in God and become justified. For this reason, *Anfechtung* could be referred to as "delicious despair."

■ Thus, in the light of Luther's TC, we must disregard any attempt to understand God's power through rational and philosophical speculation. Rather, we must seek and find the real meaning of God's power in Jesus Christ's cross and resurrection. What is more, within Luther's TC, God can no longer be viewed as an apathetic and aloof Being toward our suffering and predicaments, such as the "Greek" image of God. Rather, one can say that Christ's passion on the cross portrays God's real identification and compassion with our suffering and predicaments, as well as His faithfulness and eternal love.<sup>94</sup>

#### **4.3.2 Kitamori's theology of God's pain: An Eastern approach**

Kitamori (1966:9), a famous Lutheran scholar in Japan, believes that whereas Western Christianity has not appreciated the biblical emphasis on the pain of God, Eastern culture, especially in Japan, is particularly sensitive to this theme. Kitamori (1972:85) criticizes Western Christianity's overdependence on Greek metaphysics, in which God was usually understood as perfect, immutable, self-sufficient and impassible.<sup>95</sup> According to Kitamori, if God is impassible, then

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<sup>94</sup> As argued previously, within the religious and cultural context of the Korean setting, God can be easily understood in terms of the power of securing people's prosperity, and hijacked in order to serve people's material wishes and selfish purposes. In addition to this, God may be regarded as an "apathetic and distant Being," in which people can easily fall into a state of despair and hopelessness. However, Luther's view presents a reversed and paradoxical concept of God's power in the cross. Additionally, Luther focuses on the existential implication of the cross regarding human despair in respect of God's empathetic and compassionate love. In this light, the researcher is convinced that Luther's view of TC is extremely important and helpful for pastoral care in the Korean context.

<sup>95</sup> McWilliams (1985:114) argues that Kitamori's critique of Greek philosophical influence on Christian theology is generally fair in the sense that the traditional doctrine of divine impassibility seems to be in conflict with the biblical emphasis on the living, dynamic God who responds to human suffering.

the cross cannot affect Him. Thus, both Father and Son experience pain because of their essential unity.<sup>96</sup> Kitamori also accuses liberals and Barthianism of recognizing only the immediate love of God. According to Kitamori (1953:16, 1966:16,24), because they hold to a “monosticism of love,” they neglect the centrality of God’s cross and pain.

Kitamori (1966:19) understands God’s pain as the “heart of the Gospel.” In Kitamori’s theology of the pain of God, God in pain is represented as the God who resolves our human pain by His own pain. In addition, Jesus Christ is represented as the Lord who heals our human wounds by his own pain (1966:20). Although our reality is utterly and hopelessly broken, nevertheless, Kitamori believes that an all-embracing God resolves our pain and heals our wounds. For Kitamori (1966:20-21), the pain of God that resolves our pain is no more than “his love” rooted in his pain. Kitamori (1966:27) believes God’s pain is His love based on the premises of His wrath, which is an absolute, inflexible reality. Thus, for Kitamori (1966:39), the pain of God and the love of God indissolubly unite to form “a unity rooted in pain”; the pain and love of God are in no sense divided in opposition. In the light of Luther’s view of antonement, Kitamori attests that the Lord wants to heal our wounds, which are caused by God’s wrath; the Lord Himself suffers wounds receiving His wrath. In particular, Kitamori (1966:22) maintains that God Himself was broken, wounded and suffered, because He embraced those who should not be embraced. In this light, we can say that Kitamori develops his whole notion of God’s pain and the love in connection with our human wounds and suffering. Nevertheless, McWilliams (1985:100) points out that Kitamori does not base his discussion of God’s pain on any general notion of God’s empathy regarding the human suffering and predicaments. McWilliams (1985:115) aptly criticizes Kitamori’s view in that Kitamori limits God’s pain to His feeling, as He loves the object of His wrath. In this sense, Kitamori carefully distinguishes God’s pain from His empathy with the human predicaments and suffering. Although God might also experience sorrow or grief over human suffering, Kitamori does not develop the notion of God’s pain with an emphasis on divine empathetic love (McWilliams 1985:116).

On the other hand, we find another Eastern scholar, Lee, Jung-yong, who focuses on the notion

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<sup>96</sup> Kitamori’s emphasis on divine suffering seems to be very close to *Patipassianism*. However, Kitamori (1966:115) tries to distinguish his view from the Sabellian heresy of *Patipassianism*.

of divine suffering and passibility while emphasizing God's empathy at full length<sup>97</sup> (Weinnandy 2000:5; McWilliams 1885:149-172). In particular, in contrast to Kitamori's view, Lee bases his affirmation of divine suffering on God's nature of love (*agape*) and divine empathy. Lee's thesis is titled, "*Agape* is the basis of divine passibility, while the empathy of God is a mode of *agape*." In his book, *God suffers for us* (1974), Lee represents divine empathy as a function of God's *agape* nature. For Lee, J Y (1974:13), *agape* is the essential content of the Christian faith and the fundamental characteristic of God. Lee carefully distinguishes divine sympathy and empathy, in which sympathy is often used as a basis for divine suffering, focusing more on emotional identification, but empathy is actual participation. For Lee, divine empathy is a better conceptualization of God's suffering than divine sympathy. God does not merely feel with (sympathy) the human situation; He feels Himself in (empathy) the human situation and actively participates in it.

However, according to McWilliams (1985:166), Lee emphasizes divine empathy and passibility on the basis of God's love; nevertheless, his theological view moves from a more biblical emphasis on divine *agape* towards a more monotheistic, mystical view of God on the basis of Eastern philosophy. For instance, in his book, *The theology of change* (1976), Lee stresses the inadequacy of personalistic concepts of God. In his later work, although he still refers in passing to God's suffering, nevertheless, the main focus is on God's transcendence of categories such as passible and impassible, male and female, good and evil, and personal and impersonal on the basis of Eastern philosophy, the *yin-yang* system, which is based on essential monoism and existential dualism. Thus, although Lee tries to describe divine suffering in terms of God's empathetic love, his work can be regarded as a theological attempt to integrate Christian faith and Eastern thought<sup>98</sup> (McWilliams 1985:169-171).

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<sup>97</sup> Lee, Jung-yong is a well-known Korean theologian, especially regarding the issue of divine passibility. His theological view is occasionally cited by Western theologians with a quotation of Kitamori's view of divine passibility (Weinnandy 2000:5; McWilliams 1985:149-172). J Y Lee was born in Korea in 1935 and received a Th.D in systematic theology at Boston University. He has taught in Korea and the United States (McWilliams 1985:149). The researcher believes that, because he is a Korean scholar, J Y Lee's view of divine passibility might reflect the impact of the Korean religious and cultural setting in some ways.

<sup>98</sup> J Y Lee focuses on the notion of God's empathy regarding our human suffering. In addition, his theological view seems to relate to the background of the Korean religious and philosophical setting. Additionally, it seems that his mystical and monotheistic concept of God reflects the impact of the Korean religious culture in a certain aspect. However, Lee's notion of divine suffering is no more than a consequence of an attempt at integrating Christian faith with Eastern religious and philosophical ideas.

While J Y Lee tries to understand divine suffering regarding God's love and His empathy, Kitamori wishes to represent the notion of divine suffering in terms of God's inner conflict. For Kitamori, God is in pain because of the conflict within Himself regarding His love and wrath. Thus, there is the conflict between the God who must sentence sinners to death and the God who wishes to love them. This conflict, which occurs in the same God, causes His pain. God is angry because of our sins, but never hurt by rebellious sinners. Rather, God suffers pain only when He tries to love us, the object of his wrath (Kitamori 1996:115). In the light of Luther's concept of the "hidden God" (*Deus absconditus*), Kitamori also believes that God hid or disguised Himself and so mankind perceived Him as wrathful, although his ultimate purpose was being gracious. However, Kitamori criticizes Luther in the sense that, although Luther was aware of God's pain, he did not adequately relate it to the hidden God. Kitamori wishes to present the tension between God's wrath and his love other than Luther. For Kitamori (1966:111-112), the God's wrath is a secondary work (*opus alienum*) and the love of God is his primary work (*opus proprium*).

Furthermore, in order to understand the notion of God's pain, the researcher believes that we should reflect on the influence of Japanese culture upon it. Kitamori (1966:7-8) seems to be convinced that, in contrast with the general failure of Western theology to acknowledge God's pain, Japanese history and culture, in some respects, is particularly receptive to this theme. For instance, within the feature of the Japanese mind, we find a "spirit of tragedy," which can be regarded as a concept of the receptive window to accept the notion of the God's pain. For Kitamori (1966:134,148), Japanese tragedy in their dramas cannot be compared with others because its content corresponds more closely to God's pain, God's tragedy. Kitamori (1966: 135) emphasizes *tsurasa* as the basic principle of Japanese tragedy. One experiences *tsurasa* (neither bitterness nor sadness) when one suffers and dies, or makes one's beloved son suffer and die for the sake of repayment of a favour and securing the lives of others. Within this drama of tragedy, even though the hero tries hard to conceal and endure his agony, his cries filtering through his efforts are heard. When the Japanese audience hears these cries, they shed tears speechlessly.

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Therefore, in this study, the researcher did not engage in reflecting his theological view of divine suffering at full length.

According to Kitamori (1966:136), the artistic expression in this tragedy represents the mind of the Japanese common people. The fundamental nature of Japanese tragedy is abridged as *tsurasa*. Therefore, although Kitamori (1966:135) tries to present God's pain as an eternal truth that can be perceived in any area, we cannot deny that his theological development of the notion of God's pain has been influenced by the key principle in Japanese tragedy, *tsurasa*. Kitamori (1966:137) maintains that the notion of God's pain would not have been discerned without Japan as its medium. Ogawa (1965:108) attests that many Japanese acknowledge Kitamori's theology as a special Japanese view of God. Michalson (1960:73) also describes Kitamori's theology as "the most self-consciously Japanese of the current theological tendencies in Japan."<sup>99</sup>

According to McWilliams (1985:117), although Kitamori frequently touches on the problem of human suffering, he does not develop his theodicy fully. He seems to have little or no interest in the issue of theodicy, for instance, natural evil, the origin of suffering, or the inequality of suffering. Because, for Kitamori, God's pain is primarily due to the struggle between God's love and God's wrath. Accordingly, in his view, the possible danger is that it seems as if God the Father epitomizes the wrath of God, and God the Son epitomizes the love of God (McWilliams 1985:115).

In short, the researcher would like to summarize the significance of Kitamori's theology of pain of God in pastoral care according to the following arguments:

■ In contrast to the notion of divine impassibility in Western Christianity, which might reflect the impact of Greek philosophy, Kitamori focuses on divine passibility with his special reference to the pain of God. In Kitamori's theology of the pain of God, God in pain is presented as the God who resolves our human pain by His own pain and Jesus Christ is presented as the Lord who heals our human wounds by his own wounds. For Kitamori, God's pain is his love based on the premises of his wrath, which is the absolute, inflexible reality. That is, the pain of God and the love of God indissolubly unite to form "a unity in the rooted in pain." In the light of Luther's view of atonement, Kitamori believes that the Lord wants to heal our wounds that God's wrath

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<sup>99</sup> However, the researcher believes that the mindset and belief system of Korean culture, in many ways is totally foreign and different from those of Japan - of course, including the key principle of Japanese tragedy, *tsurasa*.

caused; thus Lord suffers wounds, Himself receiving His wrath.

■ In particular, Kitamori develops his whole notion of the pain and the love of God in connection with our human wounds and suffering. Nevertheless, Kitamori does not base his discussion of God's pain on any general notion of God's empathy regarding the human suffering and predicaments. Kitamori limits God's pain to His feeling, as he loves the object of His wrath. This is on the basis of an inner conflict between love and wrath within God. In this sense, Kitamori carefully distinguishes God's pain from His empathy with the human suffering and predicaments. Although God might also experience sorrow or grief over human suffering, Kitamori does not develop the notion of God's pain with an emphasis on divine empathetic love (McWilliams 1985:100,115-116).<sup>100</sup>

■ In Kitamori's notion of God's pain, we find the influence of Japanese history and culture, which was is in some respects particularly receptive to this theme. For instance, for Kitamori, Japanese tragedy in their dramas cannot be compared with others because its content corresponds more closely to God's pain; the tragedy of God. Kitamori emphasizes *tsurasa* as the basic principle in Japanese tragedy. *Tsurasa* (neither bitterness nor sadness) is realized when one suffers and dies, or makes one's beloved son suffer and die, for the sake of repayment of a favour and securing the lives of others. Within this drama of tragedy, even though the hero tries hard to conceal and endure his agony, his cries filtering through his efforts are heard. When the Japanese audience hears these cries, they shed silent tears (Kitamori 1966:7-8,134-135,148).<sup>101</sup>

■ Although Kitamori frequently touches on the problem of human suffering, he does not develop his theodicy fully. He seems to have little or no interest in the issue of theodicy, for instance natural evil, the origin of suffering, or the inequality of suffering, because, for Kitamori,

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<sup>100</sup> As argued previously, if we consider the religious and cultural context of the Korean setting, an emphasis on God's empathy regarding our human suffering and predicament is of utmost importance, while Kitamori presents God's pain as the key notion in which God resolves and heals our human pain by His pain. Kitamori emphasizes God's pain as a consequence of the inner conflict between His love and wrath rather than as a consequence of His empathy for our human predicaments and suffering. In this light, it seems difficult to say that Kitamori's view is greatly helpful for pastoral care in the Korean context.

<sup>101</sup> The notion of *tsurasa* as the key principle of Japanese tragedy is utterly foreign to Koreans. Thus, this could be another hindrance to adopt Kitamori's view into the Korean cultural context.

God's pain is primarily due to the inner conflict and struggle between God's love and His wrath. Accordingly, in his view, the possible danger is that it seems as if God the Father epitomizes the wrath of God, and God the Son epitomizes the love of God (McWilliams 1985:115).

### **4.3.3 Moltmann's Trinitarian view: An ontological approach**

Like Luther, Moltmann (1974:7) believes that the cross must be central to Christianity - it is the test of everything that deserves to be called "Christian." In addition, Moltmann (1974:212) maintains that God reveals Himself in Christ 's suffering by way of contradiction, which is against all that is exalted, beautiful and good. However, although Luther and Moltmann both focus their theological attention continually on the cross, Moltmann's interpretation of the meaning of the cross differs. For instance, as Burnell (1985:25) properly points out, while Luther understands God as a perfect and complete Being, Moltmann presents a panentheistic view of God that understands God more as an event taking place entirely in God. Furthermore, in Moltmann's *eschatologia crucis*, the resurrection plays a crucial role in revealing the meaning and Gospel of the cross. For Moltmann, the resurrection opens up a future perspective in such a way that the resurrection obtains an eschatological primacy over the cross. Thus, Moltmann proposes a new understanding of the "suffering" and "pathetic" God, who is a vital source of hope (Louw 2000a:152; 1999a:459).

In particular, Moltmann understands the event of the cross thoroughly within the framework of the Trinity. For Moltmann (1974:244), what happened on the cross was an event between God and God, where Father and Son are most profoundly separated in forsakenness and at the same time most inwardly one in their surrender. That is, on the cross, God abandoned God and contradicts Himself and, at the same time, God was at one with God and corresponded to Himself. Moltmann agrees with Karl Rahner's basic principles: (1) *The Trinity is the nature of God and the nature of God is the Trinity.* (2) *The economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice versa.* Moltmann believes that the distinction between the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity is artificial and unnecessary. He understands the event of the cross as an event concerned with a relationship between persons where these persons constitute themselves in their relationship with each other (1974:239-240,245).

Furthermore, following Hegel's understanding of the cross that regards the death of Jesus as God's alienation from Himself and regards the resurrection as a victory over inherent alienation or dichotomy (Louw 2000a:97), Moltmann (1974:246) describes God's life within the Trinity as "the history of God." For him, all human history is taken up into this history of God. Thus, the reality of the Triune God on the cross can be called the "history of God." In addition, for Moltmann, the Trinity means the event of Christ in the eschatological interpretation of faith. According to Moltmann (1974:249,255), for eschatological faith, the Trinitarian God-event on the cross becomes the history of God that is open to the future and that opens up the future. In addition, according to Zimany (1977:56), for Moltmann, God is a continuous One capable of encompassing all human history and all human inclinations. Thus, anyone who enters into love and, through love, experiences inextricable suffering and the fatality of death, enters into the human history and could participate in God's continuous reality.

By the way, when Moltmann develops his view of the passion of God, because he intends to make theology relevant to the question of suffering (Louw 2000a:84). Moltmann (1981:22) is critical of Christian theology having added Greek philosophy's "apathy" axiom to the central statements of the Gospel. Moltmann (1981:22,23) asserts that if God is incapable of suffering, then Christ's passion can be viewed only as a human tragedy and that God would also be incapable of love and, thus, he believes that the Father and the Son can be said to suffer. In addition, Moltmann accuses traditional Christology for having followed the doctrine of the two natures of Christ. Moltmann (1974:227-228) states that if one considers the event of the cross between Jesus and God in the framework of the doctrine of two natures, the Platonic axiom of God's essential *apathēia* provokes a barrier against recognizing Christ's suffering. Thus, when Moltmann develops his view of the suffering of God, he always intends to place it within the context of the doctrine of the Trinity because, for him, as discussed previously, God's suffering on the cross is not merely a revelation of God's compassion, but it is an intertrinitarian event that directly affects a constitute element of God's very Being. In the light of this Trinitarian understanding of the cross, in his love, the Father suffers grief on account of the death of the Son, while the Son suffers in his love, being forsaken by the Father (1974:231-235,245,246).

According to Louw, within Moltmann's hermeneutic of the cross, forsakenness becomes the primary issue, which tries to reframe God metaphors in terms of a suffering God. Louw

(2000a:89) maintains that, for Moltmann, God could only be understood properly as a suffering God because, on the cross, God the Father forsakes Jesus as well as Himself. This forsakenness can be regarded as an event between God (Jesus) and God (the Father) (Louw 2000a:90).<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, for Moltmann, suffering and history are in God and occur within Him. As a result, God does not merely reveal His compassion, but God's compassion and His identification with our suffering defines the Being of God Himself. In particular, Moltmann's endeavour to establish a TC in Hegelian dialectic could become very speculative. To put it more precisely, the following construction is in danger of falling into a philosophical and rational construction: the Father forsakes the Son (thesis); the Son has been forsaken and experiences forsakenness (antithesis); as the ongoing work of the Spirit, the message of God's identification with humankind is constantly being proclaimed (synthesis) (Louw 2000a:91).

Although Moltmann endeavours to clarify God's dynamic existence and compassion, this can easily fall prey to a philosophical system, which speculates beyond boundaries set by the knowledge of faith. On the other hand, Küng (1978:530) emphasizes God's solidarity and identification with human suffering. Nevertheless, his view of the cross does not indicate that suffering defines and constitutes God. Rather, for Küng (1978:529), in Christ, God suffers indirectly. This implies not a frightening, theocratic God "from above," but a human, friendly co-suffering God, "with us here below." Likewise, Barth does not understand God as an utterly aloof or indifferent Being to human pain and suffering. At first glance, his assertions seem to indicate an antinomy: "God is not impassible" (CD II/2:370), "God is ... passible (CD IV/1:187). However, J M Russell (1988:221) summarizes the significance of Barth's view of God in terms of suffering as "impassibility and pathos." Nevertheless, because Barth understands the TC as Christ's high-priestly mediatorship, in which God comes to us and is for us in both action and the world, one can refer to his view of TC as God's confirmation and revelation that displays His true identification with us in our suffering. Barth clearly affirms a God who suffers with us and for us. However, his view of the TC remains in a noetic category in which the TC does not constitute the Essence or Being of God (Louw 2000a:81-82).

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<sup>102</sup> Although Moltmann (1974:203,243) proposes a new term, "*patricompassionism*" in order to avoid the ancient heresy of "*patripassionism*" by advocating for a Trinitarian understanding of God's suffering, according to which the Son suffers while dying, the Father suffers the death of the Son, but not in the same way. However, Sarot (1990:372) aptly points out that the term, "*patricompassionism*," should not be used to distinguish positions from *patripassionism*, because patripassionist, Tertullian Praxeas, and his followers held that the Father was a "Fellow-sufferer," which implies compassion.

While Luther speaks of suffering in order to turn one's attention away from oneself to the cross and faith (Burnell 1985:26), Moltmann refers to God's suffering on account of other reasons. Bauckham (1990:93-99) identifies three reasons for Moltmann's speaking of God's suffering:

- *The passion of Christ*: - In Moltmann's (1990:95) TC, God is revealed decisively in the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross and, taking the TC seriously, calls for a "revolution in the concept of God."

- *The nature of love*: - Although the metaphysical theism eliminates any element of reciprocity from the notion of God's love for the world, for Moltmann, God's love is not just activity with others, but God's involvement with others in which God is moved and affected.

- *The problem of suffering*: - Moltmann accuses the traditional theism in terms of the theodicy question: How can the all-powerful and invulnerable Creator and Ruler of the world be justified in the face of the enormity of human suffering?

From this passage, we notice that Moltmann endeavours to develop his interpretation of the TC in order to provide a relevant and fundamental solution to the reality of human suffering by emphasizing God's suffering love on the cross. In fact, Moltmann attempts to clarify God's dynamic existence and compassion; nevertheless, he cannot escape the danger of dialectic of his theology of the cross, which suggests that suffering is a necessary element of the very Being of God (Louw 2000a:97).

In short, the researcher would like to summarize the significance of Moltmann's TC in pastoral care according to the following arguments:

- In Moltmann's dialectic of the cross and resurrection, which could be recognized as the eschatology and the hermeneutics of the cross, the notion of the crucified God displays the important theme of God's loving solidarity with the world in its suffering in which the contradiction between the cross and resurrection creates the contradiction between the promise (the new creation) and present reality (suffering and forsakenness). In this sense, one could say that Moltmann's TC could create a vivid hope for the future and the motivation for godliness in

the present time for all who suffer (Louw 2000:113; Gilbert 1999:177).

- On the other hand, in his interpretation of the TC, although Moltmann attempts to make theology relevant to the reality of human suffering by emphasizing God's suffering love on the cross, he cannot avoid the pitfalls insofar as suffering becomes the necessary element of the very being of God, and Jesus becomes a mere function in his eschatology.

- Therefore, the value of Moltmann's TC resides in the fact that he indicates how God, through the suffering of the Son, truly identifies Himself with the suffering of human beings in which God is paradoxically revealed as a powerless and forsaken Being. Nevertheless, his view of the TC not only runs the risk of being used to prove the reality of the Triune God in a speculative way, but also fails to propose a balanced bridge between God's transcendence and condescendence.

- Consequently, Moltmann's interpretation of the TC arouses our critical questions in terms of its implication for pastoral care: in our pastoral interpretation of TC, how can we display God's consolation and identification with human suffering without missing the dimension of God's salvific grace? How can God's intimate presence in the midst of our misery and suffering be emphasized without denying God's differentiation and transcendence?

The researcher believes that we could find a solution to these questions within Louw's pastoral interpretation of the TCR.

#### **4.3.4 Louw's promissio-therapeutic view: A pastoral hermeneutical approach**

In his book, *Meaning in suffering*, Louw (2000a:116) proposes a dynamic view for God's differentiation and identification insofar as God's differentiation refers to the uniqueness of His grace and God's identification emphasizes His solidarity and compassion. In this regard, Louw refers to Fretheim (1984:106,123), who maintains that, in the Old Testament, God is revealed as a deeply wounded and even vulnerable Being. According to him, the suffering of God is not foreign to the Old Testament.

In his investigation into the various texts and the language associated with divine suffering, Fretheim (1984:108) proposes a threefold significance of the notion of God's suffering:

- (1) God suffers due to the people's rejection of Him as Lord
- (2) God suffers with the suffering people
- (3) God suffers *for* people.

However, the notion of a "suffering God" does not eliminate God's faithfulness, His gracious purposes remain undiminished and God's salvific will and His steadfast love endure forever (Fretheim 1984:124). For Fretheim, God's suffering indicates that He does not look at suffering extraneously, but from within. That is, God is related internally to the suffering of His people. In this sense, God can indeed be regarded as a compassionate Being. In addition, to God, the meaning of suffering could be recognized as the expending of God's life, expressed primarily in the image of weariness. God immersed Himself into the midst of Israel's troubles and identified with their suffering for the purpose of their salvation. In this way, God clearly displays His faithfulness and compassion (1984:148).

In accordance with Fretheim's view, Louw (2000a:93) maintains that faithfulness and compassion must be regarded as two key concepts for an understanding of the metaphorical meaning of the notion of "the suffering God." In his interpretation of a *theologia crucis*, Louw emphasizes that God in our suffering should be interpreted in terms of Christ's reconciliation and mediatory work. Louw comprehends reconciliation in both an inclusive and an exclusive way insofar as God is in suffering not only "with us" (in an inclusive way) but also "for us" in our place (in an exclusive way). Louw maintains that two dynamic perspectives should always be considered: the salvific meaning of God's identification with our suffering and the demonstrative and convincing effects of His identification that reveal His faithfulness.

According to Louw (2000a:93), God suffers in two ways:

Firstly, God suffers in terms of His involvement with His people and His humiliation on behalf of their misery, affliction and sin due to His faithfulness. Secondly, God suffers in order to forgive, to reconcile, and thus, God's suffering indicates His grace and mediatory intervention on our behalf.

Thus, for Louw, the value of the TC resides in the fact that it reveals God's "how" in terms of

pathos. Suffering becomes a characteristic and feature of God's faithfulness to His promises (2000a:98). Furthermore, according to Louw (2000a:108), the contribution of the TC resides in that "the hermeneutics of the cross" could be constructed from below, i.e. from God's condescendence and His identification with our misery and suffering. Although Louw does not try to adapt the TCR to pastoral care in a speculative and positivistic way, nevertheless, he does not intend a hermeneutical approach to become a mere alternative for positivism. Louw's hermeneutical stance maintains both transcendence (differentiation) and condescendence (identification).<sup>103</sup> Consequently, as Louw believes, the TC should be interpreted not only in term of expiation, but also in terms of pathos (2000a:108). In his view of a theology of the crucified God, Louw (2000a:110) maintains that Jesus' whole person, who is the definitive revelation of God, not only of God the Father, but also of God the Son, died on the cross, not just part of it. Due to the mysterious transaction between the Father and the Son, which is vindicated by the Spirit, a *theologia crucis* is a reality.

However, Louw (2000a:116,148) maintains that in the pastoral interpretation of the TCR, the emphasis of God's identification with our misery and suffering is not sufficient due to our human need for change and transformation. Thus, importantly, Louw deals with TR in order to reveal God's power of healing and transformation. According to Louw (2000a:148), the message of God's faithfulness is inextricably linked to the transformative reality of the cross and the victorious event, i.e. resurrection. Following Berkof's view, Louw (2000a:149) is critical of Western theology insofar as the resurrection frequently stands in the shadow of the doctrine of atonement and the TC. For Louw (2000a:153), the resurrection that has consequences for hope, is not only a new perspective, but also a historic reality. It is not merely a psychological projection, but a historical revelation of God in creation that implies a re-creation of creation. Louw believes that the uniqueness of the resurrection resides in its healing implications for both the existential and historical aspects of reality.

According to Louw (2000a:154), the pastoral implication of the resurrection hope should not be founded in our anxiety about death and expectation of a life hereafter. It should be recognized as

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<sup>103</sup> Similarly, Weinandy (2000:56,57) maintains that there is no difference between God's transcendent Being and immanent (condescendent) activity. According to him, God is transcendent insofar as He is wholly other than created order, but not apart from the created order. In other words, that which makes Him divine and transcendent is that which equally allows Him to be active within the created order as well as being immanent.

the antithesis of anxiety. Rather, the resurrection hope should be grounded on the following bases:

- (a) Salvation, justification and Christ's mediatory work.
- (b) The overcoming of death by Christ's resurrection
- (c) The eternal value of our bodily existence in terms of Christ's resurrected body
- (d) Eschatology and the promise of a radical new future.

Thus, for Louw, the kingdom of God, as a new eschatological reality, is bodily mediated via the resurrected Christ and guaranteed in the indwelling Spirit as a deposit for what we expect to become eventually. Louw warns that, whenever the bodily resurrection of Christ is ignored, the resurrection easily falls prey to becoming a mere speculative idea. Therefore, Louw believes that God's faithfulness to our bodies and the whole of creation is concealed within the resurrection.

Consequently, Louw (2000a:154) the significance of the cross and resurrection in terms of the new creaturely reality as follows:

- (a) faith and the salvation of the cross (*perfectum*)
- (b) hope and the veracity of the resurrection (*futurum*)
- (c) love and the sacramental meaning of daily life; the Christian life and daily experiences as an embodiment of God's grace and presence through restored relationships (the *pneumatological presence*).

In this sense, according to Louw (2000a:155), through the work of Holy Spirit, the newly transformed and resurrected life can be realized daily in forms of hope, love and peace. On the whole, Louw (2000a:157-159) warns that we must draw a sharp line between TR (*theologia resurrectionis*) and a theology of glory (*theologia gloriae*), because resurrection hope can easily be misunderstood to be associated with a theology of glory in which one pursues a chief optimism and superficial euphoria. However, TR does not inspire people to ignore their suffering. Rather, it urges them to find meaning in their suffering because victory in the resurrection does not necessarily mean victory out of suffering and it sometimes has to embrace the hope of not overcoming. Therefore, we can say that Louw wishes to present the more pastoral implication of both the cross and resurrection for pastoral therapy: hope care and spiritual maturity in the following respects: "*Transformation*: a new reality within the reality of

pain and destruction; *Freedom and liberation*: the experience of forgiveness and reconciliation; *Vision, imagination and future*: the motivating and driving force behind anticipation and expectation; *Witness*: the intention to reach out to others in their suffering and pain; *Faithfulness*: the guarantee of trust despite disorientation and disintegration; *Support*: edification within the fellowship (*koinonia*) of believers; *Comfort*: the courage to be, to endure and to accept; *Truth*: divine confirmation and a guarantee, a promise of Life.”

In conclusion, the researcher believes that the whole spectrum and significance of Louw’s (2000a:112-116,155-167) pastoral implication of both the cross and resurrection could be summarized as follows:

- The TC declares not only God’s punishment and judgment concerning sin, but also a demonstration of His woundedness, love, presence, pathos and solidarity.

- In the Mediator, both God’s divinity and humanity are involved in suffering. Louw (2000a:112) maintains that, on the grounds of Christ’s high-priestly suffering, one could say that God is *in* suffering.

- Christ’s death on the cross displays victory over suffering. Louw (2000:112) believes that Jesus’ substitution eliminates guilt (justification) and allows the whole person to participate in a new state of redemption (sanctification) due to the indwelling Holy Spirit.

- The TC, which incorporates both Christ’s reconciliatory work and God’s mercy and grace, could provide hope in which we can discover meaning in suffering. According to Louw, the TC provides an answer to human beings’ existential questions and their struggle with life’s anxiety, despair, absurdity, purposelessness and meaninglessness. Consequently, for Louw (2000a:113), the cross is not just a principle of knowledge (noetic) of our sins and God’s love, but is also a principle of existence (ontic) for a person as a new being.

- In particular, Louw (2000a:113) maintains that the TC reframes our understanding of God insofar as God’s weakness becomes a sign of power. Therefore, for Louw, God’s *how* in terms

of a *theologia crucis* is revealed as *vulnerability* and *woundedness*.<sup>104</sup>

- The TC does not allow us to construct theology within a stance of an opportunistic positivism and a cheap Christian triumphalism (Louw 2000a:115).
- The TC indicates that God indeed put Christ in the place of sinners, not just functionally, but in an ontic way (Louw 2000:115-116).
- The TR indicates that, in Christ, God's promises are fulfilled and creation is brought back to its purpose: communion with God, through *doxa*, praise and worship (Louw 2000a:155).
- The TR indicates that, in Christ's resurrection, this accomplishment becomes a new promise and places creation within the framework of a new reality: the eschatological salvation. This means that life has been transformed radically: from anxiety to hope; from nothingness to eschatology; from death to resurrection. In particular, by the work of the Holy Spirit, this newly transformed and resurrected life can be realized daily in forms of hope, love and peace (Louw 2000a:155).
- In terms of Christ's resurrection, history becomes a teleological accomplishment: the healing of the whole of creation by the peace (*shalom*) of the coming kingdom of God (Louw 2000a:155).
- The TR promises *victory over death* and instils a vivid hope in the midst of anxiety surrounding death (Louw 2000a:156).
- The TR enables us to become participators in the resurrection power and life in the midst of struggle and suffering. Living in fellowship with God means: being empowered by the Spirit to

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<sup>104</sup> Louw (2000:65) argues that the Dutch *weerloze overmacht* used by Berkof should be translated as "vulnerable faithfulness," rather than as "defenceless superior power," since, according to Louw, Berkof regards God's power as "overwhelming grace" rather than as "destructive and hurtful violence." However, Frame (2001:19) proposes a more careful use of the concept of God's vulnerability. According to him, in his essential nature and eternal plan, God cannot suffer loss. In this sense, He is invulnerable. However, when He interacts with creatures, especially in respect of the event of the cross, He could be regarded as a vulnerable Being.

live and become engaged in human relationships.

■ The TR restores trust in life and provides security because it opens up a new hermeneutics, i.e. to experience the living God in every dimension of existence, as well as in the whole of the cosmos. Life becomes an opportunity to embody God's grace and to en flesh love (Louw 2000a:156).

■ In the light of the TR, in suffering, pastoral care becomes a ministry, which emanates from resurrection life (the *epangelia* in the *euangelion*) and a ministry which embodies and incarnates the vivid hope of the resurrection, as well as a sign and metaphor for eschatology in action (Louw 2000a:156).

■ Like the TC, the TR must not be understood in association with the theology of glory in which one pursues a cheap positivism and superficial euphoria, as well as hope without suffering (Louw 2000a:157-158).

■ The TR could create not only a hermeneutical horizon for a dynamic understanding of God and the discovery of meaning in suffering, but could also provide pastoral benefits in terms of our human quest for meaning, i.e. *transformation, freedom and liberation, vision, imagination and future, witness, faithfulness, support, comfort and truth* (Louw 2000a:160-167).

From all these remarks, we firstly notice that, in his endeavour to seek the implication of the TCR to the theology of pastoral care, Louw appropriately reveals God's faithfulness and compassion without disregarding God's differentiation and transcendence. As discussed previously, the underlying assumption in Louw's pastoral and hermeneutical interpretation of the TCR is that God-images, which are influenced by culture, play a decisive role in people's reaction to severe pain and suffering and their quest for meaning and transformation. Therefore, in order to instil hope in the face of human suffering and offer a solution to our human quest for meaning, Louw is convinced that the power of God should be reinterpreted in terms of compassion / vulnerability and transformation / empowerment.

In this light and in his view of the TCR, Louw (2000a:15-16) proposes a relevant bridge

between God's transcendence and condescendence. Louw does not wish to overemphasize God's identification with our human suffering, in which the immanent experience of God could probably be traded for His sovereignty. Neither does he attempt to overstress God's sovereignty and punishment, in which God could be possibly proposed as an aloof and alienated Being from human suffering. Thus, Louw's view of the the TCR effectively indicates God's intimate presence and solidarity in the midst of our human pain and suffering without losing the dimension of his salvific grace.

In short, in his promissio-therapeutic view of a theology of compassion, Louw presents the more pastoral implication of both the cross and resurrection for pastoral therapy: hope care and spiritual maturity. Moltmann tries to make his theology of the TCR relevant to the question of human suffering by adopting ontic-theological principles in some speculative way. On the other hand, Louw does not intend to focus on a mere rationalistic speculation of the TCR; he rather endeavours to concentrate more on a pastoral and hermeneutical implication of the TCR for instilling hope in the face of our human suffering and predicaments, as well as enhancing spiritual growth and maturity in our faith.<sup>105</sup>

#### **4.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, against the background of the Korean cultural context, the researcher tried to establish a theology of compassion in a pastoral hermeneutical perspective in order to provide a criterion of assessing and reframing PGI on a more relevant theological basis.

In the first place, we explored the notion of divine judgment and power in the Old Testament, while tracking the chronological development of the idea of God against Israel's historical background. As a result, we noticed that in the Mosaic traditions, unlike other gods in Mesopotamia, Syria-Palestine, and later Greece and Rome, Yahweh is revealed as a holy, just and righteous Being, in which Israelite pursuits are intensively for high morality. Furthermore,

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<sup>105</sup> As confirmed previously, due to the impact of the religious and cultural context of the Korean setting, many parishioners regard God as an "apathetic and distant Being," especially in the context of predicament and suffering, whereby they can easily be in the state of despair and hopelessness. In this light, we can say that Louw's promissio-therapeutic view of a theology of compassion is of the utmost importance for pastoral care in the Korean context.

we found two levels of setting in the Old Testament in terms of the oracle of God's judgment: (1) a frame from the Mosaic Covenant tradition. (2) a frame developed from the Mosaic tradition, most obviously in sixth century prophecy. In particular, within the Mosaic Covenant tradition (Exod. 19:3-5), we saw that the underlined "if" supplies the condition; it constitutes the theological pivot of this covenant; *if* the people obey God, He will hold them in a favoured relationship, and they will receive many blessings; but *if* the people do not obey, then their relationship with God will be jeopardized, and they can count on every misfortune.

However, under the catastrophic status of the exile, the prophets had to interpret the meaning of these events in their own theological terms. Although they interpreted this catastrophe as God's direct and proportionate punishment on Israel's sin, simultaneously, they were not merely dealing with sin, covenant breaking, defilement of the temple, or acts to demonstrate God's Lordship in judgment, as well as salvation. For instance, we found that many oracles in Amos, Hosea, Micah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel have some claims to presenting the genre "Oracle of deliverance." Furthermore, we acknowledged a distinction between of the significance of God's forgiveness in the pre-exilic period and that of the prophets' oracle deliverance. Whereas in the pre-exile period the normal understanding of God's forgiveness was that punishment is mitigated rather than swept away, on the other hand, in the deliverance oracle of prophets, God's forgiveness is comprehensive and complete. Within the context of the exile, although the saving God in terms of the exodus from Egypt became the Judging God in terms of the transgression of Israel, nevertheless, His judgment is aimed, paradoxically, at the saving of Israel. Furthermore, in terms of explaining the relationship between sin and God's judgment in the Old Testament, we should acknowledge that God's vengeance and God's love are not irreconcilable descriptions. Yahweh's justice is saving justice where punishment of the sinner is an integral part of restoration. Although assertions about God's saving justice became problematic under the context Israel's exile, in many prophets' exilic and post-exilic writings, we found that God's righteousness became the ground and content of an eschatological hope for the ultimate revelation of divine power to vindicate Israel's trust and lead all nations to acknowledge God's cosmic Lordship, in which His intervention to restore and sustain His people within the covenant figured.

Meanwhile, broadly speaking, the notion of the powerful God in the Old Testament could be

revealed as the absolute Sovereign, who has the authority and ability to do whatever He chooses. Thus, no task is too difficult for God and there is nothing to obstruct His plan and work. However, we saw that God's power could not be understood in terms of oppression and dominance. For instance, in the Mosaic tradition, Yahweh is found not only to be faithful, just, and righteous, but also to be compassionate, especially in terms of the exodus from Egypt. God displays liberating, saving, blessing and compassionate power by delivering Israel out of her oppression. The notion of God's power is distinct from oppressive and authoritarian power. However, God's liberating power should be emphasized in the light of both His justice and compassion. Furthermore, as a result of exegesis on Hosea 11:8,9 and Jeremiah 31:31-34, we found evidence of God's solidarity, in which the Lord's compassion expresses itself in the announcement that punishment will not be the final stage in the Lord's dealing with his people. Although God is not a human being but the Holy One, nevertheless, He is not merely a transcendent and distant Being in the midst of human suffering. Particularly, through the new covenant in Jeremiah's oracle, God displayed genuine solidarity, expressed in the covenant formulary by breaking the system of reward and punishment, as well as the vicious cycle of sin and punishment, in which Israel began again at a different place with a new possibility in the light of God's merciful forgiveness (Brueggemann 1991:71).

Next, in order to attain a more holistic biblical picture in terms of an issue of establishing a theology of compassion, we surveyed the significance of divine power and judgment in the New Testament. As a result, in the New Testament as in the Old Testament, we noted assertions of God's ability to do anything, whether a miracle in the realm of nature, the ability to change the human heart as well as the whole course of history. However, we could find the real meaning of God's power in Christ and His Spirit. Particularly, in Jesus' action, passion, and resurrection, we saw the decisive revelation of the reality and power of God. In other words, Jesus brings about a revolutionary change to the meaning of power, which is not in dominating others but in service and, thus, deeply disturbs all existing concepts of power and authority while Gentile rulers lord it over the Jews (Mark 10:42-45). For Jesus, true power is not the domination of others but is in service. Whereas people's concept of power is generally self-centred, in the event of the cross, Jesus rather reveals the true power as self-giving love, rather than dominant, oppressive and self-centred power. In this sense, the drama of the Gospel requires a revolution in our understanding of God's power: his power is "made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9); the

power of love of the crucified Lord is “the power of God for salvation” (Migliore 1983:58). Within the Pauline perspective, God’s power is interpreted in the light of the primary metaphor of Christ’s crucifixion (in weakness) and resurrection (in power) (Gräbe 2002:235).

Whether the meaning of atonement can be interpreted only in the light of penal categories, by speaking of Christ undergoing vicarious punishment to meet the claims of God’s punitive justice or not, it seems reasonable to say that “Christ was judged in our place”- that Christ experienced divine judgment on the sin in the sense that He endured the God-ordained consequences of human sinfulness. Therefore, we could say that God sent His only Son as bearer of divine judgment on behalf of humanity. Meanwhile, Jesus’ ministry and teaching acknowledged His compassionate and forgiving love for sinners (John 7:53; 8:11; Mark 2:5; Luke 7:47, 22:51; Matt. 26:52). In addition, we noticed that, whereas some references to divine judgment display a temporal character, which is usually depicted in terms of reformatory and educative purposes, on the other hand, most references to divine judgment are eschatological (Marshall 2001:175). Although most of the references speak of the eschatological content seems to represent the coming wrath of God and the retributive judgment of God on the last day (Kreitzer 1987:99), nevertheless, we should recognize that there is no contradiction between God’s love and justice, in which His basic orientation to humanity is one of self-giving love. In terms of an issues of certifying a character of eschatological judgment, we should observe Volf’s (1996:193) assertion: “God will judge, not because God gives what they deserve, but because some people refuse to receive what no one deserves; if evil doers experiences God’s terror, it will not be because they have done evil, but because they have resisted to the end the powerful lure of the open arms of the crucified Messiah.”

According to the result of the exegesis of 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, we noticed that Paul’s use of wisdom and foolishness creates an ironic system of values that serves his apologetic intention. Paul’s use of paradoxical irony brings about a reinterpretation, not only of the cross, but also of Paul’s authority. The paradox then being that, in its powerlessness, foolishness expresses the value of power and God’s wisdom. Therefore, Paul emphasizes that God has brought in a new age and has transcended the existing wisdom, through the foolishness of the cross, God’s true power and wisdom. As we confirmed in this passage, the folly of the cross displays God’s compassionate love and identification with our suffering in terms of weakness, failure, and a

scandalous death by crucifixion. Furthermore, our exegesis of Matthew 21:18-19 indicates clearly the figurative image of Jesus' eschatological judgment towards the unfruitful Jewish people and their strict Jewish religion, as well as Jesus's supernatural power. The divine wrath and judgement has begun to manifest itself against the Jerusalem temple, and the way of being endowed with the power of God is being prepared for another people who will produce genuine fruit. In addition, the narrative in terms of cursing the fig tree does not offer the disciples or the Christians of Matthew's church (or the modern church) the promise that, if only they believe, they will be able to get anything they want, perform any miracle, or astound the world with wonders or even miracles that make good sense. Instead, in order to escape from God's wrath and judgement and participate in the wonderful promise in terms of the miraculous power of prayer, we must recognize that we need the prerequisite condition of the relevant faith, which can be proved in the living of a Christian life in fruitful discipleship.

In the light of the previous biblical and theological reflection of the notion of God's judgment and power with exegesis on some biblical texts, according to the hypothesis of our study, we surveyed four theologians' views of a theology of compassion. As a result, we confirmed that Luther's theology of compassion in terms of his TC could create a new, even reversed, concept of God's power, since it seeks the power of God in suffering and weakness, and calls us to destroy the idols of oppressive power by conforming to the way of the Crucified. In addition, Luther's view challenges us to disregard any attempt to understand God's power by means of rational and philosophical speculation. Luther's TC highlights the notion of "*Anfechtung*," in which he tries to emphasize the passion of Christ and God's suffering in the face of human suffering and predicaments. For Luther, the passion of Christ displays not merely a noetic dimension, but a very practical, experiential dimension. Luther believes that God makes Himself known through His active suffering, rather than passivity, and brings us to experience the total humiliation and suffering that Luther calls the *opus alienum* (God's alien work) in order to experience His *opus proprium* (God's proper work). That is, through experiencing God's strange work, the sinner is able to appropriate God's proper work and by experiencing *Anfechtung*, the sinner learns to trust only in God and become justified. For this reason, *Anfechtung* could be referred to as "delicious despair." Thus, within Luther's TC, God can no longer be viewed as an apathetic and aloof Being toward our suffering and predicaments. In this regard, one concludes that in his TC, Luther focuses on the existential implication of the cross

regarding human despair concerning God's empathetic and compassionate love.

Furthermore, in Kitamori's view and his emphasis on God's pain and love in terms of human sin and suffering, we found an Eastern approach to the issue of divine passion. As argued previously, within a theology of compassion, emphasis on God's empathy regarding our human suffering and predicaments is of the utmost importance. However, Kitamori emphasizes God's pain as a consequence of the inner conflict between His love and wrath rather than as a consequence of His empathy for our human predicament and suffering. Additionally, we note that the notion of *tsurasa*, the key principle of Japanese tragedy that relates culturally to the notion of Kitamori's pain of God. In addition, we confirm that Moltmann tries to make his theology of compassion relevant to the question of human suffering by adopting ontic-theological principles in a speculative way. Although he attempts to highlight God's suffering and compassionate love in the face of human suffering with his emphasis on the trinitarian paradigm, it seems that he cannot avoid the pitfalls insofar as suffering becomes the necessary element of the very being of God and Jesus becomes a mere function of his eschatology. In this regard, Louw's view can be much more appropriate to establish a theology of compassion, especially in a pastoral perspective, because he focuses much more on the systemic and relational issues in terms of pastoral hermeneutics, in which whole discussion turns to the predicament and suffering of people and parishioners. Louw does not intend to focus on a mere rationalistic speculation of the TCR. In his endeavour to apply the TCR to the theology of pastoral care, Louw appropriately reveals God's faithfulness and compassion without disregarding His differentiation and transcendence. As we confirmed, the underlying assumption in Louw's pastoral and hermeneutical interpretation of the TCR is that God-images that are influenced by culture, play a decisive role in people's reaction to severe pain and suffering and their quest for meaning and transformation. Therefore, in order to instil hope in the face of human suffering and to offer a solution to our human quest for meaning, Louw is convinced that the power of God should be reinterpreted in terms of compassion / vulnerability and transformation / empowerment. In this light, Louw proposes a relevant bridge between God's transcendence and condescendence. Louw does not wish to overemphasize God's identification with our human suffering, in which the immanent experience of God could probably be traded for His sovereignty. Neither does he attempt to overstress God's sovereignty and punishment, in which God could be possibly proposed as an aloof and alienated Being from human suffering. Thus,

Louw's view of the the TCR effectively indicates God's intimate presence and solidarity in the midst of our human pain and suffering without losing the dimension of his salvific grace. Thus, we notice that Louw endeavours to disclose the pastoral implication of TCR insofar as it offers true hope and healing in the face of human pain and suffering and, ultimately, it enhances spiritual growth and maturity in our faith. In other words, Louw concentrates on presenting the more pastoral implication of both the cross and resurrection for pastoral therapy: hope care and spiritual maturity.

In conclusion, the researcher would like to summarize concisely the significance of a theology of compassion in this chapter in a pastoral perspective as follows:

- It could be plainly said that on the basis of His holiness and righteousness, God judges sinners, for the purpose of purifying, reclaiming and renewing them, as well as promoting their fruitful and holy life in His covenantal grace. Thus, it seems problematic to understand God's judgment only in the light of punitive retribution and destructive justice.

- In terms of the biblical explanation of the relationship between sin and judgment, the term "correspondence" should be adopted instead of "consequence," because the biblical descriptions of the relation between sin and judgment are too diverse to be confined in terms of automatically built-in consequence.

- Although God's righteousness requires satisfaction of His demands, nevertheless, God sent His only Son, who has meted all His demands, as the bearer of divine judgment and punishment on behalf of humanity. On the basis of Jesus' redemptive works, sinners can be forgiven and saved solely by the grace of God.

- Therefore, it seems more reasonable to interpret God's judgment in the light of His forgiving, saving and restorative justice, as well as His covenantal grace and self-giving love.

- However, a pastoral theology should deal deliberately with a dynamic tension between God's forgiving and compassionate love and people's accountability regarding His law in the light of the His covenantal grace.

■ In the Bible, God is revealed as the absolute Sovereign, who has authority and ability to do whatever He chooses. Nevertheless, the Bible seems to represent God's power more in terms of liberating, saving, blessing, sacrificial and compassionate power than in terms of oppressing, dominating, self-centered power.

■ God's compassionate love and identification with our suffering, as well as His true power, are exposed clearly in the person, life and works of Jesus Christ, especially in Jesus' death and resurrection. In particular, within the cross, we find a new, even reversed concept of God's power, since it seeks God's power in weakness and folly. In the light of the cross, we can reshape our conventional pattern of power.

■ In Christ's death and resurrection, life has been transformed and resurrected. Additionally, by the work of Holy Spirit, this transformed and resurrected life could be realized daily in form of hope, sacrificial love, peace and joy.

■ In this regard, we can say that the pastoral implication of a theology of compassion regarding Christ's death and resurrection creates a new dimension of pastoral therapy: hope care and spiritual maturity.

In this light, within the next chapter, the researcher will attempt to apply a theology of compassion established in this chapter into the Korean context.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **PASTORAL HERMENEUTICS AND DIAGNOSIS WITHIN THE KOREAN CONTEXT**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the light of the interplay between the PGI within the KPBC and the Korean religious culture, we previously attempted to establish a theology of compassion in order to propose a theological criterion, which aims to assess and reframe the existing theological paradigm and PGI, from a pastoral hermeneutical perspective. Now, this chapter will deal with the question of how to apply the proposed theological theory to pastoral ministry within the Korean context with special focus on the notion of a pastoral hermeneutics and diagnosis.

In this chapter, the researcher will be engaged in finding answers to the following questions:

- What is meant by a theology of compassion within the Korean context?
  
- How do pastoral care and theology contribute to the development of spirituality of the KPBC while taking into consideration of new paradigm shifts in the Korean society?
  
- What are the characteristics of pastoral hermeneutics and pastoral diagnosis? And, why and how can a hermeneutical and metaphorical approach be adapted into the pastoral ministry within the Korean context?
  
- If we opt for a hermeneutical stance, how should a metaphorical interpretation of God in a pastoral diagnosis be related to the issue of assessing and reframing God-images with into the Korean context?
  
- Against the unique religious cultural background of the Korean society, what possible new metaphors in terms of reframing God-images can be chosen in order to enhance parishioners' maturity in faith and their hope and intimacy with God even in the context of their predicaments and suffering?

## **5.2 PASTORAL IMPLICATIONS OF A THEOLOGY OF COMPASSION FOR MINISTRY IN THE KOREAN CHURCH**

In the previous chapter, we already attempted to establish a theology of compassion especially in a pastoral perspective. In this section, the researcher wishes to make an indication of what is meant by a theology of compassion within the Korean context.

In fact, according to the result of the empirical survey of the previous chapter, we have already confirmed that the theological paradigm of the KPBC was influenced by a metaphysical paradigm within the KTR, in which many parishioners might interpret God in terms of an explanatory model with an emphasis on cause and effect. In addition, due to the impact of this theological paradigm, many parishioners understand suffering as the direct consequence of the merciless and apathetic God on account of their sins (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.4; 3.3.4.7; 3.3.4.8; 3.3.4.13). However, a theology of compassion in the previous chapter indicates that it seems problematic to understand God's judgment only within the framework of punitive retribution and destructive justice. In fact, on the basis of His holiness and righteousness, God judges and punishes sinners for the purpose of purifying, reclaiming and renewing them, as well as promoting their holy and fruitful life in the grace of God. Additionally, His righteousness and justice require the satisfaction of His demands. Nevertheless, God gave His only Son to us and, consequently, Christ was judged and punished in our stead. God sent Christ as the bearer of divine judgment and punishment on behalf of humanity. On the basis of Jesus' redemptive work, sinners can be saved solely by the grace of God. Thus, it seems reasonable to understand God's judgment more in terms of the saving and restorative justice, as well as the merciful and self-giving love than in terms of the merciless, apathetic and punitive retribution. In this respect, in the light of a theology of compassion, for the parishioners within the KPBC, suffering might no longer be regarded as merely a direct consequence of automatic effecting deeds. Additionally, since God could no longer be perhaps understood as an apathetic and distant Being within the context of suffering and predicaments, adopting a theology of compassion as a new theological paradigm in pastoral care in the Korean Church may help pastors to instil true hope for parishioners, as well as to enhance their healing process and maturity in faith.

In addition, as previously confirmed, we find a materialistic theological paradigm in the Korean

religious context, in which God's power might be misused in order to serve parishioners' material wishes and selfish purposes. Although many parishioners in the KPBC regard God as an omnipotent Being, who can do anything and is responsible for everything, due to the impact of the KTR, His power could be easily misused in order to secure their material wishes and selfish purposes, especially in terms of apathetic domination and control (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.2; 3.3.4.3; 3.3.4.5; 3.3.4.6; 3.3.4.10; 3.3.4.12; 3.4.5). However, a theology of compassion may provide a new, even reversed concept of God's power and reshape the conventional pattern of power, since it seeks the power of God in weakness and folly. In addition, God's power could be perhaps represented more in terms of liberating, saving, blessing, self-giving and compassionate power than in terms of oppressing, dominating and self-centered power. Particularly, a theology of compassion in the previous chapter indicates that in Christ's resurrection, life has been transformed radically: from anxiety to hope; from nothingness to eschatology; from death to resurrection. Furthermore, by the work of the Holy Spirit, this newly transformed and resurrected life can be realized daily in forms of hope, sacrificial love, peace and joy (Louw 2000a:155). Therefore, we can say that a theology of compassion could probably help the parishioners in the KPBC to find not only God's compassionate love and His identification with their suffering, but also His true and resurrection power, in which they might reconstruct true hope in the midst of their suffering and predicaments, as well as their appropriate ethical role on the basis of Christ's sacrificial love.

However, in his endeavour to establish a theology of compassion within the Korean context, the researcher does not want to disregard the diverse dimensions of God's nature, such as holiness, righteousness, sovereignty and transcendence. Neither does he wish to assert that God's power and His judgment must be interpreted only in the light of the notion of "pathos" or "compassion," for the purpose of emphasizing God's compassionate love and His solidarity and identification with human suffering. The researcher is convinced that God's power of judgment and punishment must also be emphasized within the Korean context insofar as it enhances parishioners' awe and respect towards God, their responsible and obedient behaviour and a power of sensitive discernment regarding right and wrong (Louw 1999a:344). Despite God's initiative and unconditional grace, because God is absolutely holy and righteous, human accountability in terms of God's law must be emphasized. Thus, the researcher believes that a theology of compassion in the KPBC should deal deliberately with a dynamic tension between

God's forgiving and compassionate love and parishioners' accountability regarding His law in the light of His covenantal grace.

In this regard, the researcher believes that a theology of compassion proposed in Chapter 4 could perhaps help the Korean Church to reframe more appropriately her existing theological paradigm, which have reflected the impact of the Korean religious and cultural setting, whereby it may instill true hope for parishioners' in the midst of their predicaments and suffering, as well as to enhance their maturity in faith and healing process.

### **5.3 THE IMPACT OF PARADIGM SHIFTS WITHIN THE KOREAN SOCIETY ON A CONTEXTUAL PASTORAL HERMENEUTICS**

The central aim of this study relates to the issue of assessing and reframing the existing PGI within the Korean Church on a more relevant theological basis. Therefore, as argued previously, because PGI are linked to their experience of God within their specific context, in which cultural factors play an important role, we already attempted to interpret the significance of parishioners' understanding of God and theodicy within the KPBC in respect of the connection between God and suffering against the Korean religious and cultural background. As a result, we noticed that parishioners' God-images and their view of theodicy within the KPBC reflected both the impact of the doctrine of God as well as the considerable influence of the Korean religious and cultural setting. Therefore, we notice that within the field of pastoral care in the KPBC, a paradigmatic shift should take place from an individualistic and substantial metaphysical thinking towards a more hermeneutical and systems thinking, in which the dynamics of interrelationship and interconnectedness play an important role (Louw 2005:23,24). However, it is still necessary to reckon new paradigm shifts in Korean society, because the impact of cultural shifts in this age could be "far more radical on people's lives than the so-called treat of secularization during the twentieth century" (Louw 2002b:69).

According to Plou (1996:61), because the ultimate goal of globalization of the market economy will increase individualism and social fragmentation, people will perceive themselves only as consumers. Consequently, as Plou (1996:61) maintains, human dignity seems to be forgotten and all that counts is purchasing power. Furthermore, Louw (2002b:76-79, 2001c:41-42,

2000b:30-33) warns of a negative influence of the economic globalization on the church, which moulds human beings into a new cultural framework: “the culture of achievement, entertainment, moneymaking, consumption, materialistic exploitation, technological development and economical performance.” The researcher believes that Louw and Plou’s remarks contribute towards an understanding of the cardinal problem of globalization within the Korean society in this new millennium. Furthermore, due to the process of globalization of the market economy, within Korean society like many other countries in this age, economics has become a new religion, which sets the pace, norm and values of humans in the megapolis of the global village (Louw 2000b:31). Therefore, we can say that the tendency of over-emphasizing economic power in the process of globalization may disturb synthetically PGI of the KPBC with the impact of the Korean religious and cultural setting.

For instance, as we argued previously, materialistic theological paradigm would be found in the Korean religious context, in which God power might be misused in order to serve parishioners material wishes and selfish purposes. Thus, although many parishioners in the KPBC regard God as an omnipotent Being, who can do anything and is responsible for everything,<sup>106</sup> His power seems to be easily hijacked in order to secure their material wishes and selfish purposes (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.2; 3.3.4.6; 3.3.4.10; 3.3.4.12). Additionally, for many parishioners within the KPBC seem to interpret God’s power in terms of apathetic domination and control (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.7; 3.4.5). Therefore, the researcher is convinced that a pastoral and practical theology in the KPBC should not only reconstruct its prophetic role of unmasking the ideological paradigm of economic globalization and the materialistic paradigm of the Korean religious cultural setting, but also be engaged in reframing people’s God-images on the grounds of the notion of the compassionate God, for the purpose of concentrating more profoundly on human needs, as well as the human quest for meaning and dignity (Louw 2001c:55-56, 2000b:40-42). In this regard, the researcher believes that a theology of compassion in this study would probably provide a new, even reversed concept of God’s power, since it seeks the power of God in weakness and folly, whereby the parishioners within the Korean Church may find true hope in the midst of their severe suffering and predicaments in the light of God’s compassionate love, solidarity and His identification with their suffering, as well as His resurrection power.

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<sup>106</sup> We already confirmed this point through the results of the empirical survey at Chapter 3 (questionnaire 3.3.4.3; 3.3.4.5)

Furthermore, although the complexity of postmodernity could be described with many angles, nevertheless, it is certain that, due to the influence of the process of postmodernization that started after the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Korean society has experienced a drastic change in its entire aspect of culture. According to Shim, Young-hee Kim (2003:41), Western society experienced two paradigm shifts from the traditional autocratic agrarian society by way of the modern industrial society and, finally, to postmodern society, within a period of 200 to 300 years. On the other hand, Korean society experienced two drastic social shifts within only 50 to 60 years. As a result, “the Korean society has changed from being a very rigid and conservative society to a very advanced, individualistic and achievement-oriented postmodern society” (Shim Y H K 2003:49). Mohler (1995:68) understands postmodernism as a cultural phenomenon of profound transition. This can be regarded as an umbrella concept covering styles, movements, shifts, and approaches in the field of art, history, architecture, literature, political science, and philosophy. Osborne (1999:93) maintains that postmodernism, which embraces both pluralism and relativism, is an outgrowth of reaction against modernism with reliance on rational thinking and the reality of the objective in a scientific inquiry. Additionally, Shim, Young-hee Kim (2003:67-73) summarizes the influence of postmodernity on Korean society on the basis of the following aspects: “acknowledgement of individual distinctiveness; atomization; hyperconsumerism; the culture of amusement and the reality of technology; detraditionalization and moral anomie; Americanization.” In this light, as Louw appropriately points out (2003:36-37), the researcher believes that a pastoral theology of the KPC should reckon the impact of these new paradigm shifts, so called postmodernization and globalization.

In particular, Louw (2003:40) points out appropriately the consequences and challenge of postmodernization on a pastoral theology as follows:

The current emphasis on qualitative research is partly due to a gradual paradigmatic shift towards hermenetics. This shift is a movement away from the positivistic stance of modernity with its undertone of rationalism, i.e. to control reality through the power of reason and logic.

Indeed, as Louw (2005:17, 24-26) manifests, we cannot disregard the challenge of a new paradigm shift from “an explanatory model with its danger of a very positivistic stance: the claim of theology for defining God in metaphysical and substantial categories” towards “a hermeneutical and systemic model: focusing on contextual interpretation and understanding, as

well as dynamics of interconnectedness and interrelationship.” The hermeneutical and systemic stance make it possible for a pastoral theology to assess the being qualities of humans in order to determine how our understanding of God impacts on the human quest for meaning and hope (Louw 2003:44). Therefore, regarding theodicy issue, Louw (2003:50-54) insists that the dimension of God’s compassion and pathos, as well as His covenantal grace and faithfulness should be emphasized in a pastoral theology.

Louw’s remarks are of great importance, when reckoning the Korean religious cultural setting. For instance, according to the result of the empirical survey of the previous chapter, we already confirmed that the theological paradigm of the KPBC was influenced by the metaphysical paradigm within the KTR, in which many parishioners might interpret God in terms of explanatory model with an emphasis on cause and effect. As a result, many parishioners display the tendency of understanding that all their suffering and predicaments are the direct consequence of the judgments of a merciless and apathetic God (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.4; 3.3.4.8; 3.3.4.13). Therefore, regarding the paradigm of metaphysical theodicy of the Korean religious cultural setting, for many parishioners within the KPBC, God seems to be easily understood as the direct source of evil and all suffering in the world (cf. Chapter 3: 3.4.4) Consequently, many parishioners seems to regard God as an apathetic and distant Being within their context of suffering (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.7; 3.4.5). In this regard, the researcher wishes to confirm that Louw’s notion of “agapiedicy” should be adapted in order to deal well with new challenges of this postmodern age.

In general, theodicy could be understood as an attempt to justify God in the world’s face of evil, in order to resolve the dilemma posed by the relationship between God’s love and omnipotence (McGrath 1995:27; Inbody 1997:27; Van der Ven 1993:173; Louw 2000a:11,25,38; 1999a:3). Van der Ven (1993:173-174) classifies various theodicies into two categories that distinguish between God’s remoteness from, or nearness to, the sufferer, or between the absolutely transcendent God and the immanently transcendent God. According to Van der Ven, three perspectives of God in terms of suffering can resort under absolute transcendence. In the *apathetic* God model, He is unmoved, untouched and indifferent and thus remains completely unaffected by suffering, while in the *retaliatory* model of God, He permits suffering as punishment for sin. Furthermore, in the *planning, ordering* model of God, suffering receives a

secure place by it being placed in a larger context, not only of space but, above all, of time and thus, at the end of each person's life or at the end of time, it will become clear what meaningful role suffering has played and according to what rules it has occurred. In accordance with the view of Berkof (1979:114) and Weinandy (2000:56), Van der Ven (1993:173) believes God's transcendence is not necessarily in opposition to His immanence. Similarly, in terms of theodicy in the various traditions and viewpoints, Louw (2000a:28) distinguishes two approaches in a slightly different way, i.e. the *inclusive* and *exclusive* approaches.

In an *inclusive* approach, theologians try to link God to evil in order to protect God's omnipotence, will and providence. Thus, in this approach, there is a link between God's will and the existence of suffering and evil.

Louw proposes three perspectives in this approach:

- (1) suffering and its link to punishment and the wrath of God
- (2) suffering as a means to a higher end within a process of development or evolution;
- (3) suffering and the imperfection of creation under God's will.

However, as Louw (2000a:28) asserts, in an *exclusive* approach, theologians endeavour to emphasize God's pathos in contrast to the interpretation of God in an unsympathetic manner. Thus, in this approach, God does not necessarily regard Himself as the cause of evil and suffering, rather, He considers Himself as the "suffering God." Louw (2000:34-37) illustrates many possible models of theodicies that could be classified in this category. In particular, in the *theopaschitic* approach, which focuses on God's identification and sympathetic involvement with suffering, there are several perspectives that emphasize God's *weakness* (Bonnhoeffer 1970), His *powerlessness* (Solle 1973), His *defencelessness* (Berkhof 1973; Wiersinga 1972), and His *forsakenness* (Moltmann 1972a). Added to this, the futuristic theodicy, in which God's justification in terms of evil is postponed and redirected toward the future, is proposed as another model of an *exclusive* approach.

As a result, we notice that an *inclusive* approach in Louw's classification of theodicies could be associated with the concept of the *absolute transcendent* God in Van der Ven's categorization of theodicy, while an *exclusive* model may relate to the concept of the *immanent transcendent*

God in Van der Ven. However, an *inclusive* approach runs the risk of God being regarded as an author and origin of evil, and thus easily leads to unsympathetic and indifferent God-images. On the other hand, an *exclusive* approach has the possible danger of the reduction of God to pain and human suffering, since suffering is limited only to the human and creaturely level (Louw 2000a:9,38). Therefore, we should now pay attention to a question of Van der Ven (1993:164), which seems to be at the very heart of theodicy: “Can the reconciliation of God’s omnipotence with His love be achieved on the basis of reason alone, or only through faith?”

Although this question is not easily answered, the researcher believes that Louw’s (2000a:38) following assertion has great value in finding a clue to solving this question:

It becomes clear that theodicy never explains suffering at a rational level. It can only describe and express the complexity of suffering and our human attempt to come to grips with our human misery. Theodicy allows theology to become conscious of the following antinomy and paradox: on the one hand, God can be linked to suffering while, on the other, He is against it.

For Louw (2000a:39), from a pastoral perspective, every attempt to justify God in the face of evil is unsuccessful when using an explanatory and rationalistic approach. In a similar vein, D A Carson (1994:217-218) also makes it clear that because regarding the theodicy issue, it is not possible to find out any attempt to vindicate God by beginning with human observations, perspectives and reasonings, thus, there is no ultimate theodicy in the Scriptures. Carson writes, “Theodicy makes God’s power and goodness a deduction of human reasons; and this the biblical writers will not allow.”

Furthermore, Louw (2002a:93) aptly points out that theodicy in trans-postmodernity could no longer be a rational attempt to justify God in the face of evil. For Louw (2002a:92), “trans-postmodernity” means the movement to a new period of restructuring and reconstruction. According to him (2002a:92), while relativity, deconstruction, fragmentation and pluralism characterized postmodernity, the search for networking and security, a reconstruction of fundamental values and a unified force for localism could characterize trans-postmodernism. Louw (2002a:93) poses a new challenge to trans-postmodernity as follows: “to combat the financial war of dollars and gold with the ethics of sacrificial love; to respond with reorganising, reframing and repositioning values that safeguard our human dignity and local cultural values.”

In this light, Louw (2002a:93) proposes that theodicy should move into “agapedicy”- the justification of love despite the face of evil.<sup>107</sup> Louw (2000a:40) believes that God’s love and omnipotence are not two different entities and attributes, but both are manifestations of His faithfulness, which could be considered as an expression of God being active in our human history and His sincere identification with our predicament and suffering. Thus, for him, agapedicy is about the challenge to suffer with, and for, another, to embody God’s unconditional and sacrificial love through embracing grace (2002a:93).

In this respect, especially against the Korean religious cultural setting, the researcher believes that a theology of compassion in this study may contribute to adopt Louw’s notion of “agapedicy,” in order to deal well with the challenge of trans-postmodernity. In other words, it could probably help the parishioners within the Korean Church to enhance their intimacy towards God despite their suffering, in which they could interpret God’s judgment more in terms of the saving and restorative justice, as well as in the light of merciful and self-giving love than in terms of the merciless, apathetic and punitive retribution.

#### 5.4 THE ROLE OF A PASTORAL DIAGNOSIS IN MINISTRY

Previously, we argued that within the field of pastoral care in the KPBC, a paradigmatic shift should take place from an individualistic and substantial metaphysical thinking towards a more hermeneutical and systems thinking. In other words, in respect of its methodology and theory, pastoral theology in the KPBC should take a paradigmatic shift away from an explanatory, to a metaphorical approach in a pastoral hermeneutics. In particular, borrowing Augustine’s and Charr’y’s views, Louw (2003: 46) points out keenly the challenge of a shift from *scientia* to *sapientia* in a pastoral theology<sup>108</sup>: “the relationship between *scientia* and *sapientia* introduces a

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<sup>107</sup> D A Carson (1994:212) keenly points out that the mode of divine “ultimacy” in terms of the problem of evil has a built in asymmetry to it: “the manner in which God stands behind evil and the manner in which he stands behind good are not precisely identical; for He is to be praised for the good, but not blamed for the evil.” Thus, one can say that Carson’s understanding of the divine “ultimacy” could relate to Louw’s notion of “agapedicy” in a sense.

<sup>108</sup> Louw (2003:47) asserts that “theologizing consists of *scientia* (rational-historical analyses of experiential data), *sapientia* (wisdom and reflection/contemplation about the transcendent dimension of faith); and *intelligentia* (cognitive analysis along the lines of a logical and philosophical argumentation)” He believes that if *scientia* and *intelligentia* are separated from *sapientia*, then theology would degenerate into either a rationalistic practice (speculation) or a sensory enterprise (empiricism).

healthy tension in theological methodology: the tension between experience and revelation; between empiricism and transcendence; between rationality and wisdom; between knowledge and mystery.” In this regard, in order to take a paradigmatic shift more relevantly, here, we shall explore the significance of pastoral diagnosis within the Korean context regarding a pastoral hermeneutics.

In fact, within the pastoral ministry, since pastors’ function is hermeneutical, the significance of a pastoral hermenutics should be indentified. Broadly speaking, the word "hermeneutic" (or "hermeneutical") is a complex word with a long and complicated history of usage. The origin of this word could be associated with the Greek word that sprang from the wing-footed messenger god, Hermes, who was associated with the “function of transmuting what is beyond human understanding into a form that human intelligence can grasp” (Gerkin 1984:19). Similar to the function of the Greek god, Hermes, the pastoral counsellor, as a representative of God’s story, seeks correspondence between people’s stories and God’s story (Louw 1999a:99).<sup>109</sup>

Heitink (1977:170-171) believes that revelation and phenomenology become involved with each other and that neither can function on its own. Additionally, in his narrative approach, Gerkin (1986:50) proposes the human person as being created by God within a time and narrative framework. Also, because he understands the biblical account of God’s activity as “open-ended story,” Gerkin manifests that the pastor has no authority to command and direct (1986:48,101). However, Louw (1999a:32-33) points out a possible danger in Heitink’s bipolar approach, namely that pastoral conversation takes place as a form of indirect revelation as a continuation of incarnation, which is linked to Paul Tillich’s view of *analogia entis*. Consequently, the risk exists that a theology of development of faith degenerates into a mere psychology of self-development. Similarly, as Louw’s (1999a:15) properly criticizes, “because Gerkin’s hermeneutical approach tries to interpret the daily pastoral contacts in the light of the

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<sup>109</sup> In particular, Ganzevoort (1993:285) proposes five advantages of using a hermeneutical approach in pastoral practice and research: “The first is the expertise of theologians as interpreters of stories in which the most fundamental questions of faith and meaning come to the fore. Secondly, a hermeneutical approach generates the possibility of resolving the tension between a kerygmatic approach and a client-centred approach. The third advantage is the fact that a hermeneutical approach gives the partners in dialogue a fundamental uniqueness as interpreters of their own lives. The fourth advantage is the possibility of evangelizing in a pastoral context. The fifth and most important advantage is that a hermeneutical approach allows a better understanding of the meaning of people’s action and thinking.”

interpretive vision provided by the metaphors and themes of Christian story, his model runs the risk of becoming a phenomenology of human acts within a Christian context.”

In this light, when we adapt a hermeneutical approach into pastoral care in the KPBC, we should pay renewed attention to the unique characteristic of the pastoral hermeneutics not only in order to avoid a possibility of a psychological and phenomenological reduction in the pastoral hermeneutics, but also for the sake of a better understanding of dialogical nature of the relationship of the revelation and faith (Louw 1999a:36). Indeed, the KPBC should regard pastoral theology as the hermeneutics of God’s encounter with human beings and their world. That is, pastoral hermeneutics for the KPBC should be an interpretation of existential and contextual issues within the encounter between God and humans, especially from the perspective of the comforting effect of God’s grace, presence and identification with human needs and suffering (Louw 1999a:3, 98-99).<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, as previously argued, the pastoral encounter for the ministry in the Korean context should be described in terms of taking note of systemic and cultural contexts rather than merely a relationship between a personal God and an isolated individual (1999a:68,73-74).

In the mean time, because pastoral diagnosis / assessment focuses on interplay between faith and its fields of application within the whole spectrum of anthropological data, which is interwoven into parishioners’ language of faith (Louw 1999a:300), analyzing and understanding parishioners’ faith metaphor is a cardinal task in order to determine exactly what a parishioner means by faith in God and how he/she applies it in concrete situation. In addition, as previously argued, Furthermore, in pluralistic postmodern culture, due to the importance of the uniqueness of each person’s experience, it has become necessary for the pastors within the KPBC to give more attention to the issue of the listening a parishioner’ own story within the frame work of the Christian story (Y H K Shim 2003:194; Capps 1993:1).

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<sup>110</sup> Louw (1999a:67-68) portrays the characteristics of the pastoral encounter as follows: “Encounter implies an *event of knowing*; Encounter is part of the *process of interpretation* and understanding; Encounter may be characterized by dualities. There are dualities of distance and closeness; of challenging/confrontation and listening; of dialogue and action; Encounter implies being aware of somebody's presence as well as experiencing oneself; Encounter implies *reciprocity* and *interaction*; Encounter is a process, which involves *influencing, transforming* and *changing*.”

#### 5.4.1 The unique stance of pastoral diagnosis

Because pastoral diagnosis has a critical role in pastoral counselling, it has become important to clarify its concept. The word *diagnosis* derives from the Greek terms *diu* (through, or by means of) and *gnosis* (knowledge attained through careful observation that is verifiable). Thus, this demonstrates that diagnosis is not simply one's opinion but understanding carefully discerned as true and this can be a neutral process (Ramsay 1998:9). Furthermore, the word diagnosis has been used in many ways. For instance, diagnosis in the medical profession or psychiatry has a labelling tendency, identifying a particular pathology or a class of symptom. Hence, a label has been decided upon and given to the patient; the patient is recognized through only the diagnostic label, not as a person (De Jongh 1987:11-12). Another example is evident in psychological therapy. Rogers developed a psychoanalytic model, focusing on explaining a cause for the problem. He believes that, because all human beings have a potential of self-actualizing, a therapist must disregard his or her own preoccupation with diagnosis and tendency to make professional evaluations to generate a climate of freedom and respect. Rogers emphasizes that diagnosis is not external to the process that takes place in the client's experience (Ramsay 1998:18-19; De Jongh 1987:13). Compared to the medical or psychiatric view of diagnosis, Rogers' view of diagnosis seems to focus more on a client than the problem.

Now, turning to pastoral diagnosis, we shall see its unique characteristics. According to Louw (1999b:133), a pastoral diagnosis could be understood as a dynamic process of interpretation of information, which focuses on the integration of relevant data regarding the character of faith. For Louw, a pastoral diagnosis is about an assesment of faith in tems of God-images and the ultimate meaning of life. In addition, although Louw (1999a:87) believes that a pastoral hermeneutics would hardly be able to function without acknowledging the empirical dimension in theological theory, nevertheless, when empirical dimension is adapted into pastoral theology, a danger would exist of conceiving pastoral care as a mere empirical event with verifiable facts, denying the eschatological character of salvation. Thus, Louw (1999a:86,87) warns against the danger of a one-sided domination of theory over practice, or the domination of empirical demand over theory. Dingemans (1996:87-88) also argues that "the purpose of pastoral care or practical theology is to inquire into the experiences of salvation and of evil by humans in their personal and social life, in relation to what the church and theology offer them."

Furthermore, Van der Ven (1993:41,59-68) understands hermeneutical-communicative praxis as the base of practical theology. He especially emphasizes the normative orientation in the hermeneutics-communicative praxis that is placed in an eschatological perspective, which resides in the *basileia* symbol of Jesus' preaching and ministry. Louw, in accordance with Van der Ven's view, also emphasizes that salvation and the experience of faith should be interpreted in the light of the normative factor, the eschatological perspective. According to Louw (1999a:89-90), this normative basis, functioning as a meta-theory, refers to a dimension of meaning and transcendental reality and empirical data itself cannot become the normative agent in practical theology.

In fact, since the psychological sciences challenged the role of church, the need was felt in the field of pastoral care and counseling to intergrate the findings of the psychological sciences and theology. Thus, for instance, Boisen started a loosely organized training program, called the *Clinical Pastoral Education Movement* (C.P.E) (Collins 1980:13-14). However, in his attempt to integrate psychology and theology, most of his work not only displays a non-theological nature, but also was dependant on the medical model with its focus on the inner dynamics of the person, derived from Freud and Carl Rogers (Huckaby 1975:263). In contrast to Boisen, Adams develops his *nouthetic counseling* model in order to attack to the dominant psychological approaches in the field of pastoral counseling. Adams rejects any form of integration between psychology and theology (1979a:11; 1982:33). Adams regards sin as the cardinal root of all human problems and suggests a diagnostic model, the Personal Data Inventory (P.D.I.), which is calculated to dig out the roots of all problems (1972:128, 271-274; 1976:27; 1979b:41) In his P.D.I. model, Adams proposes two modes of approaches, that is, the intensive approach concerns itself with the problem in depth, extending in its various ramifications to many or the other entire problems. On the other hand, the extensive approach is more generalized and inquires about ten areas (1973:252; 1981:45-47).

In the mid 1970s, Pruyser also bemoaned the fact that ministers had become overawed with psychology and psychiatry and, consequently, had given up their unique and special roles based on their religious tradition and their own spiritual insight and knowledge. For this reason, Pruyser began to appeal to ministers to become involved in making theological diagnoses of their parishioners (Malony 1993:237).

Fitchett is convinced that spiritual assessment has a central place in guiding and evaluating pastoral care (Fitchett 1993:20). He identifies nine characteristic features of approaches to spiritual assessment:

(1) *Implicit assessment*. This is one of the most common forms of assessment in pastoral care. Usually, we do not regard such assessments as assessments. Consequently, they are never shared with the person who is the object of our care, nor with any other concerned or interested person. (2) *Inspired assessment*. Inspired pastoral actions are grounded in divine revelation received directly by the caregiver or mediated through holy texts or persons. (3) *Intuitive assessment*. Pastoral caregivers frequently say that their ministry with a specific parishioner or patient was directed by intuition. (4) *Idiosyncratic assessment*. This differs from implicit assessment as the caregiver regards it as an assessment. (5) *Assessments based on traditional pastoral acts*. A majority of our pastoral assessments are best described under the category of pastoral actions that are traditionally expected in the context of a specific life situation. The specific pastoral action may vary from tradition to tradition, but, within the tradition, there is a strong consensus about what should be done. (6) *Assessment based on normative pastoral stances*. For some of us, the approach to assessment focuses on our attitude or stance, rather than on our behaviour or on the explicit need of the patient. We believe that what is important is for the pastor to "be present," "be available," "be empathetic," "be authentic," or to "offer hospitality." The specific behaviour performed is less important here than the overall stance or quality of our relationship with the person for whom we are caring. (7) *Global assessments*. Another common approach to pastoral assessments is to employ one or two very broad diagnostic categories. (8) *Psychological assessment*. (9) *Explicit spiritual assessment*. Sometimes our pastoral care is based on a conscious process of spiritual assessment of what the person needs or what the situation calls for.

Furthermore, Steven (1988:81) defines pastoral diagnosis as an art of understanding the concerns, perspectives, and life story of another person within the context of the ministry of the church. He believes that the purpose of pastoral diagnosis is to provide more accurate care for those in need of pastoral care. According to Steven, pastoral diagnosis enables a pastor attain a more profound understanding of a troubled person and it illuminates the directions and possibilities of the person in relation to oneself, others and God. Heuer (1993:237) explains that pastoral analysis is the therapeutic science of engaging the problems of being human from a perspective that accommodates the human need for wholeness in a temporal and an ultimate sense.

In particular, Louw (1999:134) proposes the unique characteristics of pastoral diagnosis more

clearly. According to him, the purpose of pastoral diagnosis is not purely for an existential analysis. Rather, Louw believes that “a pastoral diagnosis focuses on organizing, summarizing and interpreting data in order to establish a link between faith and life, between God-images and self-understanding, and between the scriptural truth and existential context.” In fact, Louw distinguishes between pastoral diagnosis and analysis. According to him, “pastoral analysis is just a more specific factor that plays a role in the development of mature faith, while pastoral diagnosis regards the process, mode and significance of faith.” For Louw, thus, pastoral diagnosis seems to be associated with rather a more substantial approach than a mere functional approach.<sup>111</sup> However, Louw believes that a substantial approach should be supplemented by a functional approach (Louw 1996:118).

For instance, Fitchett proposes the 7 \* 7 Model, which focuses on seven holistic dimensions of assessment and seven spiritual dimensions based on a functional approach in pastoral diagnosis that concentrates more on how a person makes meaning in his or her life. According to Fitchett (1993:42), because our spiritual lives and needs are strongly influenced by what is happening in the rest of our lives and holistic dimension, i.e. the medical, psychological, psychosocial, family systems, ethnic and cultural, societal issues and spiritual dimensions should be considered. In the spiritual dimensions in his model, seven sub-dimensions are found: belief and meaning, vocation and consequences, experience and emotion, community, courage and growth, ritual and practice, authority and guidance. Louw (1996:119) evaluates that the value of Fitchett’s functional model lies in the various components of an assessing process being integrated. What is more, Fitchett’s model also can be regarded as a supplement to a more substantial model, which helps the pastor to move from a subjective level to a more objective level (1999c:236).

In addition to this, Louw (1999c:239) points out that because these data are not only interwoven into parishioners’ language of faith but also reflects what the parishioners mean by faith in God and how they apply it in concrete situations, analysing and understanding faith metaphors of the

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<sup>111</sup> Fitchett (1993:39-40) distinguishes between a functional approach and a substantive approach in spiritual assessment. According to him, a functional approach focuses more on how a person finds meaning in his or her life than on what that specific meaning is, while substantive approach focuses on whether a person holds certain specific beliefs.

parishioners are critical within a pastoral diagnosis.<sup>112</sup>

All in all, the uniqueness of a pastoral diagnosis resides on its endeavour to understand a person's life in the light of the eschatological perspective, for the purpose of assessing a person's faith more in an existential level. Thus, the process of listening a parishioner's stories and identifying the meaning of religious metaphor is of the uttermost importance in a pastoral diagnosis.

#### **5.4.2 A metaphorical approach to pastoral ministry**

As we argued previously, in terms of the impact of the metaphysical theological paradigm in the Korean religious cultural setting, as well as accelerated process of the globalization and postmodernization in the Korean society, the researcher believes that in the area of pastoral care within the KPBC, the interpretation of God in association with only a metaphysical ontology, in which an ontological representation of God concepts could hinder parishioners' attempts to interpret God within the problem of their own context and suffering, might be no longer valid. Therefore, as argued previously, the researcher would like to advocate that within the field of pastoral care in the KPBC, the paradigmatic shift should take place from an individualistic to a more cultural and systemic paradigm. According to Louw (2003:44), "the introduction of hermeneutics as method opens new avenues for practical and pastoral theology to be classified as science."

Louw describes the metaphorical characteristics of a hermeneutical stance in pastoral theology as follows (2003:47-48)

Although God cannot be perceived (the *Deus absconditus*), the minimum for methodology in theology is to work with the basic assumption that God can be grasped, understood and portrayed with the aid of human language and metaphorical forms of speech.

In this sense, the researcher advocates that the positivistic and explanatory stance that attempts

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<sup>112</sup> Louw (1999a:316-317) suggests that pastoral diagnosis should consider the following criteria: "Problem thinking and problem behaviour; Historical context and life story; Ego-strength and purposefulness; Social analysis; Coping skills and temporal events; Interplay between motive, need and expectation – vocation; Ethical dimension."

to define the ontology of God solely in terms of being categories are no longer valid in pastoral and practical theology in the KPBC. Therefore, the researcher intends to adapt a metaphorical (and hermeneutical) approach in order to reframe a theological paradigm and the notion of God's power in terms of the covenantal schema of interpretation and agapedicy, in the light of the Korean religious cultural setting and the new shifts of the Korean society. However, when we use a theological metaphor, we should pay attention to an issue of balance between revelation and human experience. For instance, Kaufman (1981:11-12) believes that theology is essentially a constructive work of the human imagination. Hence, he rejects an approach based on the revelation of God. Accordingly, Kaufman's view seems to hold the danger that it not only devaluates the value of revelation, but also eventually loses the balance between a divine relation and human experience in terms of theological imagination. On the other hand, Green (1992:134) proposes that the task of theology is to interpret the metaphorical language of religious life and faith, which is especially grounded in the canon of Scripture. Brueggemann (1993:14) appropriately evaluates that, although there are difficulties in appealing to the canon on account of the meaning of the notion of the canon varying among many theologians, nonetheless, Green's attempt in which he treats the text as the material substance and arena for the practise of imagination should be appreciated.

In addition, when a metaphorical approach is adapted in pastoral care, the ontological existence of God should not be ignored. Louw (1999b:136) emphasizes that to adapt a metaphorical approach in pastoral care does not mean that God is not "real." That is, although no words or phrases are appropriate to use in reference to God (McFague 1987:34), nevertheless, we should not disregard the fact that, in terms of faith, the reality of God is not only a meaningful but also indeed a realistic and substantial issue. Furthermore, Louw (2003:47) aptly points out that in a hermenetical approach, it is no longer valid to make differentiate between God and our human experience of faith that has often been viewd as the only true object of theological reflection. Louw (2003:49) contends that within the contemporary quest for methodology in a hermeneutics of pastoral care and encounter, pastoral theology cannot operate without the correlation between biblical texts and human context, which presupposes *sapientia*: the experience of loving and enjoying God.

According to Braaten (1989:11-33), in God language three modes can be identified: speaking

about God - a descriptive monological approach; speaking for God - the dialogical model of prophecy or proclamation; the liturgical mode of speaking to God in prayer and praise which is an ascriptive act. Louw adds a pastoral mode of speaking, i.e. to speak of God appropriately within different contexts. In particular, Louw (1996:120) points out that in a pastoral assessment, whether we speak about, for, or to God, our task should be to determine the significance of God-talk with regard to our quest for meaning. That is, a pastoral hermeneutics endeavours to trace significant signs of meaningful experiences of transcendence and mystery in human events and language. Furthermore, in a metaphorical approach, it should be assumed that God is not a reality immediately available in our experience for observation, inspection, and description or to speak to Him. Also, as no words or phrase refer directly to God, thus, all God-talk could be referred to only through the detour of a description that belongs elsewhere. In other words, although not all metaphors fit this definition, "metaphor" can be defined as an attempt to speak about what we do not know, in terms of what we do know (Kaufman 1981:21; McFague 1987:33-34).

Furthermore, in *Models of God*, McFague (1987:34) describes the difference between a metaphor and a model, i.e. while a metaphor is used generally to refer to God in terms of a concept well-known to us for the purpose of illuminating certain aspects of God's relationship to us, a model is a metaphor that has gained sufficient stability and scope so as to present a pattern for relatively comprehensive and coherent explanation. In addition, it has been generally said that there is a difference between analogy and metaphor. While analogy assumes that it has something to teach and that a logical process of comparison can grasp its subject matter, metaphor is much less clear about what it has to say, but it is clear about wanting to assert the presence of a reality to which we are not accustomed. In other words, when analogy is used, objective language is presupposed, so that the role of the speaker and hearer is secondary. On the contrary, in metaphor, the imagination and experience of the speaker and hearer play an essential part in the success of the communication (Zimany 1994:56-57).

Meanwhile, according to Cavanagh (1992:75), how Christians perceive God has a profound influence on how they live each day. Furthermore, as discussed above, because metaphors in pastoral care are embedded in the life stories of parishioners, making assessment of God-images in their stories and seeking relevant metaphors that may enhance parishioners' faith have

become a primary task in pastoral care (Louw 1996:114,121). However, it is not easy to identify and assess parishioners' God-images because each pastor and parishioner has his/her own unique God-images that might be formed and influenced by many factors, such as ecclesiastical tradition and dogma, his/her experience of God and other various cultural aspects (Louw 1996:122,123). And, choosing proper metaphors that may enhance parishioners' faith is also extremely difficult. For instance, McFague (1987:61-62) proposes new metaphorical concepts of God, such as mother/father, lover and friend instead of traditional concepts, namely King, Ruler and Patriarch. However, the father metaphor may arouse negative associations in strict patriarchal societies according to Rizzuto's view.

Therefore, Louw (1996:124) poses this particular question: *“Is it possible to identify metaphors in Scripture that may convey the meaning of compassion and consolation in association with God's involvement with human need and suffering?”*

Louw's question is of great importance to pastoral ministry in the Korean context. As previously argued, the results of empirical research in this study indicate that due to the decisive impact of the Korean Shamanism and Confucianism, many parishioners within the KPBC, seem to understand excessively the notion of God as “a Judge” in the Bible within the framework of a traditional religious understanding of God as “a frightening, apathetic, merciless and even cruel Judge,” in which their suffering and predicaments could be easily regarded as a direct consequence of punishment of God for their sins (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.4; 3.3.4.8; 3.3.4.13). In addition, against the hierarchical and metaphysical schema of interpreting God, which might be derived from mainly Confucianism and Taoism, we confirm that many parishioners reflect a tendency of understanding God as “the ultimate cause or source of evil in the world” (cf. Chapter 3: 3.4.4). Consequently, we confirmed that for many parishioners within the KPBC, God has become a more “distant and apathetic Being” rather than a “compassionate and intimate Being,” especially within the context of their predicaments and suffering (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.7; 3.4.5). Against this religious cultural background, the researcher believes that Louw's perspective for metaphor is of great importance in order to imply the established theological theory with in this study into the ministry of pastoral care in the Korean context.

Because while Campbell (1981:35-71) proposes pastoral metaphors in association with the

pastor's personal character and Capps (1984:66-80) suggests that some metaphors relate to one's pastoral self-understanding, on the other hand, Louw (1996:125) offers pastoral metaphors to convey the pastoral dimension of God's involvement with existential issues of human beings, emphasizing the meaning of compassion and consolation from God regarding human suffering. Louw presents four metaphors to develop sensitivity (*the shepherd metaphor*), conciliation and woundedness (*the servant metaphor*), discernment and insight (*the wisdom metaphor*), and support and empowerment (*the paraclesis metaphor*). That is, Louw firstly proposes *the shepherd metaphor* (care as a mode of pastoral ministry). Like Campbell, Louw (1996:125) points out that the image of the shepherd in pastoral care does not designate the sense of status and authority. Rather, it could notify God's sensitive and compassionate caring for the entire creation. In particular, Louw (1996:127) believes that the meaning of *the shepherd metaphor* for pastoral care is that it connects the unique meaning of pastoral care, as compassionate and loving charity, to Jesus Christ's sacrificial and redeeming love. Thus, for Louw (1996:127), as a mode of pastoral ministry, *the shepherd metaphor* is not merely about human sympathy, but it is rather about the compassion of the covenantal God Himself.

Secondly, he asserts that *the servant metaphor* (wounded healer: service as therapy and pastoral identification), which indicates God's pathos and compassion for our human needs, links God's compassion to human suffering (1996:127). Louw (1996:127-128) believes that God's identification with human suffering clearly comes into view in Jesus Christ's work. That is, on the ground of Christ's messianic work, the servant metaphor could be linked to the healing, recovery, or reconciling function of pastoral care. According to Louw (1996:130), in God's identification with our suffering through the wounded Christ, God shares our suffering and generates hope and a new vision rather than simply removing our suffering.

Thirdly, he suggests the wise fool metaphor (paradox as an indication of true pastoral discernment and understanding). One could say that wisdom or the wise is a metaphor for God's active involvement in our human experience and creation (Sleeper in Louw 1996:131). Louw believes that wisdom could be related to paradox and comedy on the grounds of 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, which depicts Christ as God's wisdom. In other words, for Louw (1996:131), this wisdom reveals an apparent contradiction: a crucified and vulnerable God who is the power of our salvation. Similarly, he also says that comedy switches the roles by means of paradox,

which also could be described as God's humour. As Campbell (1981:71) seeks the carefree image of the fool in a reappearance of laughter, Louw (1996:132) understands that the wise fool metaphor could generate the insight and power of discernment to assess reality by means of humour through contradiction and paradoxes.

Fourthly, he proposes *the paraklesis metaphor* (comforting as pastoral mediation of salvation). After surveying briefly the concepts of several Greek words such as *episkopein*, *paramytheisthai*, *katartizein*, *oikodomein* and *nouthetein*, Louw (1996:135) proposes that the word *paraklesis* is the best word to describe and reflect the style of pastoral comforting and caring. In the LXX *parakaleo* is mainly used for the Hebrew *naham* that denotes sympathy and comfort. When *parakaleo* is used specifically to translate *naham*, it expresses compassion, sympathy and caring (Ps 135:14), otherwise it denotes encouragement, strengthening and guidance. In the New Testament, the word *parakaleo* has several nuances in meaning, such as summon, invite, reprimand, admonish, comfort, encourage, support, ask and exhort and all these could be linked to God's compassion and loving care. For instance, even when *parakaleo* expresses admonition, it must not be regarded primarily as a moral instruction, but as the loving involvement of the compassionate God (Louw 1996:135). Furthermore, one could say that *parakaleo* is directly linked to Christology and pneumatology. For example, a similar term, *parakletos*, which can be translated into helper, advocate, counsellor, comforter, persuader and convincer, exhibits the soteriological dimension of Jesus Christ's work of reconciliation and, in other texts, it indicates the Holy Spirit's independent work.

Thus, Louw believes that the shepherding mode of protective cherishing, the servant figure of sacrifice in suffering, the wisdom of true discernment and the admonishing component of actual support and change are combined in the concept of *parakaleo*. Thus, pastoral mode (loving care) and pastoral content (salvation) can be mediated effectively in practising congregational ministry (1996:136). According to Poling (1991:174), in order to reveal the faithfulness of God, whose caring presence is expressed in the pastoral encounter, a metaphor of covenantal presence and mutual partnership/companionship/friendship, the metaphor of God as "Friend" could be proposed.

In accordance with Poling's view, Louw (1996:137; 1998:239-240; 2001a:339) also proposes a

metaphor of God as “*Soul Friend*” and “*Partner for Life*” for pastoral care and encounter, especially in association with the pastoral modes of four metaphors, i.e. four aspects: sensitivity and compassion (*pathos*); identification (*woundedness*); insight and understanding in terms of paradoxes (*wise fool*); and consolation, encouragement and empowerment (*paraklesis*). Taking into consideration of the religious and cultural setting of Korea, in the light of a theology of compassion, the researcher will explore and adapt these metaphors into the pastoral ministry of the Korean Church in the following (See Chapter 5: 5.6).

## **5. 5 MODELS FOR ASSESSING GOD-IMAGES**

In this section, we shall survey some models for assessing God-images. The researcher believes that through our exploring, we could attain some practical clues in terms of the strategy of making use of the previously established theological theory in this study, for the purpose of assessing and reframing PGI within the Korean Church.

Hood (1989:336) believes that God-images could be properly investigated from a theological and ontological perspective. On the other hand, many researchers on God-images have consistently reflected the assumption that these images are internally constructed and experienced, and are separated from any ontological question about the external reality of God (Kunkel 1999:194). In accordance with this view, Kunkel (1999:194) asserts that researching God-images could be properly termed as phenomenological in the sense of being concerned with how people consciously come to construe God and are relatively unconcerned with how individual constructions might correspond to external reality. Similarly, ‘theo’-logical analysis does not aim to evaluate God’s being in terms of His characteristics, which reflect the essence of God, but aims to assess parishioners’ understanding of God that could be linked to their experience of God within specific contexts. Although assessing PGI is extremely complicated, its ultimate objective should be to determine how people view God, for the purpose of helping the parishioners to reframe their theological paradigm appropriately in their context.

Although identifying and assessing parishioners’ God-images is extremely difficult and complicated, in order to enhance parishioners’ faith and their intimacy with God by reshaping their inappropriate God-images, we should pay attention to theo-logical assessment. Various

models have been suggested in answer to the quest for assessing the parishioner's God-images. Firstly, the God image inventory (GII) model, which has been developed as an objective psychometric instrument for clinical and pastoral use in measuring a subject's image of God. Secondly, there is the pastoral semantic differential (PSD) model. This model was designed to provide insight regarding cognitive and affective associations of the parishioner's understanding of the concept of God. Thirdly, the theological-conceptual model could offer a good framework to assess people's experience of God in their quest for meaning in the context of suffering. A fourth model (the metaphorical model) could also be used to assess and reassess parishioners' intimacy with, and closeness to, God. Finally, the thematic cognitive model may indicate parishioners' inappropriate God-images and their pathological behaviour, as well as their appropriate God-images regarding the instilling hope and the enhancement of maturity in faith. The significance of these entire models to ministry in the Korean context will be examined against the religious and cultural setting of Korea.

### **5.5.1 The God image inventory (GII) model**

The God image inventory (GII) is an eight scale psychometric instrument to measure God's image. It was developed for clinical and pastoral use among those who believe that their God images correspond to a Being who actually exists (Lawrence, T L 1997:214). According to Lawrence, if the God-image is a transitional object, closely related to the self-image, then basic questions for the self-image should be important also for the God-image. Thus, he suggests that dimensions of the God-image to be measured by an instrument might well be guided by answers to the question, "What critical issues or areas of relationship between the God-image and the self-image can be identified and operationalized in an instrument?"

Therefore, Lawrence (1985:215-216) displays eight dimensions of diagnostic criteria, in which we find three critical self-image areas such as feelings of belonging, fundamental goodness, and control:

- (1) *The dimension of presence*: "Is God there for me?," related to Winnicott's question, "Is there a mother for me?"
- (2) *The dimension of challenge*: The second belonging issue, is, "Does God want me to grow?"
- (3) *The dimension of acceptance*: The primitive form of the goodness issue is: "Am I good enough for God to love?"
- (4) *The dimension of benevolence*: The secondary form of the

goodness question is: "Is God the sort of person who would want to love me?" (5) *The dimension of influence*: The first control issue is: "How much can I control God?" (6) *The dimension of providence*: The second control issue, is: "How much can God control me?" (7) *The dimension of faith*: "Do I believe my God-images corresponds to a being who actually exists?" (8) *The dimension of salience*: "How important to me is my relationship with this God?"

Furthermore, although the computerized version of the GII model was developed for more rapid and painless use, researchers may legitimately question whether all of these scale are necessary or even useful in their empirical research. For this reason, the GIS model (the God-images scale), being rooted in the GII model, was developed (Lawrence 1985:221). Generally, the GIS model has six principle scales: adopting presence, challenge, acceptance, benevolence, influence and providence dimensions, while some of the GIS models adopt a different scale system (1985:221). In short, the GII and GIS models have been developed as an objective psychometric instrument for clinical and pastoral use to measure a subject's image of God. Thus, we could say that these models have a value for pastoral ministry of the Korean Church in a sense that they deal reciprocally with the measuring issues of both the God-image and self-image, which tries to adapt the object-relation theory into the clinical field of pastoral diagnosis.

### **5.5.2 Gorsuch's PSD(Pastoral Semantic Differential) model**

Osgood *et al.* believe that analysing the ratings of numerous concepts on bipolar adjective scales could determine the general meaning of concepts. Thus, they propose a semantic differential process involved in different meanings given to concepts (Gorsuch 1968:57). Moreover, Louw (1999a:337) argues that the semantic differential approach could provide a method with which to assess the connotation of a given concept and the emotional impact of this concept. Osgood *et al.* hypothesize that images have an affective as well as an existential meaning. The affective power of a word has dimensional structure, which could be categorized into three different dimensions: Evaluation (e.g. good vs bad, or safe vs dangerous), Potency (e.g. strong vs weak, or firm vs yielding), Activity (e.g. active vs passive, or moving vs still) (Gorsuch 1968:57; Louw 1999a:337).

Gorsuch uses 63 adjectives used by Spilka *et al.* in previous research on the conceptualization of God and 28 adjectives from Osgood *et al.* Subjects rated each adjective on a 3 point scale:

“1” meant “the word does not describe ‘God’”; “2” meant “the word describes ‘God’”; “3” meant “the word describes ‘God’ partly well.” Gorsuch does not use pairs of adjectives in his model, because many semantic factors are not bipolar and thus may not appear in studies with paired adjectives (1968:57). Gorsuch categorizes 91 adjectives into 11 factor-groups (1968:57-62). By adopting Gorsuch’s model, one could draw some tendency towards a religious attitude from the nature of these factors. For instance, one would expect that the fundamentalist groups would probably score much higher on factor 5: Wrathfulness, while the more liberal and humanistic Christian bodies would probably average much higher on a factor such as factor 3: Companionable (1968:64). While Gorsuch adapted the study of Spilka *et al.* and that of Osgood *et al.* in his *semantic differential model*. On the other hand, Louw adapted the research of Osgood *et al.* and Fishen & Raven in his *pastoral semantic differential model* (PSD model). Louw (1999a:337) believes that the PSDA model has value for pastoral theology because it enables people’s understanding of God to be assessed. In the PSD model, he proposes four dimensions as follows (1999a:338-339):

(1) *The probability dimension*. It signifies whether or not parishioners regard God as real. It should be taken into consideration that an assessment of this dimension includes associations with positive and negative life experiences. It is linked to situations of pain and suffering that often indicate whether God is existent or nonexistent within parishioners’ experiential framework. The probability dimension reflects the classical problem of theodicy. (2) *The evaluating dimension*. This concentrates on the value of concepts. This value or meaning may tend to be more affective or more cognitive. In the case of a PSD it will be mixed, with a strong tendency towards a more dogmatic presentation and wording. (In the case of PSDA a reformed approach would be followed.) The value of concepts on the 7-point scale could either edify and provide security, or could hamper and disrupt existing associations and identifications. (3) *The dimension of potential*. This concentrates on the ability hidden in the relevant concept. In a PSD, this ability or potential is associated with contrasting concepts, indicating strength or weakness. (4) *The activity dimension*. This focuses on action. In a PSD, God’s actions and deeds would predominate. The associations can move either in the direction of doing or towards passivity and uninvolvedness.

In order to identify whether the person’s understanding of the central concept is appropriate or inappropriate, the analysis method of the 7-point scale (numbered either from 1 to 7 or from +3 to -3) is chosen in this model.

According to Louw (1999a:339), when the semantic differential analysis is applied to the God concept, the following pairs of contra-adjectives would be identified as follows:

- (1) The probability dimension: possible/real - impossible/fictitious; unlikely/unknowable - likely/knowable; existent/conceivable - nonexistent/inconceivable; true/personal - false/general idea.
- (2) The evaluating dimension: - just/fair - unjust/unfair (biased); faithful/trustworthy - unfaithful/untrustworthy; loving - hostile; steadfast - inconsistent; approachable/merciful - unapproachable/merciless.
- (3) The ability dimension: - omnipotent - powerless; sympathetic/compassionate - unsympathetic; revealed (will) - concealed.
- (4) The activity dimension: presence (intimacy) - distance (afar); redeemed (saved) - rejected; blessed (gifts) - accursed (withholding gifts, isolation); help (assistance) – withdrawal.

A score tending towards the negative in the scores of (1), (2), (3) and (4) provides insight into the possible crisis levels that a person experiences and how this influences his/her experience of God, while a positive tendency indicates a positive identification between the parishioner and God. Thus, if the negative score is accompanied by painful emotions, then the pastor should encourage the person to communicate these emotions honestly to God through lamentation formulas, as well as to take note of the association between his/her emotional condition and his/her negative reaction to crises or problematic situations. Meanwhile, when the score reflects a neutral position, this could indicate deficient growth or a superficial identification with God. Therefore, constructive confrontation or challenging should be provided to alert the parishioners and, consequently, to promote their growth of faith (Louw 1999a:339). The researcher believes that a possible value of Gorsch's model for the KPBC resides in the fact that this model may provide an opportunity to assess parishioners' God-images in a more existential level, since it tries to assess PGI regarding the connotation of a given image and the emotional impact of this image.

### **5.5.3 The theological-conceptual model**

Van der Ven (1993:159) is convinced that, as far as the contribution to theology in general is concerned, the theodicy problem occupies the central role. He argues that an important epistemological theme within theodicy concerns the relationship between *ratio* and *fides*. Thus, Van der Ven arouses cardinal questions: "Can the reconciliation of God's omnipotence with God's love, which is the object of theodicy, be achieved on the basis of reason alone or only

through faith (1993:165)?”<sup>113</sup>

Furthermore, in the theological-conceptual model, Van der Ven (1993:183) proposes seven theodicy symbols as follows:<sup>114</sup>

(1) *Apathy*: - “Suffering does not touch God at all.” (2) *Retaliation*: - “Suffering is a punishment by God.” (3) *Plan*: - “God gives suffering a place in our destiny.” (4) *Therapy*: - “God invites those who suffer to learn from their suffering.” (5) *Compassion*: - “God shares our suffering.” (6) *Vicariousness*: - “Through suffering, God urges us to serve others.” (7) *Mystical union*: - “Through suffering, we make direct contact with God.”

What is more, in the process of empirical-theological data analysis, Van der Ven (1993:189-193) reduces seven theodicy symbols into four categories, i.e. apathy, retaliation, pedagogy and solidarity. To put it more precisely, while apathy and retaliation symbols continue to be separate categories, two symbols, plan and therapy, are combined as pedagogy, as well as the last three symbols (compassion, vicariousness and mystical union) that did form a scale, and which he called “solidarity.” This reduction could provide a good framework to assess people’s experience of God in their quest for meaning in the context of suffering. That is, while pedagogy may display some tension between God and sufferer, apathy and retaliation symbols reveal a greater distance and the solidarity symbol could indicate the intimacy and closeness of the sufferer with God. Van der Ven’s model might be of great valuable to ministry of the Korean Church, since it exhibits a useful framework to assess people’s experience of God in their quest for meaning, especially in the context of suffering.

#### **5.5.4 The metaphorical model**

According to McFague, a metaphor, a word or phrase used inappropriately is a strategy of

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<sup>113</sup> As argued previously, theodicy can never explain suffering at a rational level, but it allows theology to become conscious of the following antinomy and paradox: God can be linked to suffering while, He is against it (Louw 2000:38).

<sup>114</sup> According to the results of the empirical research in this study, due to the impact of KTR, within the KPBC, many parishioners seem to display the tendency of understanding their suffering in terms of the apathy and retaliation symbols of theodicy (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.4; 3.3.4.8; 3,3,4,13). Thus, the researcher believes that it might be useful to assess the significance of the theodicy of the Korean Church in detail in terms of Van der Ven’s model for further research.

description and an attempt to say something about the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar, or an attempt to speak about what we do not know in terms of what we do know. Added to this, she explains that a model, a metaphor with “staying power,” is a metaphor that has gained sufficient stability and scope so as to present a pattern for relative comprehensive and coherent explanation (McFague 1987:33). Furthermore, McFague (1987:34) assumes that God-language can be referred to only through the detour of a description, due to the fact that no words or phrases refer directly to God. In this view, McFague (1987:63-65) warns that the monarchical model of God as king, a prevalent imaginative picture of God within the main stream of Christianity, presents a critical danger, since this model generates negative imagery of God, emphasizing the distance, the difference and the otherness of God, and it results in negating God’s presence in the world.

Therefore, McFague (1978:91,92) proposes three models of God as parent, lover and friend, expressing God’s impartiality, reuniting and reciprocity with world. For McFague, creative love (or *agape*) is the love for God *for* being as such, which is the affirmation for all creatures through the parent (God) who embodies all this. Salvific love (or *eros*) is the passionate manifestation in terms of the “incarnation” of divine love for us. Furthermore, sustaining love (or *philia*) is God’s immanent, companionable love that continues to remain always with us as we work together toward the fulfilment of everything.<sup>115</sup> Thus, McFague believes that a Christian lifestyle modelled on God as parent, lover, and friend would be committed to the impartial continuation of life in its many forms, the healing and reunification of all dimensions of life, and the sharing of the basic needs of life as well as its joys. In short, we can say that McFague challenges the transition of God-images from a traditional monarchical model toward the models of God as parent, lover and friend. Louw (1999a:334,335) evaluates that the merit of McFague’s model as a diagnostic model is its provision for metaphors, which can be adapted to assess people’s God-images.

Thus, Louw (1999a:335) attempts to adapt McFague’s model for assessing God-images as follows:

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<sup>115</sup> Therefore, McFague’s model displays a pantheistic view of God in terms of the relationship between God and creation. However, the pantheistic stance of McFague’s model leaves room for further discussion.

(a) the *monarchic model* perceives God as ruler, king, governor, and judge (b) the *family model* views God as parent (father/mother) (c) the *covenantal model* portrays God as friend, partner and confidant (d) the *personal/love model* views God in terms of love, as the beloved or intimate lover (cf. the bridegroom-bride metaphor).

In shorts, McFague proposes three models of God as parent, lover and friend, expressing God's impartiality, reuniting and reciprocity with world instead of the monarchical model, since, as McFague believes, the monarchical model of God generates negative imagery of God, in which God's distance and difference and His otherness could be emphasized. Although the researcher does not agree with the panentheistic stance of McFague's view, nevertheless, McFague's model seems to have a value for ministry in the Korean context in a sense. For instance, when adopting McFague's model with the Korean context, the monarchical model of God in her model, which perceives God mainly as ruler, king, governor and judge, could probably relate to the PGI within the KPBC, since within the mainstream God-images of the KTR, we could find a similar image of God as "the heavenly omnipotent Ruler & frightening moral Judge," which might have played a considerable role on the function of PGI with the KPBC. However, as argued previously, reshaping and changing PGI is extremely difficult, since PGI are embedded in a specific cultural context, in which a dynamics of interrelatedness and interconnectedness play an important role. Thus, the researcher believes that when trying to adopt McFague's model into ministry of the KPBC, the efficacy of McFague's model should be examined theologically and contextually against the Korean religious cultural background.<sup>116</sup>

### 5.5.5 The thematic cognitive model

Louw proposes this model as a diagnostic approach that attempts to detect whether God-images play a constructive or destructive role in thinking. According to Louw (1999a:341), because specific themes in terms of God-images could often be associated with negative or positive

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<sup>116</sup> Because PGI of the KPBC are deeply embedded in their cultural context, without reframing theological paradigm regarding their specific context, it seems impossible to reshape PGI in a rational level. Thus, in this study, we already attempted to build a theology compassion for reframing theological paradigm against the religious and cultural setting of Korea. Thus, in the light of a theology of compassion, McFague's panentheistic stance will be discussed and, particularly, Louw's covenantal model, which portrays God as "*Friend*" or "*Partner for Life*," will be explored in the Korean context in the following.

experiences, these terms generate emotional and behavioural reactions. For instance, inappropriate perceptions of God can curb the development of faith and generate infantile behaviour (regression), which may even cause doubt, anxiety and aggression. On the other hand, appropriate images of God can enrich faith behaviour and stimulate maturity and strengthen the experience of gratitude, hope, love and joy. However, Louw emphasizes that the difference between inappropriate and appropriate God-images and between destructive and constructive God-images, should not be regarded as a moral issue.

Louw (1999a:341-343) illustrates inappropriate God-images as follows:

(1) *God as powerful giant*: The omnipotence of God is often interpreted against the background of the Hellenistic *pantokrator* (strength and violent power) and the Roman despot (tyranny)... (2) *God as a bully*: Although God might not be interpreted directly as a sadist or bully, nevertheless, because God punishes, people think that God enjoys a person's suffering... (3) *God as Father Christmas*: Many people believe that faith acts as a guarantee and "insurance policy" against losses: God and faith guarantee success and ensure progress. Within our materialistic, optimistic culture, the so-called achievement ethics functions by its demand for efficiency and its obsession with success.... When crises affect their health or rob people of their material guarantees, people with a Father Christmas" view of God are deeply disappointed and this could eventually lead to doubt. (4) *God as mechanic/engineer*: People often use faith as an explanation for all inexplicable mysteries. This explanatory principle, which applies a deterministic and mechanical scheme of cause and result, can result in God being held responsible for all painful mysteries of life. Thus God ultimately becomes the author of evil and the cause of suffering. Such an image of God can often result in religious neutrality leading to unbelief (the rejection of God). (5) *God as computer*: Faith is regarded as a purely rational issue. God's counsel is interpreted as a logical blueprint for human behaviour and the course of history... Predestination is regarded as an antipole of rejection. The effect of this belief on faith behaviour is constant uncertainty, doubt and anxiety. (6) *God as magician*: Faith is an instant formula to solve all problems. The statement: "Just believe, then all will come right" creates the impression that God waves his magic wand and all is fine. This type of faith results in cheap optimism. For example, when God does not bring healing in a terminal situation, it is not God's fault, but it is blamed on inadequate faith. The effect on the believer of such an approach is superficial opportunism, with the motto: "Have more faith and try harder."

Against the religious and cultural setting of Korea, within PGI of the Korean Church, we may easily find many similar inappropriate God-images. For instance, regarding the images of God as "powerful giant" or "bully," there has been a possible danger of interpretation of God's

omnipotence in the light the background of the Hellenistic *pantokrator*. In a similar vein, within the KPBC, as we confirmed at the results of the questionnaire (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.7; 3.3.4.11), God's power could be easily understood in the framework of apathetic domination and sadistic control against the Korean religious cultural context. Additionally, many parishoners within the KPBC seem to view God as "Father Christmas" or "the great magician", in which God is regarded as "prosperity Guarantor" and faith acts as an instant formular to solve all problem and "insurance policy" (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.2; 3.3.4.6; 3.3.4.10; 3.3.4.12). Hence, when crises damage to their health or material property, they seem to be easily fall into the status of despair, hopelessness and doubt. Furthermore, due to the impact of the metaphysical interpretation of God against the background of Confucianism and Taoism, within the KPBC, we find easily an image of God as "mechanic," in which God might be understood as the ultimate source of evil and all suffering with an empahsis of cause and effect principle (cf. Chapter 3: 3.4.4).

On the other hand, borrowing Louw's view, Shim, Young-hee Kim (2003:209-211) attempts to propose the examples of inappropriate God-images regarding the Korean children:

(1) God as powerful giant (2) God as a bully (3) God as Santa Claus (4) God as mechanic /engineer (5) God as computer (6) God as magician (7) God as policeman

Here, interestingly, we find that Y H K Shim adds the image of "policeman," as an inappropriate God-image for children in the Korean context. According to Shim (2003:211), due to this God-image, many children display the desire to escape from the watchfulness and searching of a policeman. As a result, their hostility towards God's intervention is increasing, while they are under stress to avoid God's watchfulness. The researcher believes that this pathological God-image could relate to the image of God as "frightening Judge" within the background of the Korean religious culture (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.4; 3.3.4.11; 3.3.4.13).

Furthermore, Louw (1999a:343-344) illustrates appropriate God-images as follows:<sup>117</sup>

(1) *God as Father*: The Father metaphor in Scripture strengthens the important notion of God's

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<sup>117</sup> Against the Korean cultural context, Y H K Shim (2003:211-212) attempts to add several metaphors such as comforter, shepherd, general and suffering servant.

faithfulness. The believer can always rely on God because He remains faithful to his covenantal promises: “I will be your God.” This covenantal formula does not guarantee success, but comforts and provides compassionate love. (2) *God as Soul Friend*: This expresses the notion that God is not distant. His close presence means that He is a Partner and Companion. God's friendship implies help concerning two important areas: • Forgiveness, in the case of human guilt, • Vision, in the case of human fear of death (victory). (3) *God as Saviour*: As a result of sin, alienation creates distance between God and man. God's conciliation, fulfilled through Christ, creates peace. It abolishes the alienation between God and man, thus bestowing complete liberation and redemption. (5) *God as Comforter*: The Holy Spirit confirms God's identification with suffering. God acts for people, declares them just and is constantly with them. God is compassionate, full of sympathy and empathy. (6) *God as Judge*: The knowledge that human behaviour is determined by God's norms and is assessed in the light of scriptural values, means that people are moral beings. The fact that God is a Judge does not imply that one should fear Him in the sense of trepidation. Rather, fear of God means that at all times one should take Him into account and have awe and respect for Him. Fear of God leads to responsible behaviour and a power of true and sensitive discernment regarding right and wrong. God, as Judge, means that people have received the stewardship for which they are accountable. People could also claim that God's justice is guaranteed by the fact that he is a Judge. God, as Judge, does not imply that He keeps count of our debts. On the contrary, He cancels them.

In fact, one could generally say that God as “Father” could be regarded as a more common and usual metaphor than other metaphors among Korean Christians.<sup>118</sup> However, the “Father” metaphor may evoke various negative associations from childhood. In particular, the connection between God's fatherhood and patriarchal domination within the Korean context may arouse a more negative association than within Western culture (Rizuto 1979:177; Louw 1999a:85). In addition, when reckoning the religious and cultural setting of Korea, there is a possible danger of that the “Father” metaphor may easily and considerably reflect the impact of the KTR, in which we found the prominent tendency of understanding of God as a “apathetic and distant Being.”<sup>119</sup> In a similar vein, on the basis of the results of the empirical survey, we could find some evidences regarding the fact that the “Judge” metaphor in the Korean context is also easily associated with the interpretation of God in the KTR, in which God is understood as an apathetic, distant and frightening, especially in terms of human suffering and predicaments (cf. Chapter 3: 3.4.4; 3.4.5).

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<sup>118</sup> With the help of the pioneering empirical survey, the researcher already confirmed this point within the KPBC. However, there is a need to test this argument for further study.

<sup>119</sup> Of course, this point should also be tested in greater detail for further study.

However, as Louw (1999a:344) properly points out, a metaphor “God as Judge” is also of great importance to the Korean church in order to enhance parishioners’ awe and respect towards God, as well as their responsible and obedient behaviour towards God. Nevertheless, as we argued previously, within the Korean context, there exists a possible danger of the interpretation of this metaphor in terms of the theological paradigm of the KTR, whereby many parishioners within the KPBC regard God as “apathetic, distant, merciless, even cruel Being,” especially in their context of severe suffering. In this regard, the researcher believes that against the Korean religious and cultural setting, the “Father” and “Judge” metaphors would become more relevant and appropriate metaphors to the ministry of the Korean Church when they are interpreted more in terms of the pastoral implication of a theology of compassion than in terms of the existing theological paradigm of the KTR.

In other words, the researcher is convinced that an issue of choosing and proposing appropriate metaphors itself could be less important than an issue of reframing the existing theological paradigm in a certain cultural context. Because since people’s metaphorical understanding of God could never be free from the impact of their systemic background, a certain metaphor could be interpreted in many ways. That is, the interpretation of a certain metaphor is not a static issue, but it is fundamentally a systemic and dynamic issue. That was the reason why within this study, the researcher was first involved in reframing the existing theological paradigm by proposing a theology of compassion against the religious and cultural setting of Korea.

In conclusion, it seems unreasonable to accept a certain classification of themes regarding appropriate or inappropriate God-images as an absolute criterion. Nevertheless, if considering adequately a complexity of the process of conceptualization of God within a certain context, in which the dynamic of interrelatedness and interconnectedness play an important role, the Korean Church could probably attain useful diagnostic information for her pastoral ministry through the thematic cognitive model to analyze parishioners’ inappropriate (infantile) and appropriate (mature) God-images.

## **5.6 EXPLORING A NEW PRINCIPLE METAPHOR FOR PASTORAL CARE WITHIN THE KOREAN CONTEXT**

In fact, reshaping or changing parishioners' God-images is extremely difficult on a rational level, because, as we confirmed within the Korean cultural context on the basis of the previous arguments, PGI are linked to not only to the doctrine of Christianity, but also their experience of God within their specific cultural context. Thus, as argued previously, the researcher tried to reframe a theological paradigm within the Korean Church by establishing a theology of compassion from a viewpoint of a pastoral hermeneutics. Although choosing and proposing a relevant metaphor is a dynamic and systemic issue, nevertheless, the researcher believes that there is still a need for exploring a metaphor for God as "*Partner for Life*"<sup>120</sup> in order to propose a strategy of assessing and reframing PGI in a more practical way. Because a metaphor for God as "*Partner for Life*" is linked to the pastoral implications of a theology of compassion in terms of the TCR, in which God's faithfulness and his identification and solidarity in our human suffering are obviously revealed. As a consequence of the previous empirical research, in terms of the theodicy issue, we noticed that many parishioners understood God as a "distant and apathetic Being," especially within the context of predicaments and suffering (cf. Chapter 3: 3.4.5). However, according to Louw, a metaphor of God as "*Partner for Life*" cannot be comprehended without dealing with the existential category of suffering. Thus, this metaphor inevitably leads to a *theologia crucis*, in which God is depicted in terms of deformation and the distortion of vulnerability. At the same time, for Louw (2001a:340), this metaphor instils a creative hope insofar as one regards a *theologia resurrectionis* as the exegesis and commentary of the cross.

In addition, a metaphor for God as "*Partner for Life*" could provide an opportunity for the parishioners within the KPBC to reframe their existing concepts of God's omnipotence in the light of the whole issue of God as "*Partner for Life*," without imposing any pressure to replace their existing concepts of God's power. In fact, as confirmed in the previous empirical research, we found that many parishioners within the KPBC displayed a tendency to manipulate God in

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<sup>120</sup> When opting for the metaphor, God as "*Partner for Life*," within the Korean context, the researcher does not wish to propose a person as God's equal co-partner, nor does he intend to disregard God's transcendence with an overemphasis on God's immanence. (As the researcher is convinced, within Feinberg's view (2001:58-73), one finds a balanced approach regarding the issue of dealing with a dynamic tension between God's transcendence and His immanence). Rather, he prefers to use the term "*Partner*" in the sense that God is not a mere partner among many of our life partners, but the most special and unique Partner, who not only secures our salvation by His covenantal grace and faithfulness, but also instils real hope and faith, as well as provides a marvelous answer to our human quest for meaning, dignity and transformation.

order to fulfill their material wishes, prosperity, success and selfish purposes against their religious cultural setting (cf. Chapter 3: 3.3.4.2; 3.3.4.10; 3.3.4.12). However, this metaphor could be used to challenge cultural and social concepts and belief systems on the grounds of God's compassion and faithfulness rather than the materialistic interpretation of His omnipotence, for the purpose of deeper concentration on the human quest for meaning and dignity. Furthermore, in terms of their quest for meaning and dignity as human beings, the metaphor for God as "*Partner for Life*" can create not only close intimacy between God and parishioners of the KPBC by instilling and inspiring their hope and faith, but also a relevant basis for the pastoral ethic that enables us to participate appropriately in God's eschatological activity.

Nevertheless, proposing a principle new model of God-image within the Korean context could be another project for further research. Thus, in this section, by choosing and exploring the significance of a metaphor of God as "*Partner for Life*," from the theological and cultural point of view, the researcher attempts to develop a new hypothesis for further study, which aims to provide a more practical and concrete strategy for assessing and reframing against the Korean religious and cultural context.

### **5.6.1 A theological background for choosing a metaphor for God as "*Partner for Life*"**

According to the previous core arguments in terms of the research problem and hypothesis in this study, for the purpose of reframing the existing theological paradigm regarding the notion of God's power appropriately, we have already tried to establish a theology of compassion from a pastoral hermeneutical perspective within the unique context of Korean culture. Nevertheless, the researcher believes that against the Korean religious and cultural setting, it is still necessary to explore a new principle metaphor of God in terms of the faithfulness of God, whose caring presence is expressed in the pastoral encounter: a metaphor for covenantal presence and mutual partnership / companionship / friendship.

In fact, through the previous investigation, we notice that a theology of compassion could create a new, even reversed, concept of God's power, since it seeks His power in suffering and weakness and calls us to destroy the idols of oppressive power by conforming to the way of the

crucified Lord. In addition, a theology of compassion in a pastoral hermeneutics challenges us to disregard any attempt to understand God's power by means of rational and philosophical speculation.<sup>121</sup> Rather, we must seek and find the real meaning of God's power in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. What is more, within a theology of compassion, God can no longer be viewed as apathetic and aloof toward our suffering and predicaments. Rather, Christ's passion on the cross illustrates God's real identification and compassion with our suffering and predicaments, as well as His faithfulness and eternal love. Furthermore, according to the previous arguments in terms of the pastoral implication of a theology of compassion, God's power should be reinterpreted in terms of compassion / vulnerability and transformation / empowerment.

Through Bonhoeffer's (1971:360) writing from prison just before his execution, we are urged to reconsider our concept of God's power in a different way:

God lets himself be pushed out of the world onto the cross. He is weak and powerless in the world, and that is precisely the way, the only way, in which he is with us and helps us ... Only the suffering God can help us.

In this sense, Louw (1989:53, 2000a:9,66) appropriately attests that God's omnipotent presence and power could be interpreted as vulnerable faithfulness and overwhelming pathos, which reveal God's identification with our human suffering, and His transformative involvement and action, as well as his faithfulness and genuine power, as revealed in the cross and resurrection of Christ (2000a:8,20, 1999a:16, 1998:240). Furthermore, his view of a theology of compassion in terms of TCR, Louw proposes a relevant bridge between God's transcendence and condescendence. Louw (2000a:15-16) neither overemphasizes God's identification with our human suffering (which provokes a pitfall for the immanent experience of God being traded for his sovereignty), nor overemphasizes God's sovereignty and punishment (which brings about the danger of proposing God as being aloof and alienated from human suffering). In other words, Louw's view of a theology of compassion indicates effectively God's intimate presence and solidarity in the midst of human pain and suffering without losing the dimension of his salvific

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<sup>121</sup> As argued previously, especially within the Korean context, philosophical and speculative approach to interpret God's power in the face of human suffering might be foreign to the Korean systemic and relational thinking pattern and mindset.

grace.

To latch onto the previous discussion about metaphors, we already maintained that, in terms of our pastoral purposes, an effective metaphorical concept of God should effect the consoling dimension of God's grace that discloses the following aspects: God's compassion and sensitivity (the shepherd metaphor); his identification and woundedness (the servant metaphor); insight and comprehension of God in terms of a paradox, such as weakness and being crucified (the wisdom metaphor); the consolation, encouragement and empowerment of God's Spirit (Louw 1998:238). According to McFague (1987:33,61-62), within the context of modernity, it is urgent to shift from the traditional understanding of God as "King, Lord or Ruler" (that evoke a distant, uninvolved, or unaffected God) to the models of God as "Parent, Lover or Friend," (that evoke an intimate and close God). However, when we attempt to choose relevant metaphors in order to emphasize God's intimacy and identification with us, a balanced approach is necessary. As Migliore (1991:94) aptly points out, while the idea of God as an uninvolved and distant Creator is totally inadequate from a biblical perspective, on the other hand, the description of the world as God's body fails to depict appropriately either the freedom of God in relation to the world, or the real otherness and freedom of the world.

In accordance with Migliore's view, Russell (1979:28-33) characterizes our faithful relationship with God as "a partnership with God." N J Gorsuch (2001:37) appropriately maintains that Russell's notion of a partnership should be recognized in an eschatological framework because he explores partnerships from the point of view of the new creation and God's intent in Jesus Christ. Therefore, we can say that, unlike McFague, Russell (1979:33) and N J Gorsuch (2001:41-42) attempt to promote a combination of an intimate relationship with God and His freedom in relation to the world, and our responsible participation in God's new creation. In particular, according to Louw, the notion of "*Partner*" depicts God in terms of fellowship and identification. For Louw, the metaphor "*Partner for Life*" is linked to *theologia crucis* that describes God in terms of deformation and vulnerability, as well as a *theologia resurrectionis* that opens a new avenue for a creative mode of hope and transformation. In this respect, the researcher wishes to hypothesize<sup>122</sup> that a metaphor for God as "*Partner for Life*" could be an

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<sup>122</sup> Undoubtedly, this hypothesis should also be tested within the Korean context in a greater detail.

appropriate and useful supplementary metaphor<sup>123</sup> to ministry for the Korean Church, insofar as it challenges parishioners of the KPBC to reflect on their own God-image and to enhance their mature faith by providing vivid and true hope in the midst of suffering, and to provide true acknowledgment for God's eschatological activity through the Holy Spirit.

### 5.6.2 God as "*Partner for Life*": the cultural background and implication

The researcher is convinced that to instil hope for parishioners has become the most important task in the field of pastoral care within the Korean context. In fact, as previously discussed, a dramatic, rapid, social change in Korea from a traditional agrarian society to a postmodern information society has brought about many social problems. For instance, according to a recent report (*Jung-Ang* newspaper, 2004-5-6), due to the impact of the recent financial crisis in the mid-1990s and a drastic social change from an industrial to a postmodern society, many became unemployed and the middle-class collapsed, while the indigent class grew. As a result, the number of people, who are faced with both a severe financial and psychological crisis, is increasing rapidly. In addition, the divorce rate has increased eight times during the past 25 years. During 2003, the total number of the divorces was 167,000, while 304,000 people were married during the same period (*Up-Korea Newspaper*, 2004-4-24, 2004-5-11).

Even worse, the rate of suicides in South Korea is continuously and rapidly increasing. According to recent reports (*Kyunghang Daily Newspaper* 2004-5-13, 2004-4-20; *Donga Daily Newspaper* 2004-5-10), there were 2947 suicides in Korea in 1988. However, this figure increased to 8641 in 2002, and 13005 in 2003. These statistics disclose that the total number of suicides increased more than four times during the past 15 years and now there is a possible

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<sup>123</sup> As previously discussed, God as "*Father*" could be regarded as a more common and usual metaphor than other metaphors among the Korean Christians. (In fact, the researcher already argued that the "*Father*" would become a more relevant and necessary metaphor for the ministry of the Korean Church when it is interpreted more in terms of the pastoral implication of a theology of compassion than in terms of the existing theological paradigm of the KTR). Thus, the researcher believes that a metaphor of God as "*Partner for Life*," should not be used as a substitute metaphor in order to reshape or change PGI from "*Father*" to "*Partner for Life*," since as argued previously, reshaping or changing PGI in a rational level is extremely difficult. Therefore, in order to accomplish a pastoral purpose in this study, the researcher wishes to adopt the metaphor of "*Partner for Life*" as a principle (but a supplementary) metaphor to ministry of the KPBC insofar as it is closely associated with the pastoral implications of a theology of compassion and displays clearly God's faithfulness, solidarity, compassion and intimacy, especially in the context of human suffering and predicaments.

suicide every 40 minutes. There are even more shocking and extreme cases whereby the numbers of joint suicides (with their children) are also continuously increasing.

All these statistics in terms of Korean social problems indicate that more people in Korea are being exposed to a context of severe crisis and suffering. Nevertheless, the researcher doubts whether the Korean Church has been successful in instilling hope for the parishioners as well as society. For instance, the result of our previous survey disclosed that many parishioners of the KPBC exhibit a prominent tendency to understand God "*a distant and apathetic Being*" in the face of their pain and suffering. Furthermore, many parishioners display a tendency to interpret God's power in terms of cheap triumphalism and opportunistic positivism. As a result, when crises and suffering affect their health and rob them of material property, they seem to fall easily into a state of helplessness or hopelessness. Therefore, when considering this crisis in the context of the Korea churches and society, we can say that promoting and instilling new hope for the parishioners of the Korean church, as well as their society, has become the most crucial task in the field of pastoral care.

Furthermore, many parishioners of the Korean church, including the KPBC, seem to fail to perform their proper role as the source of sound values and ethics. Although the Korean Conservative Churches emphasize God's sovereignty, nevertheless, ironically, they exhibit non-political, non-social and self-oriented characteristics (Min, Kyung-bae 1987:148; Timothy, Chung-in Song 1999:305). According to Ro, Chi-jun (1998:32, 1996:40), one of the main problems in the Korean Church is excessive self-preoccupation, whereby each local church gives priority to its own internal affairs, such as maintenance and expansion. For instance, the average rate of expenditure for social service relief is less than 5% of the total fiscal budget of the Korean Church (Ro, C J 1996:41,65). As Timothy, Chung-in Song (1999:307) maintains, due to this self-centredness, the Korean Church has yielded to collective selfishness and isolation from society and, as a result, it could not fulfil its proper role as the source of sound values and ethics. What is more, through the previous survey and argument in this study, we noticed that due to the influence of the KTR and culture, many parishioners not only display a prominent tendency to interpret God's power in terms of the power of dominance and a guarantee of prosperity for the purpose of manipulating God to fulfil their selfish purposes.

Therefore, we notice that there is an urgent need to instil hope and reconstruct a proper ethical role within the Korean Church, and the KPBC. In the light of this cultural background of the Korean context, the researcher would like to hypothesize that the metaphor, God as “*Partner for Life*” could not only instil true and vivid hope for the parishioners of the KPBC within the Korean context but also help to reconstruct a proper ethical role for the parishioners and their KPBC as the source of sound values and ethics on the basis of the following arguments:

■ In fact, Louw proposes two metaphors: “*God as Friend*” (1999:151-52, 1998:233-241, 1996:137-139) and God as “*Partner for Life*” (2001a:339) in order to emphasize and enhance the dimension of partnership, companionship, commitment and intimacy. However, as Korea has been an extremely patriarchal and hierarchical society, the researcher wishes to hypothesize that the metaphor, God as Friend, could present a possible danger of arousing a negative impression, denying God’s transcendent and ontological reality. On the other hand, in the KPBC, God as “*Partner for Life*” could be more easily accepted than “*Friend*,” because this metaphor may help parishioners to experience God’s presence without arousing a negative impression, especially in their context of suffering. Furthermore, it could awaken their awareness of ethical responsibility as God’s partners, on the basis of His sacrificial love.<sup>124</sup>

■ The metaphor, God as “*Partner for Life*” presents true healing power by creating true and vivid hope for parishioners of the KPBC in the context of their crises. Because hope emanates only from God’s faithfulness, not from therapeutic skills, we can instil vivid hope only by reframing PGI in terms of His faithfulness (Louw 1999a: 460,461). Thus, “*Partner for Life*” could be a very appropriate metaphor for God when reframing PGI in terms of His power of creating real hope for parishioners of the KPBC.

■ The metaphor, God as “*Partner for Life*” provides a new framework for the understanding of hope for parishioners of the KPBC. Admittedly, many parishioners within the KPBC have a tendency to interpret hope within the category of chief triumphalism and opportunism, because, if crises and suffering badly damage their health or material property, they seem to be deeply disappointed. Furthermore, if crises and suffering continue, they easily seem to fall into the state

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<sup>124</sup> However, as argued previously, the validity or invalidity of proposing the metaphors for God as “*Friend*” or “*Partner for Life*” should be tested within the Korean context in further research.

of hopelessness. However, hope and victory do not necessarily mean victory over suffering. Rather, hope discloses its patient and long suffering nature insofar as victory sometimes has to embrace the hope of not overcoming. It challenges a theology based on opportunistic imperialism and affluence (Louw 2000a:147). Hope for God's final triumph (not yet) holds no uncertainty because it is founded on God's faithfulness to His promise. A divine proof of this, His faithfulness, is evident in the resurrection (Louw 2000:115). Hope should rather be seen within the framework of eschatology that concerns Christ's *parousia* and *adventus* (Louw 1999a:458,460), because eschatology is not merely about an apocalyptic description of history, but about what life essentially is (*perfectum*): reconciled with God. In this sense, the real tension in life that should result in a patient and vivid hope is not stress caused by earthly demands, but is anxiety arising from the tension between the "already" and "not yet" of the Kingdom of God.

■ The metaphor, God as "*Partner for Life*" creates a new ethical framework for the KPBC on the basis of God's sacrificial love. In the event of Christ's crucifixion, God displays clearly His identification and solidarity with human suffering, as well as His sacrificial love. Furthermore, through the activity of Holy Spirit, God calls us, as new beings, in order to participate in the eschatological reality of Christ's resurrection. As a result, God calls us as His partners and empowers us to share His sacrificial love with others. In this sense, the metaphor, God as "*Partner for Life*" enables parishioners of the KPBC to move from their self-centered ethical framework to the ethical principle of sacrificial love.

■ This metaphor creates a balanced view for the parishioners of the KPBC in their ethical management of social and political conflicts, because, on the basis of God's sacrificial love, the metaphor, God as "*Partner for Life*" indicates that His power should not be interpreted in terms of the power of dominant authority or aggressive resistance (Louw 1989:58).

■ In addition, in the face of the ethical crises within the Korean Church, the metaphor God as "*Partner for Life*" can awakens parishioners to the significance of their ethical responsibility for others. According to Hall (1993:102), God calls us as friends, covenantal partners, labourers in the vineyard and stewards. On the grounds of the pastoral implications of a theology of compassion, the metaphor, God as "*Partner for Life*," creates a new meaning of liberation and freedom in God's salvation. In other words, the researcher wishes to hypothesize that this

metaphor for God may help parishioners in the KPBC to regard liberation as “being free for the new responsibility” determined by the Kingdom of God, rather than merely as the freedom to “claim rights” or “being free of restraint” (Louw 1999a:470).

### 5.6.3 A suggestion for further study: Proposing a new hypothesis

As a result of the previous arguments in this section, a possible interplay between the existing God-images in the KTR and a new metaphor for God as “*Partner for Life*” in a pastoral hermeneutics could be depicted as follows:

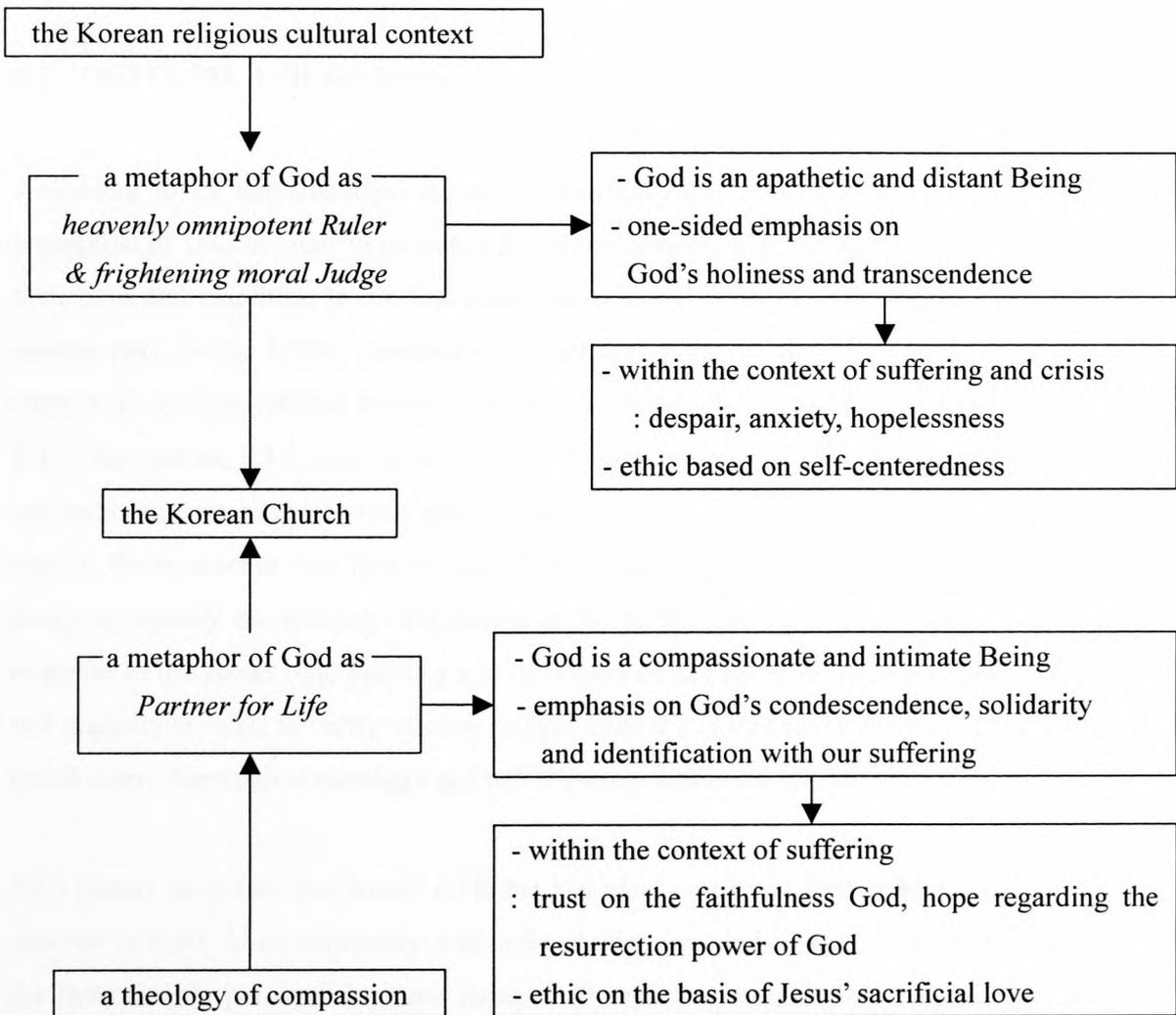


Fig. 32. A possible interplay between God-images in the KTR and a metaphor of God as “*Partner for Life*” in a pastoral hermeneutics.

Therefore, a possible main research problem for further study could be whether, and how, a new metaphor for God as “*Partner for Life*” can be used in order to reframe the cultural / social concepts about God within the unique context of Korean culture. As a consequence, the researcher would like to propose a new hypothesis for pastoral care of the Korean Church as follows: “Against the Korean religious cultural background, a new model of God as “*Partner for Life*” could perhaps be a more relevant metaphor insofar as it contributes towards enhancing a mature faith and instilling true and vivid hope in the context of suffering amongst the parishioners in the Korean Church. In this regard, a theology of compassion not only can play a decisive role to enhance the therapeutic quality of pastoral care in the Korean context, but also has important implications for the ethical vacuum in the Korean society.

## 5.7 OUTCOME AND FINDING

According to its hermeneutical stance for pastoral care, this study dealt with parishioners’ perception of God in order to provide a better understanding of the significance of meaning for their lives and identities. In the first place, the researcher hypothesized that the role that God-images play in the KPBC parishioners’ spiritual / faith development should be understood against the unique cultural background of this Church, especially focusing on the impact of KTR, because the KTR, such as Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, have been the enduring core of the Korean mindset, belief system and spirituality over centuries. In this regard, the researcher was first engaged in investigating the central research problem of this study: to identify the existing God-images in the KPBC and how they influence parishioners’ response to life issues (e.g. theodicy and its impact on parishioners’ understanding of suffering) and maturity in faith; to verify whether or how culture and traditional religions have influenced parishioners’ theological paradigm and belief system within the KPBC.

As a result, we notice that within KTR the historical current of God-images could be divided into two streams. More concretely: within the mainstream God-images, God can be described as the monotheistic personal Supreme Being. Although this monotheistic view of God was not revealed, as in Christianity and Islam, it seems to have submerged into the minds of all Koreans and has constantly and fundamentally influenced their culture and religious thoughts. On the other hand, within non-mainstream God-images, various views of God can be found, including atheistic, pantheistic, polytheistic, and even panentheistic views of God. Especially, in Korean

Shamanism, we find a monotheistic God-term, *Hanunim*, which meant one great God. Korean Shamanism recognized one Supreme God above other gods and spirits, i.e. the hierarchical structure of gods and spirits in Korean Shamanism placed one Supreme God or Spirit as the head, which led to the concept of monotheism. Although within the KTR, there have been other monotheistic indigenous God terms, such as, *Hananim*, *Ch'unsin*, *Ch'un*, *Hanul* and *Okhwang-sangche*, *Hanunim* has become fundamentally rooted in, and has influenced, the lives and religious experience of all Koreans. Thus, we can say that the concept of "*Hanunim*" seems to play a decisive role in the way Korean perceive and experience God. This concept points to a personal but Supreme Being, who rules heaven and earth. Additionally, this understanding of God is clearly related to the issue of punishments and rewards for human deeds. Due to this background, in terms of the concept of *Hanunim*, we could identify and summarize the God-images within the KTR as "*heavenly omnipotent Ruler and frightening moral Judge.*"

Furthermore, we also confirm that not only for all parishioners in the KPBC, but also for Koreans in general, the term, "*Chunneung*," has been used as an exclusive term in order to modify the omnipotent God. Additionally, we notice that the Korean term, *Chunneung*, seemingly equivalent to "omnipotent," derives from the Chinese characters: "*chun* (全)" that represents "all" or "holistic," and "*neung* (能)" that means "power." Accordingly, *chunneung* could be understood as "holistic or all encompassing power." If we reckon the Korean religious cultural setting, we notice that this term should be understood with regard to the idea that God can do anything and is responsible for all events. In addition, we find that the Koreans' concept of God's omnipotence (*Chunneung*) is totally different from an interpretation of God's power in the light of a theology of compassion.<sup>125</sup> For instance, a very famous common saying among Koreans in terms of God's omnipotence (*Chunneung*) has been: "*Ji Sung imyen Gam Ch'un*" (至成感天), which derived from Chinese characters. Although this common saying is not easy to interpret to express its whole nuance, we try to describe it roughly as follows: "If human beings do their best in order to come into touch with the very heart of God, He will be moved and, finally, engage in, and take care of, their wishes and efforts. Eventually, He will solve all our problems and get rid of all our predicaments and suffering, whereby He displays His omnipotent (a Korean term "*Chunneung*") power." As a result, we see clearly that within this well-known saying, God was viewed as an "aloof and apathetic Being," because, for the

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<sup>125</sup> See the discussion on the notion of compassionate God in Chapter 4

purpose of attaining God's loving concerns and care for them, Koreans must continue doing their best until God becomes compassionate and sympathetic.

In addition to this, for Koreans in general, the term "*Ch'unbeöl*" has been used as an exclusive term in order to designate the power of God's frightening judgment and punishment. The Korean term, "*Ch'unbeöl*" derives from the Chinese characters: "*Ch'un* (天)" that represents "Heaven" or "God," and "*beöl*" (罰) that means "punishment." Thus, "*Ch'unbeöl*" could be understood as "heavenly punishment," or "God's punishment." As confirmed previously, within this Korean terminology regarding God's power to punish, "*Ch'unbeöl*," God was regarded as an apathetic Judge, who judges and punishes people according to their sins without mercy. Furthermore, especially in Confucianism and Taoism, there might exist a metaphysical/hierarchical interpretation of God, in which God could be easily regarded as the ultimate cause or source of suffering and evil in the world with an emphasis on cause and effect principle. In a similar vein, the fatalistic idea of "the law of rewards in accordance with human deeds" of Buddhism could also relate to the formation of the metaphysical interpretation of God in a sense. In addition, after the introduction of Christianity, some socio-political factors in the KRC acted as "switches" that controlled the level of influence of God-images on the formation and function of KGI regarding both the mainstream and non-mainstream God-images of the KTR. Therefore, we note that within the KGI, God can be easily understood as the ultimate source of evil in the world, in which all human suffering and predicaments might be regarded as the direct consequence of the judgment and punishment of the apathetic and merciless God for their sins (misdeeds). (However, the significance of sins (misdeeds) within KRC must be distinguished from the notion of sins of Christianity. It should be understood against the Korean religious cultural background.)

In the light of this religious and cultural setting of Korea, the result of the empirical survey indicate that the KTR have played a fundamental role in the formation and function of the theological paradigm within the KPBC, especially when we reckon the connection between parishioners' understanding of God and their interpretation of suffering (the quest for meaning). For instance, due to the decisive impact of the Korean Shamanism and Confucianism, many parishioners within the KPBC, seem to understand excessively the notion of God as "a Judge" in the Bible within the framework of a traditional religious understanding of God as "a

frightening, apathetic, merciless and even cruel Judge,” in which their suffering and predicaments could be easily regarded as a direct consequence of punishment of God for their sins. As a result, although they display a strong tendency to seek God diligently in an endeavour to fulfil their material wishes and selfish purposes, nevertheless, when their property, their success or health is damaged by a sudden crisis or severe suffering, they seem to be disappointed easily and fall prey to a state of profound hopelessness and despair.

What is more, against the hierarchical and metaphysical schema of interpreting God, which might be derived from mainly Confucianism and Taoism, we confirm that many parishioners reflect a tendency of understanding God as “the ultimate cause or source of evil in the world.” In addition, they display a prominent tendency to believe that suffering and predicaments could be the direct consequence of the judgment and punishment of the distant God for their sins, whereby God was easily understood in terms of a more explanatory model, in which the emphasis was on cause and effect. In this regard, we acknowledge that the phenomenon of theodicy within the KPBC has considerably reflected the impact of the Korean religious and cultural setting. Consequently, for many parishioners within the KPBC, God has become a more “aloof and apathetic Being” rather than a “compassionate and intimate Being,” especially within the context of their predicaments and suffering.

Secondly, the researcher also hypothesized that, against the Korean religious cultural background, it was necessary to make use of a theology of compassion by exploring the notion of the compassionate God in the Old and New Testaments and reflecting the views of a theology of compassion presented by Luther, Kitamori, Moltmann and Louw by taking into account the impact of Korea’s cultural and religious setting on parishioners’ God-images and understanding of theodicy. In particular, as a consequence of reflecting the views of a theology of compassion represented by Luther, Kitamori, Moltmann and Louw, we first acknowledge that Luther’s view is most helpful for pastoral care in the Korean context, since his view presents a reversed and paradoxical concept of God’s power in the cross and focuses on the existential implication of the cross regarding human despair in respect of God’s empathetic and compassionate love. Furthermore, we notice that although Kitamori presents God’s pain as the key notion, in which God resolves and heals our human pain by His pain, for Kitamori, God’s pain is merely a consequence of His inner conflict between love and wrath rather than as a consequence of His

empathy for our human predicaments and suffering. Additionally, the notion of *tsurasa*, the key principle of Japanese tragedy that relates culturally to the notion of Kitamori's pain of God, is utterly foreign to Koreans. In this light, we find that it is difficult to say that Kitamori's view is greatly helpful for pastoral care in the Korean context.

In addition, we confirm that at a glance, Moltmann's emphasis on the trinitarian paradigm seems helpful with regard to the monotheistic paradigm in the Korean religious setting. However, it seems that he cannot avoid the pitfalls insofar as suffering becomes the necessary element of the very being of God and Jesus becomes a mere function of his eschatology. Additionally, not only Moltmann's endeavour to establish a TC in Hegelian dialectic can become very speculative, but also his philosophical and speculative approach to human suffering is foreign to the Korean systemic and relational thinking pattern and mindsetting. Therefore, we find that Louw's view is much more appropriate for pastoral care in the Korean context, because he focuses much more on the systemic and relational issues in terms of pastoral hermeneutics, in which the whole discussion relates to human predicaments and suffering. We notice that Louw endeavours to disclose the pastoral implication of TCR insofar as it offers true hope and healing power in the face of human pain and suffering and, ultimately, it enhances spiritual growth and maturity in parishioners' faith. In this respect, we notice that Louw's as well as Luther's view of a theology of compassion seems to be much more helpful than Kitamori's and Moltmann's for pastoral care within the Korean context.

Therefore, as a consequence of exploring the notion of the compassionate God in the Old and New Testaments and reflecting the views of a theology of compassion presented by Luther, Kitamori, Moltmann and Louw by taking into account the impact of Korean cultural and religious setting on parishioners' God-images and their understanding of theodicy, we can denote the significance of a theology of compassion within the Korean context as follows:

First of all, as we already confirmed, due to the impact of the metaphysical paradigm within the KTR, many parishioners might interpret God in terms of explanatory model with an emphasis on the cause and effect principle and understand suffering as the direct consequence of the merciless and apathetic God on account of their sins. However, a theology of compassion in this study indicates that it seems problematic to understand God's judgment only within the

framework of punitive retribution and destructive justice. In fact, due to His holiness and righteousness, God judges and punishes sinners for the purpose of purifying, reclaiming and renewing them, as well as promoting their holy and fruitful life in the grace of God. Additionally, His righteousness and justice require the satisfaction of His demands. Nevertheless, God gave His only Son to us and Christ was judged and punished in our stead. God sent Christ as bearer of divine judgment and punishment on behalf of humanity. On the basis of the Jesus' redemptive work, sinners can be saved solely by the grace God. Consequently, it seems reasonable to understand God's judgment more in terms of the saving and restorative justice, as well as merciful and self-giving love than in terms of the merciless, apathetic and punitive retribution. Thus, in the light of a theology of compassion, suffering might no longer be regarded as merely a direct consequence of automatic effecting deeds. (However, in spite of His initiative and unconditional love and covenantal grace, since God is absolutely holy and righteous, human accountability in terms of God's law must be emphasized. Consequently, a theology of compassion in the Korean context should also deal deliberately with a dynamic tension between God's forgiving and compassionate love and parishioners' obligation regarding His law in the light of God's covental grace). In this regard, in the light of a theology of compassion, since God could no longer be perhaps understood as an apathetic and distant Being within the context of suffering and predicaments, adopting a theology of compassion as a new theological paradigm in pastoral care in the Korean Church may help pastors to instil true hope for parishioners and enhance their maturity in faith and healing process.

Furthermore, due to the materialistic theological paradigm in the Korean religious context, although many parishioners in the KPBC regard God as an omnipotent Being, who can do anything and is responsible for everything, nevertheless, God's power could be easily interpreted in terms of apathetic domination. However, a theology of compassion may provide a new, even reversed concept of God's power, since it seeks the power of God in weakness and folly. In the light of a theology of compassion, God's power could be perhaps represented more in terms of more liberating, saving, blessing, self-giving and compassionate power than in terms of oppressing, dominating and self-centered power. Particularly, a theology of compassion in this study indicates that in Christ's resurrection, life has been transformed radically from anxiety to hope; from nothingness to eschatology; from death to resurrection. Furthermore, by the work of the Holy Spirit, this newly transformed and resurrected life can be realized daily in forms of

hope, sacrificial love, peace and joy (Louw 2000a:155). Therefore, we can say that a theology of compassion could probably help the parishioners in the KPBC to find not only God's compassionate love and His identification with their suffering, but also His true and resurrection power, in which they might reconstruct true hope in the context of their suffering and predicaments, as well as their appropriate ethical role on the basis of Christ's sacrificial love.

In this regard, in terms of the central hypothesis of this study, we can conclude that against the Korean religious and cultural setting, a theology of compassion, as "a new theological paradigm," could probably play a constructive role to assess and reframe the existing theological paradigms that dominate the thinking of the KPBC and, also the PGI. Thus, ultimately, assessing and reframing the existing theological paradigm and the PGI within the KPBC by making use of a theology of compassion could help pastors not only to diagnose parishioners' faith at a more existential level, but also to instill true hope for them in the context of suffering and predicaments and to enhance their maturity in faith.

Consequently, the researcher believes that the significance and some possible contributions of this study could be summarized as follows:

- This research might explore the interplay between the Koreans' views and understanding of God and the KTR in the light of the Korean religious and cultural setting, especially from a pastoral perspective. In particular, the views of God within the KTR, namely Shamanism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, as well as their influence on Koreans' religious thoughts and lives were explored. Furthermore, this research traced how socio-political factors have influenced the Koreans general view of God since Christianity was first introduced into Korea. Therefore, this study may provide for the first time a holistic picture in terms of the interplay between Korean culture, including the KTR, and the Korean general understanding of God regarding the question of human suffering and predicaments.

- Focusing on the prominent tendency of a monotheistic understanding of God against the religious and cultural setting of Korea, this research identified the significance of God's omnipotence within the KPBC in the light of the usage of the Korean terminology of "*Chunneung* (omnipotence)" and "*Ch'unbeöl* (punishment)," against the Korean religious

context.

■ By adopting an empirical approach, this research investigated and analyzed parishioners' existing God-images and their theological paradigms within the real field of the KPBC, especially in a pastoral perspective. In particular, this research highlighted and pointed out what exactly was meant by the phenomenon of theodicy in the KPBC against the religious and cultural background of the Korean setting.

■ By exploring the notion of a compassionate God in the Bible and reflecting on views of a theology of compassion, this research established and proposed a theology of compassion as a new theological paradigm for pastoral care and ministry of the Korean Church, which could be used for assessing and reframing PGI on a more appropriate theological basis, especially against the unique religious cultural background of the Korean context. This proposed theology of compassion might be used to not only diagnose parishioners' faith at a more existential level, but also instill true hope for parishioners within the Korean Church in terms of the context of their suffering and predicaments and, eventually, enhance their maturity in faith and healing process.

## APPENDIX A (SUEY FORM-1. ENG.)

### Questionnaire to discern God-images

\* Please choose one answer below that is closest to your thoughts. (Should you not find a relevant answer among the multiple choices, please write down your own thoughts.)

1. Sex?

- male
- female

2. Age?

- 19-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60- years

3. When are you aware of God's presence?

- When I pray
- When I read and meditate on the Bible
- When I am in church
- When I experience God's answer to my prayers
- When I attend a worship service
- When I am in nature
- When I hear a sermon
- In my daily life
- If you have any other answer, please write it here:

.....

4. If I believe in the omnipotence (*chunneung*) of God and pray earnestly to God, I can receive and achieve anything in my life.

- Yes
- No

5. What, in your opinion, is the most representative characteristic of the Korean traditional God (*Hanunim*) that has been conceived over thousands of years?

- God can do anything and is responsible for all events
- God knows everything
- God blesses human beings
- God judges human beings
- God punishes human beings
- God controls the lives and deaths of human beings
- God answers the prayers of human beings
- God controls the universe
- If you have any other answer, please write it here:

.....

6. How often do you feel that you have committed sins that cannot be forgiven?

- Never
- Seldom
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

7. Please choose one item that, in your opinion, is similar in the Korean traditional God (*Hanunim*) and the Christian God.

- God can do anything and is responsible for all events
- God knows everything
- God blesses human beings
- God answers the prayers of human beings
- God judges human beings
- God punishes human beings
- God controls the lives and deaths of human beings
- God controls the universe
- God forgives sins of human beings
- God saves human beings
- If you have any other answer, please write it here:

.....

8. We hardly experience the miraculous power of God due to our poor faith.

Yes

No

9. When do you feel that God is distant, rather than compassionate?

When I experience God's severe punishments for my sins

When God does not answer my earnest prayer

When I am in the context of intolerable suffering

When things around me get worse

When I see that the unrighteous are successful

When I see evil and imperfection in the world, such as wars, violence, famine and natural catastrophes

When my emotions are in distress

If you have any other answer, please write it here:

.....

10. Suffering that I have experienced is related to God's punishment for my sins.

Yes

No

11. When are you aware of the omnipotence (*chunneung*) of God?

When I experience God's answer to my prayers

When I see God's great answer to other parishioners' prayers

When I see God's miraculous healing power for incurable diseases

When I see nature that God has created

When I meditate on Jesus Christ's death and resurrection

In my daily life

If you have any other answer, please write it here:

.....

12. God solves all our problems and heals our suffering if we have sincere faith.

Yes

No

13. How often do you feel that God is distant, rather than compassionate?

- Never
- Seldom
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

\* If you have a reason, please write it here:

.....

14. God is an omnipotent Being who guarantees our health, wealth and success.

- Yes
- No

15. How often do you feel fear for receiving God's punishments for your sins?

- Never
- Seldom
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

4. 만약 내게 전능 (chunneung: omnipotence) 한 하나님에 대한 믿음이 있고 전능  
 곧 기도하면 모든 것을 얻을 수 있고 모든 일을 성취할 수 있다  
 그렇다  
 그렇지 않다

3. 당신은 언제 하나님께서 당신과 함께 하심을 느끼게 되나요?  
 기도할 때  
 성경 말씀을 읽을 때  
 교회에 있을 때  
 하나님께서 나의 기도에 응답하셨을 때  
 교회 예배에 참석할 때  
 자연 속에 있을 때  
 쉬고 있을 때  
 아무 일도 없을 때  
 아무 일도 없는데도 불구하고  
 :  다른 어떤 때에도 없습니다

2. 나이?  
 19-29  
 30-39  
 40-49  
 50-59  
 60세 이상

1. 성별?  
 남자  
 여자

\* 다음에 나오는 각 질문들에 대해 당신의 생각에 가장 가까운 답을 하나  
 고르시오 (만약 여러 개의 선택 항목 중에서도 적당히 답을 찾지 못한다면  
 당신의 자신의 답을 적으시오)

“하나님에 대한 이미지”에 관한 설문조사

APPENDIX B (SURVEY FORM-2. KOR.)

5. 당신이 생각하기에 한국인들이 수 천년 동안 전통적으로 알아 왔던 하느님 (하  
나님)의 특성 중 가장 대표적인 것을 한가지만 찾는다면?

- 하느님은 모든 것을 하실 수 있고 모든 일들을 주관하시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 모든 것을 아시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들에게 복을 주시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들의 기도를 응답해주시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들을 심판하시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들에게 벌을 내리시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들의 삶과 죽음을 주관하시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 우주를 주관하신다
- 만약 당신에게 다른 대답이 있다면 여기에 적어주세요 :

6. 당신은 얼마나 자주, 용서 받지 못할지도 모르는 죄를 범했다는 생각을 하게  
되나요?

- 결코 그런 적이 없다
- 거의 그렇지 않다
- 가끔씩 그렇다
- 자주 그렇다
- 항상 그렇다

7. 다음의 여러 특성들 중 우리 한국인들이 전통적으로 알아오던 하느님 (하나님)  
과 기독교의 하나님이 가장 비슷한 점을 한가지만 찾는다면?.

- 하느님은 모든 것을 하실 수 있고 모든 일들을 주관하시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 모든 것을 아시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들에게 복을 주시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들의 기도를 응답해주시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들을 심판하시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들에게 벌을 내리시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들의 삶과 죽음을 주관하시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 우주를 주관하신다
- 하느님은 인간들을 구원하시는 분이시다
- 하느님은 인간들의 죄를 용서하시는 분이시다
- 만약 당신에게 다른 대답이 있다면 여기에 적어주세요 :

8. 우리는 우리의 연약한 믿음을 때문에 하나님의 기적적인 능력을 잘 경험하지 못한다

- 그렇다
- 그렇지 않다

9. 당신은 언제 하나님께서 우리와 고통을 함께 하시기 보다는 멀리 계신 분처럼 느껴지나요?

- 하나님께서 나의 죄에 대해 심한 벌을 내리시는 것을 경험할 때
- 하나님께서 나의 간절한 기도에 응답해주시지 않을 때
- 내가 감당하기 어려운 심한 고난 가운데 있을 때
- 내 주위의 일들이 잘 풀리지 않을 때
- 불의한 사람들이 잘되는 것을 보았을 때
- 세상에 존재하는 전쟁, 기근, 폭력, 기아, 자연재해 등의 악과 부조리를 볼 때
- 나의 마음이 낙심가운데 있을 때
- 만약 당신에게 다른 대답이 있다면 여기에 적어주세요

10. 내가 경험한 고난들은 내가 범한 죄에 대한 하나님의 징벌과 관계가 있다

- 그렇다
- 그렇지 않다

11. 당신은 언제 하나님께서 전능하신 분임을 실감하게 되나요?

- 하나님께서 나의 기도에 응답하시는 것을 경험할 때
- 다른 사람들이 하나님께 큰 기도응답 받는 것을 볼 때
- 하나님의 기적적 능력으로 불치의 병이 치유되는 것을 볼 때
- 하나님께서 창조하신 자연을 볼 때
- 예수님의 죽으심과 부활하심을 묵상할 때
- 나의 일상 생활 속에서
- 만약 당신에게 다른 대답이 있다면 여기에 적어주세요 :

12. 만약 우리에게 신실한 믿음이 있다면 하나님은 우리의 모든 문제를 해결해 주시고 우리의 고통을 다 해결해 주시는 분이시다

- 그렇다
- 그렇지 않다

13. 당신은 얼마나 자주 하나님께서 우리와 고통을 함께하시기 보다는 멀리 계신 분처럼 느껴지나요?

- 결코 그런 적이 없다
- 거의 그렇지 않다
- 가끔씩 그렇다
- 자주 그렇다
- 항상 그렇다

\* 만약 당신이 그렇게 답하신 특별한 이유가 있다면 여기에 적어주세요:

.....

14. 하나님은 우리의 부와 건강과 성공을 보장해 주시는 전능하신 분이시다.

- 그렇다
- 그렇지 않다

15. 당신은 얼마나 자주, 하나님께로부터 당신이 범한 죄에 대한 벌을 받을지도 모른다는 두려움을 느끼게 되나요?

- 결코 그런 적이 없다
- 거의 그렇지 않다
- 가끔씩 그렇다
- 자주 그렇다
- 항상 그렇다

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