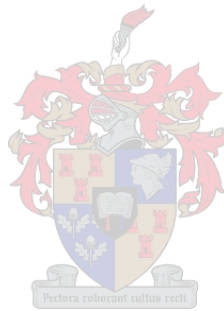


**ROOTS THAT REFRESH:
A HISTORICAL-THEOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH JEWISH
MEAL TRADITIONS AND THE CELEBRATION OF THE
EUCHARIST IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH**

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Declaration

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

Signature: Date:

Abstract

Different theologies have sprung up around the celebration of the Eucharist. Consequently at the very point where Christians should be most united there is often controversy, bitterness and division. This is true of the writer's own social location within the Anglican Church.

The central question of this thesis is therefore how an engagement with Christianity's Jewish roots helps us to reframe Eucharistic theology. In this regard a historical theological approach is employed to track how Eucharistic theological emphases have changed over time in relation to Jewish meal traditions, Jesus' meal parables and table fellowship. The implications to reconnecting with the essence of Jesus' social location are somewhat radical and potentially discomfoting. Yet there are several obstacles to connecting with roots of our faith.

The first obstacle examined in this thesis is the problematic interpretative gap of history, between the strangeness of the past and the familiarity of the present. A second obstacle only briefly touched upon is the attitude of anti-intellectualism in some churches today and an ignorance of the histories of Christianity. However, given the thesis question, the primary focus is on the obstacle of Christian anti-Semitism and the de-Judaising of Christianity. To seek greater continuity with Judaism is, in some ways, to Christianize Christianity.

Opsomming

Verskillende teologieë het rondom die viering van die Eucharistie ontstaan. Gevolglik is dit so dat juis daar waar grootste eenheid in die Kerk en die Christendom hoort te wees, is daar intendeel bitterheid, skeiding en wantrou. Dit is waar van die skrywer se eie konteks binne die Anglikaanse Kerk.

Daarom is die sentrale vraag van hierdie tesis, hoe n' hernude verbintenis met die Christendom se Joodse oorsprong ons die moontlikheid bied om n' Eucharistiese teologie te herontdek en te raam. In hierdie verband word n' histories – teologiese benadering gebruik om te volg hoe die spoor van Eucharisties teologiese klem oor die jare verander het. Dit spesefiek met verhouding tot die Joodse maalyd tradisies, Jesus se eie maalyd gelykenisse en sy tafel geselskap / broedersakap. Die implikasie van n' herkonneksie met die kern van Jesus se konteks en maatskaplike ligging is effens radikaal en het die potensiaal om selfs steurend te wees. Tog is daar verskeie hindernisse wat verhoed dat ons herkonnekteer met die oorsprong van ons geloof.

Die eerste hindernes wat in hierdie tesis ondersoek sal word is die problematiese vertolkingsgaping' van die geskiedenis tussen die vreemdheid van die verlede en die bekendheid van die hede. n' Tweede hindernes wat slegs effense aandag sal geniet ,is die houding van anti-intellektualisme en onkunde in verband met die geskiedenis van die Christendom wat in sommige Kerke heers. Gegewe die sentrale tesis vraag, sal die primere fokus van hierdie tesis die hindernes van n' Christen atisemitiese houding en die wegbeweging van ons Joodse oorsprong wees. Om n' groter kontinuïteit met Judaïsme te vind is eintlik n' manier om die Christendom te herontdek.

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*Whatever is has already been,
and what will be has been before;
and God calls back the past.*
~ Ecclesiastes 3:15

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Chapter 1. Introduction

All beliefs are rooted in a history. Beliefs shape our interpretation of old experiences, our openness to new experiences and the integration of contrary experiences. All Christian beliefs, whether conscious theological reflections or an uncritical lived-out faith, are rooted too in a history. These beliefs shape our experience of God and the world in which we live, work and try to co-exist; they betray the manner in which we view the saving work of God revealed in Scripture, in the church, in the world and in history. All churches whether denominational or non-denominational are rooted in an ever expanding history. To sit or kneel; to raise hands or clap; to be somber, silent or celebratory; to respond individually or corporately is to manifest a certain history, a certain theology, a certain belief.

History not only casts the hindsight shadow of judgment over the church, both good and ill, but from its past depths can be found roots that can refresh: “Reformation roots”; “Patristic roots”; “Jewish roots.” To tap into these roots is to refresh our Biblical faith and worship of the living God, who has chosen to be revealed in and through history. At the same time we must be cautious to not over simply the past as we view it from the vantage point of our own era.

Each of these roots, Reformation, Patristic as well as Jewish, encompass a diversity of historical figures, writings, debates, viewpoints and traditions which even in their time did amount to a static expression of ideas. Consequently we need to acknowledge how theology is influenced by complex historical contexts and face the obstacles that hinder us from a fuller understanding of the triune God, the Father, His Son Jesus and the work and witness of the Spirit in the Church. With this outcome in mind, my thesis question is “*How does an engagement with our Jewish roots add to or challenge our Eucharistic theology?*” Two sub-questions accompany this central question. Firstly, how have theological emphases and ideas changed over time in relation to Jewish meal traditions (especially Passover), Jesus’ meal parables and the different trajectories within the Anglican Eucharist? Secondly, what acts as barriers to our engagement with Jewish roots? A historical theological approach is essential to the first; a critique of Christian anti-Semitism for the latter.

Michael Welker, in his book, *What happens in holy communion?* engages in theological reflection through a critique that is both personal and intellectual; one influencing the

other. He maintains a link between his theology and lived context. I am conscious that, like Welker, my thesis does not arise in a personal vacuum. In my thesis I will argue that rather than disregarding the Jewish roots of Christianity, appreciating them can enrich and deepen our understanding of Eucharistic theology. Furthermore, by intentionally reconnecting with Christianity's Jewish roots we can provide a sense of rootedness that many today, like myself, do not have despite being in the church. Welker also speaks of his search for Eucharistic meaning as he taught and researched the subject as expressed in the question in the title of his book:

“Although I have studied theology, am an ordained theologian, and for over twenty years now have been engaged in teaching and research that has required intensive reflection on issues of faith, I have gone a long time without finding a satisfying answer to this question.”¹

He reflects on how he has experienced Holy Communion in various churches around the world, in Germany, in North America and in Russia. Welker uses Immanuel Kant's characterization of Holy Communion as a 'sad colloquy' to describe many of these experiences. Yet there were numerous contrary good experiences which to him were more along the lines of "counter-sentiments".² He describes living with the desire to formulate theologically what he was experiencing personally,

“Just as for a long time I could not explain why I found some celebrations of the Supper oppressive, so I could not speak clearly about the positive experiences.”³

His perplexed state completely changed when he was asked to give a lecture course for a symposium in Princeton on "Hope for the Kingdom and Responsibility for the World." He comments that in studying the biblical texts about the resurrection, "I saw for the first time – from a distance – a way to understand communion."⁴

Welker's own experience of worship services provided the personal reflections that finally led him to see, as from a distance, a *theological* way to understand Holy Communion. His theology of communion did not develop in a vacuum, but is grounded in his very being, rooted in Scripture and motivated by an ecumenical desire to see churches find common ground. This gives rise to his unique theological discourse. This

¹ Welker, M. (2000) *What happens in Holy Communion?* 6

² *Ibid*, 8

³ *Ibid*, 9

⁴ *Ibid*, 10

contextual beginning has been true of theological discourse throughout history. Luther's theology was rooted in his personal experience of the Roman Catholic church, acute consciousness of his own sin and justification brought about by faith. Consequently his theology of justification by faith alone brings forth both his personal and theological convictions. Another example from another era is Paul Tillich, who acknowledged that "History became the central problem of my theology and philosophy because of the historical reality as I found it when I returned from the first World War."⁵ He was not a passive detached observer of history or theology, but saw in history the genesis of his theology:

"One is enabled to speak of that which is actually happening in the present, of that which makes the present a generative force, only insofar as one immerses oneself in the creative process which brings the future forth out of the past."⁶

Theology consequently is a paradox. It is shaped by and itself shapes the church and society of each Age. This is the particular concern of historical theology, to lay bare the connection between historical context and theology.⁷

1.1 The rationale of a historical theological framework

Anglican scholar, Alister McGrath, argues that we too easily overlook the insight that 'theology has a history'.⁸ Theologians attempt to make sense of the foundational resources of the Christian faith in the light of the contemporary scholarly methods of each age.⁹ Geoffrey Bromiley defines "theology" as the

"investigation of the church's word about God with the intent of testing and achieving its purity and faithfulness as the responsive transmission of God's Word in changing languages, vocabularies, and intellectual and cultural contexts."¹⁰

Historical theology is a branch of theology which aims to explore the historical situations within which these ideas developed or were specifically formulated.¹¹ The

⁵ Braaten, C.E. (Ed) (1968) *Paul Tillich: A history of Christian thought*, xvii

⁶ *Ibid*, xviii

⁷ McGrath, A. E. (2001) *Christian Theology: An introduction*, 144

⁸ *Ibid*, 144

⁹ *Ibid*, 144

¹⁰ Bromiley, G. W. (1978) *Historical Theology: An introduction*, xxvi

¹¹ McGrath, A. E. (2001) *Christian Theology*, 144

universality of God's saving action is necessarily embedded in the experiences of particular cultures and, argues McGrath, "is shaped by the insights and limitations of persons who were themselves seeking to live the gospel in a particular context."¹² Christianity inevitably and often unconsciously absorbs ideas and values from its cultural backdrop.

Historical theology, importantly, is not simply a Christian rendering of history, but is subversive in nature, seeking to "indicate how easily theologians are led astray by the self-images of the age."¹³ Geoffrey Bromiley asserts that

"an ideal historical theology lies beyond the limits of human possibility. Indeed, even the ideas of the ideal differ so broadly that what might approximate the ideal for some falls hopelessly short for others."¹⁴

He comments that "historical theology is not just a history of Christian theology but is itself theology."¹⁵ It is studying the history of theology on "its own terms, rather than only when theology touches on some branch of history."¹⁶ Bromiley argues that

"Historical theology fills the gap between the time of God's Word and the present time of the church's word by studying the church's word in the intervening periods."¹⁷

Paul Tillich commented that people in the twentieth century had little sense of history; they were not aware of the sources of tradition from which they came.¹⁸ Consequently a great part of Tillich's career in teaching theology was devoted to "tracing the history of an idea through its main stages of development, observing even subtle shifts in the nuances of meaning at the main turning points."¹⁹ Rowan Williams, Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, argues that this detachment from our roots in fact handicaps the church:

"A Church that shares the widespread and fashionable illiteracy of this culture about how religious faith worked in other ages is grossly weakened in its

¹² McGrath, A. E. (2001) *Christian Theology*, 144

¹³ *Ibid*, 145

¹⁴ Bromiley, G. W. (1978) *Historical Theology*, xxi

¹⁵ *Ibid*, xxv

¹⁶ Placher, W. C. (1983) *A history of Christian theology*, 12

¹⁷ Bromiley, G. W. (1978) *Historical Theology*, xxvi

¹⁸ Braaten, C.E. (Ed) (1968) *Paul Tillich*, xiv

¹⁹ *Ibid*, xvi

witness. That witness has to do with a promise of universal community that is grounded not in assumptions about universal right and reason but in a narrative displaying how communication is made possible between strangers by a common relatedness to God's presence and act in history – in an historical person.”²⁰

Williams sees history as a set of stories we tell in order to understand better who we are and the world we're now in.²¹ Constructing a history essentially helps us define our own identity.²² Williams notes, “We begin with a sense of identity that is in some way fragile or questionable, and we embark on the enterprise of history to make it clearer and more secure.”²³ He likens our relationship to history as to a foreign country and to historical characters as to strangers:

“Good history makes us think again about the definition of things we thought we understood pretty well, because it engages not just with what is familiar but with what is strange. It recognizes that ‘the past is a foreign country’ as well as being our past.”²⁴

Furthermore, Williams suggest that good historical writing is one that makes the familiar become unfamiliar in order to make it clearer;²⁵ in other words our identity now is “bound up with a whole range of things that are not easy for me or us, not obvious or native to the world we think we inhabit, yet which have to be recognized in their solid reality as both different from us and part of us.”²⁶ For good or ill, we are more indebted to our theological past than we will ever truly realize. Williams recognizes this:

“Who I am as a Christian is something which, in theological terms, I could only answer fully on the impossible supposition that I could see and grasp how all other Christian lives had shaped mine, and more specifically, shaped it towards the likeness of Christ...I do not know, theologically speaking, where my debts

²⁰ Williams, R. (2005) *Why study the past?* 113

²¹ *Ibid*, 1

²² *Ibid*, 1

²³ *Ibid*, 23

²⁴ *Ibid*, 1

²⁵ *Ibid*, 20

²⁶ *Ibid*, 24

begin and end.”²⁷

He cautions that the characters that historical theologians engage with, and to whom all Christians are indebted to various degrees, “are not modern people in fancy dress; they have to be listened to as they are, and not judged or dismissed - or claimed or enrolled as supporters – too rapidly.”²⁸ He also cautions against seeking a definitive History and argues rather, that “We don’t have a single ‘grid’ for history; we construct it when we want to resolve certain problems about who we are now.”²⁹ There is a fine balancing act between seeking continuity – linking of the present with the past in a manner that is familiar – and discontinuity – seeing the strangeness of the past in regard to the present - in history. Yet it is an important balancing act. Williams argues that “the risk of not acknowledging the strangeness of the past is as great as that of treating it as purely and simply a foreign country.”³⁰ In other words, there are two extremes to be avoided: seeking flawless continuity of our faith tradition with the past; and thinking who we are now and what we believe as being completely discontinuous with all that has gone before.

Yet, on another level, the history of the Church, focusing on the major doctrinal debates and developments as well as on the key historical figures is not necessarily the ‘real’ history of the church. There are the other stories of the hidden, invisible, unwritten history of the faithful ordinary people of God in every generation; his-story and her-story that will never be told. Thus Rowan Williams, See of Canterbury, posits that

“The true Church has no real history, since it is always that community of persons (not wholly coterminous with its membership of the visible institution, in which there will always be those not fully obedient to God) in whose lives the kingdom has come.”³¹

This paradox between the visible and invisible church throughout time, between the strangeness and foreignness of history and the sense of continuity or discontinuity with our present forms of Christianity create many challenges in the study of historical theology. William Placher notes the ambiguity of the story of Christianity in the

²⁷ *Ibid*, 27

²⁸ Williams, R. (2005) *Why study the past?* 11

²⁹ *Ibid*, 5

³⁰ *Ibid*, 11

³¹ *Ibid*,16

following quote. Although rather long it is worth including in full because it clearly illustrates the theme of the many and various complex historical contexts in Christianity:

“Christian ideals inspired many of the efforts to end slavery, but slave owners quoted the Bible too. Both sides of every war fought by Christians have evoked religious principles. A Christian-inspired conviction that the world had a rational order often inspired scientific advance, but defenders of outdated scientific theories have also appealed to theological premises. In late antiquity, when many philosophers treated anything physical as evil, Christians affirmed the goodness of the physical world as part of God’s creation, but Christianity has led some to deny the value of this world. The very first Christian’s gave women positions of authority and influence unusual in their society, but in other times Christianity has been cited as a justification for assigning women a subordinate place. Christian theology tolerated and too often encourages a long history of anti-Semitism, and no responsible history of Christian theology written in the twentieth century can ignore the haunting shadow of the Holocaust.”³²

Yet this only serves to illustrate the importance of studying the historical contexts and development of theological ideas. Consequently, the aim of historical theology necessarily shapes the methodologies. Geoffrey Bromiley, in his book, *Historical Theology: An Introduction*, outlines five approaches:

- Rapid survey, “which attempts a sketch of everybody and everything.”³³
- Detailed and multi-volumed study, “which tries to say everything about everybody and everything.”³⁴
- Interpretative theses, “which advance a series of interesting theories or theses according to which the material is grouped and which form the starting point for the interminable and inconclusive analyses, antithesis, and synthesis beloved by specialists.”³⁵
- Explanatory study, “which tries to show the root and reason of what is

³² Placher, W.C. (1983) *A history of Christian theology*, 13

³³ Bromiley, G. W. (1978) *Historical Theology*, xxii

³⁴ *Ibid*, xxii

³⁵ *Ibid*, xxii

said or written, so that what finally emerges is a nexus of influence and interaction.”³⁶

- Selective study, which chooses a few theologians and makes a fuller exposition of selected pieces.³⁷

Placher adds a caution that the various church traditions, church historians and historical theologians have had to clarify their logic and integrity and have consequently tended to accentuate the *positive* interpretations and story of the church.³⁸ My approach will be contrary to this in as much as it also emphasizes the negative-narrative of Christian anti-Semitism in the theology and practice of the church.

Both the aim of historical theology and the various methodologies inherently impose selectivity. Bromiley recognizes that the choices lie at two levels: which theologians are to be introduced, and which of their works are to be used for the purpose? He also acknowledges the subjective nature of this selectivity:

“In neither sphere can any definitive criteria be found by which to make the selection... Hence the final choice has an arbitrary element in which circumstances and preferences play a major part.”³⁹

The three strands that I have chosen to interweave in this thesis, and that will affect my choice of sources, are those theologians who contribute to the narrative of anti-Judaism; my own social location within the Anglican Church; and how we celebrate the Eucharist.

But what is the particular value of doing historical theology? Bromiley and McGrath outline several benefits, *inter alia*:

- It shows how the church has moved across the centuries and continents with an ongoing continuity in spite of every discontinuity.⁴⁰
- It offers examples of the way in which, and the reasons why, the conformity of the church’s word to God’s Word has been achieved or compromised in the

³⁶ Bromiley, G. W. (1978) *Historical Theology*, xxii

³⁷ *Ibid*, xxii

³⁸ Placher, W. C. (1983) *A history of Christian theology*, 13

³⁹ Bromiley, G. W. (1978) *Historical Theology*, xxiii

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, xxvi

different centuries and settings.⁴¹

- It brings a valuable accumulation of enduring insights as well as relevant warnings to today's church.⁴²
- It demonstrates that certain ideas came into being under very definite circumstance; and that, occasionally, mistakes have been made.⁴³
- It maintains openness that theological development is not irreversible; the mistakes of the past may be corrected.⁴⁴

McGrath is adamant that historical theology is not restricted to the past and therefore argues:

“Too often, modern trends in theology are little more than knee-jerk reactions to short-term cultural trends. The study of history makes us alert both to the mistakes of the past, and to the alarming way in which they are repeated in the present.”⁴⁵

Bromiley, like Williams, cautions against a theological arrogance in our approach to the Christian narrative of history so that

“the criticism will be constructive, not condemnatory... and both criticism and approval will be undertaken with humility, for is not the historical theologian himself a participant whose work comes under the same test?”⁴⁶

He concludes that historical theology, like all theology, needs to serve the ministry and the mission of the church.⁴⁷ It is important that the historical theologian works to a specific end acknowledging that he or she is a participant in theology, forging the proclamation of God's Word in authentic contemporary terms.⁴⁸

1.2 Aim of the thesis

I am conscious that my thesis, like Welker's study referred to earlier, did not arise in a

⁴¹ *Ibid*, xxvi

⁴² Bromiley, G. W. (1978) *Historical Theology*, xxvi

⁴³ McGrath, A. E. (2001) *Christian Theology*, 145

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 145

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 145

⁴⁶ Bromiley, G. W. (1978) *Historical Theology*, xxvii

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, xxviii

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, xxviii

personal vacuum. In my thesis I will argue that rather than abrogating the Jewish roots of Christianity, appreciating them can enrich and deepen our experience of church and understanding of theology. More specifically, that by intentionally reconnecting with Christianity's Jewish roots we can provide a sense of rootedness and depth that many today do not have despite being themselves in the church. These people are denominational refugees, rootless Christians found in present confessional churches.

A church in a Confessional tradition has as its defining framework various historical creeds and confessions of faith such as the Nicene Creed, the Heidelberg Confession, the Westminster Confession, the Barmen Declaration or Belhar Confession. The emerging non-Confessional or so called, 'non-denominational' churches by comparison do not even define themselves in this manner.

I am acutely aware therefore of a sense of rootlessness in both Confessional and non-Confessional churches. A defining character of this generation is that since they neither care to be nor can be rooted in Calvinism, Lutheranism, Roman Catholicism, Methodism or Anglicanism, they cannot draw from the theological resources of these traditions to nurture their faith or rightly or wrongly, inform their understanding of Scripture.

1.2.1 Denominational rootlessness

My thesis is motivated by and will be coloured by my own experience of rootlessness. "What church do I belong to?" is my perplexing question. I grew up in a Presbyterian church until the age of eight. Then when my family moved to the United Kingdom for six years, we joined the Church of England. Upon arrival back in South Africa, we became members of a Methodist church. I was baptized and confirmed in the Methodist church. I did a short two year stint in a so-called 'non-denominational' New Covenant Ministries International (NCMI) church, before returning again to the Methodist church. I have finally ended up being a full-time youth pastor in an Anglican church and am in the process of pursuing ordination in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA), part of the worldwide Anglican church.

When I reflect on over ten years of youth pastoring I can observe that this is not an isolated experience. The confirmation course that I run each year never has only good Anglicans on it. There have been children of Methodists, Lutherans and devout Roman Catholics on the course. These parents say that they would rather their children

(teenagers) have an active faith in a strong Christian community, than make denominational or Confessional loyalty the main thing. The young people seem not to care and have little sense of historical theology and what importance to attach to these traditional church labels.

There have been many other labels attached to this trend: explaining it by means of being ‘post-modern’ youth or living in a consumer society where free choice, catchy packaging and self-gratification are all that count, even in church attendance. A less cynical view is that many people are simply looking to ‘belong’, in other words, experience a sense of belonging in an active Christian community. This is a trans-denominational motivation.

Alister McGrath, in his book, *Roots that Refresh*, from which I get the title of my thesis, draws our attention to the need to recover a sense of Christian identity and purpose. He, of course, is referring to Reformed roots and speaks of the feeling of the Reformers that Christianity needed to be reborn and reshaped. McGrath argues that

“It was not merely that medieval forms of Christianity were of limited relevance to the new era of human history then dawning; it was that those medieval forms of Christianity represented distortions of authentic Christianity. Time and time again, the writings of the reformers develop the theme: there is an urgent need to return to the roots of faith, and reappropriate an authentic form of the Christian gospel.”⁴⁹

This same desire to return to the authentic roots of our faith is crucial to many Christians today. McGrath argues,

“There is a need for individuals and their communities to gain a sense of being rooted, of belonging, of having continuity with the past... The Christian believer and the Christian community may – and must – recover a sense of belonging, of having deep spiritual roots, even in the midst of a new, young and immature society.”⁵⁰

He develops this further by reflecting on the importance of roots for continuity and stability. McGrath powerfully motivates that

⁴⁹ McGrath, A. E. (1991) *Roots that Refresh: A celebration of reformation spirituality*, 50

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 66

“to be a Christian is to trace one’s roots back two millennia, to the great events of the first Good Friday and Easter Day. It is to renew the covenant with memory and history. It is to recover the sense of *belonging* in history, however fractured the social location of one’s life may be.”⁵¹

Crucial to this is the Eucharist, which McGrath describes as “a return to Christian roots – to recall, and to recollect, the importance of the death of Jesus Christ for the life of the believer and the church.”⁵²

I agree with McGrath’s fundamental observations about rootlessness, the need for continuity and the role of the Eucharist. Despite the Anglican church having been born in the Reformation, as will be discussed later, this root is no longer primarily responsible for nourishing our identity. Consequently it is natural that Christians, like me, who cannot connect with the theological and faith resources in the various branches that make up the Church tree, may also be drawn to seek refreshment from other authentic roots such as our Jewish roots. It is precisely because I have experience of being part of a rootless minority on the margins of the Church that I am drawn to a marginalized theological appreciation of Jewish roots.

There are many potential dangers in this approach, not least a resurgence of neo-Judaizers in the church, which has already become evident in parts of the contemporary Jewish Roots movement.⁵³ Yet there will always be reasons that detract from the value of any theological discourse; the renewal of eschatological theology in the church is not without its misapplication, likewise the ecumenical movement too has had to navigate ever present potential pitfalls; hence the important perspective historical theology gives to these issues.

An anti-Judaism bias to much of Christian theology will have to be overcome before one is open to consider my thesis. In this regard I will begin by exploring anti-Judaism and anti-Semitic sentiment in the writings of some key theologians throughout the history of the church. This gives the background for discussing the Eucharist as the lens for my thesis; using this lens to view the richness of a reclaimed Jewish roots

⁵¹ McGrath, A. E. (1991) *Roots that Refresh*, 67

⁵² *Ibid*, 63

⁵³ I went to a funeral several years ago where the son of the deceased wore a prayer-shawl, substituted Yahweh for God when reading scripture and used the event as a platform for an anti-Church tirade. He and his family had adopted Jewish traditions, had basically become Jews, but were ‘Christian’.

perspective; roots that refresh.

1.2.2 Use of the term 'Eucharist'

The terms "Eucharist" and "Holy Communion" are the two most commonly used names in the Anglican Church for the Lord's Supper. The liturgy for the Anglican Church of Southern Africa is contained in the *Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) and uses the term, "Eucharist." I will therefore primarily use the term Eucharist in this thesis instead of Holy Communion, Lord's Supper, Breaking of Bread, Synaxis and Mass. The term Eucharist is used in the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM) ecumenical dialogues as well as the ongoing dialogue between the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches and in that regard represents some linguistic common ground between different church traditions.

For what it is worth, it has the one advantage - over other terms - of possessing an adjectival form, "Eucharistic", thus making it possible to describe a particular theology as being 'Eucharistic theology' or a form of liturgy as "Eucharistic liturgy".⁵⁴

"Eucharist" is derived from the Greek word for 'thanksgiving': blessing in Greek is either *eulogia* or *eucharistia*.⁵⁵ This idea of 'thanksgiving' echoes the action of Jesus on the night in which he was betrayed, that he 'gave thanks'; it also links in with the Jewish tradition of the blessing prayed at normal meals.

Tom Wright, bishop of Durham, discusses the various phrases used alongside the term Eucharist: 'the bread-breaking', from the Christians in Acts breaking bread when they met; 'the sharing' which is the English for *koinonia*, from which we also get 'communion'; then there is 'the Lord's Meal' or 'the Lord's Supper' as well as 'Mass', from the Latin phrase for 'Go - you are sent out.'⁵⁶ He reminds us that these words carry all sorts of other meanings through their use in different branches of Christianity down the centuries. Wright concludes that "it is these different uses, and the different theories and ideas that have sprung up around them, that have often caused controversy, and, tragically, bitterness and division at the very point where Christians should be most united."⁵⁷

⁵⁴ McGrath, A.E. (1999) *Reformation Thought: An introduction*, 509.

⁵⁵ Skarsaune, O (2002) *In the shadow of the Temple: Jewish influences on early Christianity*, 399

⁵⁶ Wright, N.T. (2002) *The Meal Jesus Gave us*, 36

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 37

No attempt, therefore, is being made by this thesis to advocate the term “Eucharist” as the correct usage, or as being normative or superior to other terms.

1.2.3 Validity of connecting with Jewish roots

Naturally the validity of connecting with our Jewish roots to enrich the Eucharist depends on the *relationship* between the Eucharist, the Last Supper, Jewish meal culture and in particular, the Passover meal. Some historical arguments for and against the strength of these links will be reviewed. A way forward will be sought that allows for my thesis, in the absence of a definitive solution to the aforementioned debates.

This will lead to a synthesis of understandings of the Eucharist against the backdrop of the Jewish meals and especially, the Passover. Hence, the motivation to use the Eucharist as the lens for my thesis: there is little in the life of the modern church, apart from Scripture itself, that has the potential to exploit the Jewish roots for a faith-giving, richer understanding of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Furthermore, the visual richness of the Eucharist, given a renewed Hebraic meaning, can unlock a deeper appreciation of Jesus in the Scriptures and in liturgical actions for a rootless generation.

1.2.4 Theological resonances in the Anglican church

Terms such as the “Church” or the “Eucharist” have a plurality of meaning because of the breadth and diversity of traditions and forms of the catholic (universal) church. Which church? Which Eucharist? Throughout this thesis I will position myself in relation to the Anglican church and the history of Anglicanism. I will consciously have an Anglican bias to my thesis in discussions of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism as well as in examining Eucharistic liturgy in light of the Passover.

I will therefore draw on some writings of Anglican scholars in order to weave Anglican perspectives through my discussions on historical theology (Alister McGrath), general church history (Rowan Williams), Anglican church history (W. M. Jacob, Bryon Spinks), general Anglican liturgy (Dom Gregory Dix, Charles Hefling, Ronald Jasper, Geoffrey Cuming, Colin Buchanan), Kenyan Anglican liturgy (Grant le Marquand), South African Anglican liturgy (Michael Nuttall) and Reformation perspectives on the Eucharist (Alister McGrath, Richard France).

To conclude my thesis I will turn the Eucharistic lens from the Jewish Passover to focus

on my own faith community, a low-Anglican⁵⁸ church in Cape Town. I will discuss the various ways in which the Eucharist is celebrated in our midst, including the occasional ‘Seder-Communion’ in the week before Easter. From this viewpoint, I will affirm several aspects of general Eucharistic theology that others have argued before, *inter alia*, that the Eucharist is a gift from God and an invitation to give thanks (Gerrish), is eschatological in character (Wainwright), is a call to remembrance grounded in Biblical truth (Berkouwer), provides hope for Christian resistance to the violent discipline of the world (Cavanaugh), and finally, is an invitation to joyfully partake of the personal presence of Jesus in the unity of the body of Christ (Welker). As shall become clear, I am not claiming originality for these ideas, since as Gerrish notes, originality is not the greatest of theological virtues.⁵⁹

I hope that a return to the Jewish roots of the Eucharist may begin to redress an almost exclusive focus on the vertical relationship focus (God - Me) by reaffirming the place of the horizontal relationship (God – Community; Me in community), and even challenge the dichotomy between these two types of relationships. Finally, I seek to extend an earnest invitation to the wider church to intentionally discard the lens of anti-Judaism and encourage both the denominational-refugees and those fully immersed in their Confessional traditions to be more fully appreciative of our Christian-Jewish heritage and our roots that refresh.

⁵⁸ “Low Church” arose in the 18th century to describe theologians who sought more reform in the English church and a greater liberalisation of church structure. See Chapter 3.

⁵⁹ Gerrish, B.A. (1993) *Grace and Gratitude: The Eucharistic Theology of John Calvin*, ix

Chapter 2. Obstacles to reclaiming Jewish roots

There are several obstacles that hinder us drawing from our roots, whether they are Reformation roots, Patristic roots or Jewish roots. One obstacle is the problematic interpretative gap of history, between the strangeness of the past and the familiarity of the present, which has been discussed in the previous chapter. Yet there are other obstacles. In a fascinating essay by Abraham Heschel, *Protestant Renewal: A Jewish View*,¹ he argues firstly, that “Protestantism has often succumbed to an individualist Hellenized conception of the Christian tradition” and secondly, succumbed to “a romantic oversimplification of the problem of faith and inwardness.”² Thus are described two significant present-day obstacles: the de-judaizing of Christianity and anti-intellectualism. The latter obstacle of being anti-intellectual is displayed in some dominant strands of spirituality today.³ It can be manifested in Christians and churches as attitudes that are anti-academic and anti-history, viewing intellectual pursuits as detracting from or being unnecessary for the life of the church and true worship of God.

I have noticed how some of the younger movements of Christianity in South Africa today are nearly completely ignorant of the history of Christianity and their place in it. This ignorance seriously truncates their understanding of the diversity of what the church has looked like over the centuries and that others have gone before them, such as the Anglican reformers, who also believed that they were reforming the Church according to what they believed were the principles of the Church in its pristine youth before the church erred in matters of Faith.⁴

Compounding all of this is a significant obstacle that is rarely acknowledged, perhaps because it is so ingrained in the history of the church and our belief system: Christian anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism. This obstacle, in other words, is the de-Judaizing of Christianity that Heschel refers to. Vosloo, picking up on Heschel’s remarks, argues that Christianity’s engagement with its Jewish roots deserves serious theological reflection for the sake of the authenticity of Christianity in the 21st century.⁵

¹ Reprinted in his book, *The Insecurity of Freedom* (1972)

² Heschel, A. J. (1972) *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 171

³ Vosloo, R (2007) *Beyond Spirituality: Bonhoeffer & responses to the de-judaization of Christianity*, 84

⁴ Jacob, W.M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 9

⁵ Vosloo, R (2007) *Beyond Spirituality*, 84

To reclaim our Jewish roots so that they become roots that refresh, it is to this obstacle that I must therefore now turn.

2.1 Problematizing anti-Semitism in this study

I grew-up thinking that Jesus was just like me, a white-European male of English descent. My Sunday School upbringing formed this stereotype. Movies on Jesus portrayed him like this; always smiling and having piercing blue eyes. Attending church as an adult, the Jewish Jesus still rarely emerged in sermons, even though some of the better preachers sought to root what they had to say in an original cultural context. My picture of Jesus, made in my own image, has only been challenged since I became a member of one particular Anglican church where the minister is aware of the problem of anti-Semitism and our need to reconnect theologically with our Jewish roots. Yet before this my understanding of Christianity and Judaism would have confirmed Heschel's assertion that my faith reflected a "conscious or unconscious dejudaization of Christianity, affecting the church's way of thinking and its inner life..."⁶ It is worth quoting at some length the anti-Judaism stereotypes Heschel writes about for they have been ones that I have grown up with and have had to reassess, namely, that Judaism is

"a religion of law, Christianity a religion of grace; Judaism teaches a God of wrath, Christianity a God of love; Judaism a religion of slavish obedience, Christianity the conviction of free men; Judaism is particularism, Christianity is universalism; Judaism seeks work-righteousness, Christianity preaches faith-righteousness; The teaching of the old covenant a religion of fear, the gospel of the new covenant a religion of love. The Hebrew Bible is preparation; the gospel fulfillment. In the first is immaturity, in the second perfection; in the one you find narrow tribalism, in the other all-embracing charity."⁷

Why this discontinuity? Why are so many churches reluctant to acknowledge the richness of its Jewish heritage in understanding both Scripture and its traditions such as the celebration of the Eucharist? The esteemed Dietrich Bonhoeffer came to grapple with, among other things, the church's relationship with its Jewish roots while in prison towards the end of his life. He read and re-read the Old Testament. He realized that to

⁶ Heschel, A. J. (1972) *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 169

⁷ *Ibid*, 169

seek greater continuity with Judaism is to Christianize Christianity.⁸ Consequently, this question needs to be taken seriously as a first step in dealing with the research hypothesis; that we stand to gain from reclaiming the Jewish roots of the Eucharist.

Graham Keith provides an insightful survey of anti-Semitism throughout the ages. While his thesis is not exclusively about the church, since he also writes about modern European, Arab and Islamic forms of anti-Semitism, a significant portion is devoted to the sad history of Christian anti-Semitism. “Christian anti-Semitism” is a term Martin Goldsmith uses in the foreword to Keith’s book where he remarks,

“We cannot run away from the horrendous realities of our history, peppered not only with anti-Semitic attitudes but even the most fearful oppression, pogroms and persecution in the name of Jesus Christ. We inherit the history of our Christian forefathers and its consequences.”⁹

Keith begins his book by commenting that “The issue of anti-Semitism has yet to receive the prominence it merits within the Christian church.”¹⁰ Marvin Wilson, in his book, *Our Father Abraham*, would concur with this view as he comments,

“In today’s Church, the often sordid and self-indicting story of animosity, enmity, and strife directed by Christians toward Jews remains generally untold. Perhaps this is the case because the history of the Church is about as long as the history of the evils directed towards the Jews – if not in the overt acts of Christians, certainly in their guilty silence.”¹¹

However, there is an emerging trend to counter this. Marvin Perry and Frederick Schweitzer have noted a positive development

“that in the recent decade Christian thinkers, moved by past wrongs and an ecumenical spirit, have taken to examine the religious roots of anti-Semitism...and to rid Christian teachings and attitudes of a historic anti-Jewish bias.”¹²

The development of my thesis consequently has to be set against the background of the

⁸ Vosloo, R. (2007) *Beyond Spirituality*, 93

⁹ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause? A survey of anti-Semitism*, from the Foreword

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 1

¹¹ Wilson, M.R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*, 91

¹² Perry M & Schweitzer, F.M (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, x

long history of Christian anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, because if it is not acknowledged then my basic thesis will be undermined.

2.2 Defining anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism

According to Marvin Wilson, both “anti-Judaism” and “anti-Semitism” have occupied a major portion of Jewish history.¹³ The early church became increasingly anti-Judaism, and in the medieval and Reformation church was decidedly anti-Semitic. But why the distinction?

Anti-Judaism is a religious viewpoint towards Jews and Judaism. Anti-Semitism, on the other hand, is a term that originated in the later half of the 19th century and described anti-Jewish campaigns in Europe.¹⁴ It has negative racial connotations. It came to describe retrospectively the hostility and hatred directed towards Jews since before the Christian era but especially in the history of the church. Anti-Semitism and Anti-Judaism are twin phenomena that feed on each other; Christian hostility to Judaism has usually resulted in societal hostility towards Jews.¹⁵

In the New Testament the anti-Judaism polemic was an intra-family device used to win Jews to the new ‘Christian’ movement, whereas in the hands of the Gentiles in the second century onwards it became anti-Semitic.¹⁶ When the early Jewish believers addressed their non-believing Jewish brethren with the harshest words of the Jewish prophets, they did so in the tradition of Jewish self-criticism.¹⁷ This changed when the preaching passed into the hands of Gentile Christians who did not have a deep sense of solidarity with Israel.¹⁸ Thus a shift occurred in the early anti-Judaism attitude towards anti-Semitism, which became the negation of all things Jewish and a condemnation of all Jews.¹⁹ There are many dimensions to the vehement self assertion of Gentile Christians against and in relation to Judaism – theological, social and political, which will now be explored.

¹³ Wilson, M.R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 91

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 91

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 91

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 92

¹⁷ Skarsaune, O (2002) *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 262

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 262

¹⁹ Wilson, M.R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 92

2.3 The early church and Christian-Jewish believers

Donald P. Gray in his essay, *Jesus was a Jew*, comments that

“Christianity underwent a profound transformation which had wide-ranging repercussions on its relationship with its own Jewish heritage, a heritage which derived from Jesus himself and his first disciples, all of whom were themselves Jews.”²⁰

Very early on the church began asserting its unique message and identity. Consequently, towards the end of the first century significant discontinuity between the two traditions was already apparent even if a not insignificant continuity remained.²¹

2.3.1 Continuity and discontinuity

Politically and socially Judaism was a recognized religion, Christianity was not. Judaism had a defined position in society and enjoyed a certain amount of security.²² Religiously, the Jew had the security of hundreds of years of unbroken tradition.²³ Oskar Skarsaune notes the fragility of the Christian position once it became largely Gentile:

“The Christians were newcomers with no pre-history, and they were painfully aware of it. The rabbis handed on a tradition of scriptural exegesis which could claim the authority of generations of excellent teachers, reaching all the way back to Moses on Mount Sinai... And there was a basic consistency in their approach to the Bible: they not only recognized the Torah as divine, they also observed it.”²⁴

Thus it was impossible for a religious movement coming out of Judaism to expound Christianity without reference to and comparison with Judaism.²⁵ This required an encounter with Judaism on doctrinal grounds as well as from the standpoint of history and contemporary relations, whereas Judaism could be expounded without theological

²⁰ Gray, D.P, “Jesus was a Jew”, in Perry M & Schweitzer, F.M (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 12

²¹ *Ibid*, 13

²² Skarsaune, O (2002) *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 265

²³ *Ibid*, 265

²⁴ *Ibid*, 266

²⁵ Banki, J.H, “What and How Jews Teach about Evangelicals and Christianity”, in Rudin, A.J & Wilson, M.R. (Eds) (1987) *A Time to Speak*, 94

reference to, or comparison with, Christianity.²⁶

The early Christian-Jewish believers shared the same identity as their fellow Jews, but believed there was a fulfillment of Messianic promises in the person of Jesus. Consequently, an emphasis on the unique history, values, and beliefs of the “in group” became necessary in order to help separate the new, essentially Jewish movement from the surrounding community; but it later, also encouraged a defensive or polemical attitude toward the “others”.²⁷

This new Jewish-Christian grouping viewed Jesus as bringing the earlier history to a climax, yet in a manner that demanded a significant reinterpretation of that same history. Rowan Williams, in his book *“Why Study the Past? The Quest for the Historical Church”*, argues that the New Testament should be seen as a great attempt to write history as a consequence of revolution; maintaining one story, despite enormous breaks and redirections.²⁸ The New Testament is more than a narrative of what happened in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; it represents a set of memories that covers events of a great disruptive force.²⁹

He highlights that there is not a single grid for history, rather differing narratives that define a subject and persist through time, providing continuity.³⁰ There is also an element of discontinuity that is essential to history, which means that history and revolution are always born together. In relation to religious groups, Judith Banki remarks:

“Each group will tend to see the larger patterns of history in the light of how they have affected the destiny of the group. Obviously, Roman Catholics and Anglicans have different views of Henry VIII, just as Protestants and Catholics do of Luther.”³¹

Drawing on the French philosopher, Michel de Certeau, Williams argues that a revolution, a major rupture in a corporate experience such as the life, death and

²⁶ Banki, J.H, “What and How Jews Teach about Evangelicals and Christianity”, in Rudin, A.J & Wilson, M.R. (Eds) (1987) *A Time to Speak*, 94

²⁷ *Ibid*, 92

²⁸ Williams, R. (2005) *Why study the past?* 8

²⁹ *Ibid*, 7

³⁰ *Ibid*, 5

³¹ Banki, J.H, “What and How Jews Teach about Evangelicals and Christianity”, in Rudin, A.J & Wilson, M.R. (Eds) (1987) *A Time to Speak*, 93

resurrection of Jesus, provokes people to review and re-interpret their past.³²

It was this tension between continuity and discontinuity of ideas that deeply worried the earliest Christians. Jewish and Gentile Christians were aware that a familiar world had been broken apart and reassembled, rather tenuously at first and held together through paradox and skilful redefinition.³³ Heresy became anything that threatened to break the developing unity of ideas. Williams elaborates:

“Time and again, what they identified as heresy turns out to be, in one form or another, a system that reintroduces into a world rather precariously put together after great ruptures some kind of deep division – between Old and New Testaments, between Christ and God, between the divine and human natures of the Saviour.”³⁴

Yet early Christianity was characterised by considerable diversity.³⁵ Churches varied in their theology and praxis.

2.3.2 Diversity in the early churches

In regard to theology, apologetics began to come to the fore in the second century through writers such as Justin Martyr (c.100-165). A more formalised and recorded theological debate began in earnest once the church ceased to be persecuted.³⁶ Likewise, with praxis, the church had no one divine pattern of organisation, leadership or worship because the early church was a dynamic phenomenon.³⁷ Early Christianity embraced diversity as long as there was essential unity with respect to the person of Christ.³⁸ The reality of this diversity among the New Testament churches was so real that it exposes the naivety of any desire to “get back to the New Testament church” since one must ultimately ask, “To which church should we return?”³⁹

According to James Dunn, we find existing and competing in the early church Jewish Christianity, Hellenistic Christianity, Apocalyptic Christianity and early Catholicism.⁴⁰

³² Williams, R. (2005) *Why study the past?* 6

³³ *Ibid*, 8

³⁴ *Ibid*, 8

³⁵ Patzia, A. G. (2001) *The Emergence of the Church*, 144

³⁶ McGrath, A. E. (2001) *Christian Theology*, 8

³⁷ Patzia, A. G. (2001) *The Emergence of the Church*, 144

³⁸ Idea of Dunn, referred to by Patzia. A. G. (2001) *The Emergence of the Church*, 144

³⁹ *Ibid*, 144

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 144

Nevertheless, within this diversity there were developments that were considered unacceptably diverse; there were limits to diversity in theology and praxis. For Jewish Christianity it was Ebionitism; for Apocalyptic Christianity, Montanism; for Hellenistic Christianity, Gnosticism and for early Catholicism, rigid ecclesiastical institutionalism.⁴¹

Ebionitism was an early Christological heresy, which treated Jesus as a purely human figure, but recognized that he was endowed with charismatic gifts which distinguished him from other humans.⁴² Montanism was a prophetic movement originating in Phrygia around *CE.170*. A Christian named Montanus began uttering new prophecies, which he and his followers sought recognition for from the church. Montanus and his followers claimed that their movement was the beginning of a new age demonstrated by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The consequence of this was to diminish the significance of the events of the New Testament and the belief that the death and resurrection of Jesus had in fact ushered the new age; the church therefore rejected Montanism as heresy.⁴³

Gnosticism was a diverse and complex movement, not dissimilar to the modern New Age movement; it was viewed as a major challenge by many early Christian writers.⁴⁴ Salvation through hidden knowledge or *gnōsis* was stressed. Cosmological dualism was an essential feature: Gnostics argued that there was a radical dualism between the ‘physical’ and the ‘spiritual’, with matter being inherently evil.⁴⁵ From an historical-theological point of view it is interesting to note that Gnosticism has been a permanent shadow of the church and, as Vosloo notes, “seems to loom large at the moment.”⁴⁶ The Eucharist has not been unaffected by this shadow for it has become in many churches an individual, hidden spiritual act with the emphasis being on spiritual communion with God. The dimension of a tangible, visible, gathered meal-community in communion with each other and grounded in an earthly reality has been undermined, among many things, by our disconnection with our Jewish roots. But this will be discussed in greater detail later. The parting of ways between Jewish and Gentile

⁴¹ Patzia, A. G. (2001) *The Emergence of the Church*, 144

⁴² McGrath, A. E. (2001) *Christian Theology*, 356

⁴³ González, J. L. (1984) *The Story of Christianity*, Vol. 1, 76

⁴⁴ McGrath, A. E. (2001) *Christian Theology*, , 15

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 188

⁴⁶ Vosloo, R (2007) *Beyond Spirituality*, 84

Christians and the process of dejudaization within the church, in the opinion of Heschel, “paved the way for abandonment of origins and alienation from the core of its message.”⁴⁷

2.3.3 Parting of ways

By the end of the first Century there had been a parting of ways between Christianity and Judaism and a split between Jewish and Gentile Christianity.⁴⁸ This division between Christianity and Judaism brought with it the depreciation and eventual extinction of the Jewish Christianity - to which the New Testament writings make plain, the world-wide church owes its very existence.⁴⁹ The reasons for this parting are many and complex, some of which have already been discussed with the issue of continuity and discontinuity. Yet there were other contributing factors.

The Jewish persecution of Jewish Christians was a factor in the split: all who deviated from Pharisaic norms were no longer welcome within the community.⁵⁰ Jewish Christians also refused to fight in the two Jewish revolts against Rome (CE 66-73 and 132-135) and thus compromised their allegiance to the Jewish community and state.⁵¹ Coupled with this was the dramatic event of the fall of Jerusalem, which denoted the end of Jewish political independence and a particular religious way of life and further coloured the emerging church’s interpretation of history.⁵² With the destruction of the temple a reformulated Rabbinic Judaism grew to dominate, which eventually came to consider all Jewish Christians *personae non gratae* in relation to the synagogue.⁵³ But by then the church had become overwhelmingly Gentile, and so reasoned that there was no more need for the support of the Jewish root.⁵⁴ It is the judgement of Heschel, that “the children did not arise and call the mother blessed; instead, they called the mother blind.”⁵⁵

Judaism and Jewish Christianity were consigned to the scrapheap of church history, behind Christianity’s advancement. Marvin Wilson remarks that “the tearing away

⁴⁷ Heschel, A. J. (1972) *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 169

⁴⁸ Patzia, A. G. (2001) *The Emergence of the Church*, 145

⁴⁹ Moltmann, J (1993) *God in Creation: A new theology of creation and the Spirit of God*, 295

⁵⁰ Wilson, M.R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 88

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 88

⁵² Williams, R. (2005) *Why study the past?* 7

⁵³ Wilson, M.R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 88

⁵⁴ Paul’s warning to the gentile believers about pride in Romans 11:17-24 went unheeded. *Ibid*, 88

⁵⁵ Heschel, A. J. (1972) *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 169

from Jewish roots resulted in the Church defining itself largely in non-Jewish terminology.”⁵⁶ Heschel also notes this reality of discontinuity to Christian theology and is worth quoting at length for the force of his argument:⁵⁷

“The Christian message, which in its origins intended to be an affirmation and culmination of Judaism, became very early diverted into a repudiation and negation of Judaism; obsolescence and abrogation of Jewish faith became conviction and doctrine; the new covenant was conceived not as a new phase or disclosure but as abolition and replacement of the ancient one; theological thinking fashioned its terms in a spirit of antitheses to Judaism. Contrast and contradiction rather than acknowledgment of roots relatedness and indebtedness, became the perspective.”

The abrogation of the Jewish faith became conviction within the first few hundred years of the birth of the Christian gentile church. As Christianity distanced itself and dis-identified itself from Judaism it also developed an anti-Semitic tradition and doctrine that in later centuries would have tragic consequences.⁵⁸ Nevertheless the parting of ways between Judaism and Christianity did not happen overnight. Jewish scholar, David Rokeah asserts that the last friendly literary venture to win over the Jews was Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho*, written in about the mid-second century.⁵⁹

At this same time there was a hardening among official Jewish attitude towards Christianity, evidenced by the Sages instructing Jews not to discuss their faith with Christians.⁶⁰ Keith argues that before the second century the church could still have staked a claim to represent true Judaism in a pluralistic religion. Later, a shift occurred and an anti-Jewish attitude formed an integral part of the testimony and self-identity of the Christian church.⁶¹ We turn now to illustrate the continuity of this theme from the early church to the present day.

2.4 Marcion

Rowan Williams argues that the identity of the early church was held together through

⁵⁶ Wilson, M.R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 89

⁵⁷ Heschel, A. J. (1972) *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 169

⁵⁸ Perry, M. & Schweitzer, F. M. (1994) *Jewish-Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, iv

⁵⁹ David Rokeah cited in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 92

⁶⁰ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 92

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 93

paradox and skilful redefinition.⁶² Heresy consequently became anything that threatened to undermine the developing unity of ideas. In this regard, Marcion is portrayed as one of the first serious heretics of the church. He was banished from the church and yet continued to develop a network of churches around his heretical doctrines.⁶³ Marcion challenged the weakness of the situation where the church was uneasily claiming to be a new faith, yet at the same time was dependent on the Hebrew Bible.⁶⁴ He wanted a Christianity free from any vestige of Judaism.⁶⁵ Heschel argues that Marcion saw his task as that of “showing the complete opposition between the Hebrew Bible and the Gospels.”⁶⁶

Yet the effect of his theology would have been to marginalise the Jews and not denigrate them.⁶⁷ In combating Marcion, the mainstream church, however, accentuated its anti-Judaism.⁶⁸ The church countered Marcion’s criticism by emphasising it was because the Jews were particularly prone to sin that God had dealt with them differently in history; espousing an unsatisfactory people rather than an unsatisfactory God.⁶⁹ For example, Tertullian – and similarly, Irenaeus and Justin - argued that the food taboos and the requirement to offer sacrifices were God’s way of thwarting the Jewish partiality to gluttony and idolatry.⁷⁰ While it cannot be entirely blamed for it, Christian apologetics against Marcion was accompanied by a heightened hostility towards the Jews.⁷¹ From a historical theological perspective, although the apostle of discontinuity was expelled from the church, Marcion remains a formidable menace to the modern church. Thus Heschel, writing over four decades ago, concludes that “in the modern Christian community the power of Marcionism is much more alive and widespread than is generally realized.”⁷²

2.5 The argument from history

A second and central strand to the early church’s anti-Judaism theology was its trump

⁶² Williams, R. (2005) *Why study the past?* 8

⁶³ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 93

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 93

⁶⁵ Heschel, A. J. (1972) *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 170

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 170

⁶⁷ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 94

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 94

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 94

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 95

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 95

⁷² Heschel, A. J. (1972) *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 170

card - the argument from history. Keith summarises it as follows:

“Christians made this the centrepiece of their argument, contending that the hand of God had been made manifest in history since the time of Jesus in various calamities that had befallen the Jews and the successes that had attended the Christian gospel in the gentile world.”⁷³

Robert Michael in his essay, *Antisemitism and the Church Fathers*,⁷⁴ argues that Judaism and Jews served several important functions for the Church Fathers as they re-interpreted history with respect to the existence of the church; *inter alia*:

- The failures of the Judaism of the past was utilized to supply Christianity with an unimpeachable history and with a prestige the new church otherwise would not have possessed.⁷⁵
- Rendering the persistent Jews hateful was done in order to keep the faithful from being attracted to Judaism: the patristic writers employed the words of the Christian scriptures against the Jews and the texts of the Jewish Prophets themselves to falsify the whole of Jewish moral history - announcing that the Jews are, have always been, and will always be evil.⁷⁶
- Antisemitism in the form of a powerful, pervasive anti-Jewish theology supplied the church with a crucial aspect of Christian self-identity.⁷⁷
- Provided a way for the church to explain away the contrary evidence in the emerging history that the kingdom of God had arrived in Christ by making Jews the scapegoat and cause of the continued evil at work.⁷⁸

Examples of the anti-Judaism sentiment of the Church Fathers abound. Origen, in *Contra Celsum*, posits the history of Christianity as the most powerful evidence of its truth over and above both miracles and Old Testament prophecy.⁷⁹ His commentary on scripture was coloured by an attitude that was not favourable towards Judaism; he was anti-Judaism. For example, although Origen comments heavily on almost every Pauline

⁷³ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 95

⁷⁴ Included in Perry, M & Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*

⁷⁵ Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” in Perry, M & Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 106

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 106

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 107

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 107

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 96

verse he quite clearly censors texts that are laudatory of the Jews.⁸⁰ Thus John A McGuckin in his essay, *Origen on the Jews*, remarks that “Paul’s doctrine of the priority of Israel has quite clearly and deliberately been overlaid.”⁸¹ Furthermore, “Origen has clearly been ready to alter the tenor of St Paul himself, his master theologian, to firm up the apologetic at those instances the Apostle might be seen to have given too much away because of his love and respect for Judaism.”⁸²

In the Byzantine Empire, this anti-Jewish triumphalism developed further still, so much so that it went beyond the bounds of religion to influence legislation. The anti-Jewish effort was a major preoccupation of Byzantine intellectuals.⁸³ Even the anti-Jewish trend of the Byzantine legislation is exclusively an echo of the anti-Jewish thrust of the Church: it has no independent source.⁸⁴

The Church Fathers often used a process called value-inversion to destroy Judaism’s historical and Biblical credibility, attacking the traits and ideas identified as Jewish (covenant, monotheism, synagogue, kosher rules, circumcision, chosen, Promised Land, Jerusalem and Temple).⁸⁵ For example, Eusebius of Caesarea, under the reign of the Emperor Constantine, juxtaposed the political and religious destinies of both Christians and Jews. He wrote that

“they themselves [Jews] would be deprived of their ancient worship, robbed of the independence of their forefathers, and made slaves of their enemies instead of being free men.”⁸⁶

Augustine argued that this would be the situation to the end of the age:

“to the end of the seven days of time, the continued preservation of the Jews will be a proof to believing Christians of the subjection merited by those who, in the pride of their kingdom, put the Lord to death.”⁸⁷

⁸⁰ McGuckin, J. A. “Origen on the Jews” in Wood, D (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism*, Studies in Church History, Vol 29, 12

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 12

⁸² *Ibid*, 13

⁸³ Langer, N.R.M. “Jews and Christian in the Byzantine Empire”, in Wood, D (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism*, Studies in Church History, Vol 29, 26

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 22

⁸⁵ Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” in Perry, M & Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 108

⁸⁶ Eusebius, Dem. Ev. 1:1 in *ibid*, 98

⁸⁷ Augustine, *Adv. Faust. Man.* 12:12 in Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” in Perry, M

He also wrote that the Jews no longer bore witness to their positive relationship to God's existence and goodness but were likened to Cain – to serve as a warning of disobedience and deicide.⁸⁸ The Jews became paragons of evil and satanic adversaries.⁸⁹ They were considered an apostate and immoral nation who had been cast off by God into utter darkness.⁹⁰

Gregory of Nyssa wrote that the Jews were

“Murderers of the Lord, killers of the prophets, enemies and slanderers of God; violators of the law, adversaries of grace, aliens to the faith of their fathers, advocates of the devil, progeny of poison snakes,...whose minds are held in darkness, filled with the anger of Pharisees, a Sanhedrin of satans. Criminals, degenerates, enemies of all that is decent and beautiful.”⁹¹

Likewise, Judaism, in the words of Hilary of Poitiers, was

“ever mighty in wickedness;... when it cursed Moses; when it hated God; when it vowed its sons to demons; when it killed the prophets, and finally when it betrayed to the Praetor and crucified our God Himself and Lord...”⁹²

This value-inversion in the re-interpretation of history and appropriation of Christian meaning is clearly demonstrated by Pseudo-Cyprian:

“Moses they cursed because he proclaimed Christ,... David they hated because he sang of Christ,... Isaiah they sawed asunder shouting glories,... John they slew revealing Christ,... Judas they loved betraying.”⁹³

To labour this point about the extent of anti-Judaism theology in the early church, Robert Michael somewhat wryly draws our attention to the fact that in the extant works of the outstanding North African theologian, Tertullian, there contains anti-Jewish diatribes in twenty-seven of his thirty-two works.⁹⁴

The anti-Jewish theology was not limited to written works alone, where the intellect of

& Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 99

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 108

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 109

⁹⁰ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew: Twenty centuries of Christian anti-Semitism*, 28

⁹¹ *In Christi Resurrectionem* 46:685-686, in Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” 109

⁹² *Ibid*, 110

⁹³ *Ibid*, 110

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 111

the Fathers and their influence may have been limited to other Christian intellectuals. It was preached from the pulpit. Eusebius of Alexandria began every paragraph in the first half of his sermon on the resurrection with

“Woe to you wretches,... you were called sons and became dogs. Woe to you, stiff-necked and uncircumcised, from being the Elect of God you became wolves, and sharpened your teeth upon the Lamb of God, etc”⁹⁵

Jerome’s contribution to the development of anti-Judaism theology was to link Jews with Judas, thus in a sermon he preached that

“Christ is saying: ‘Judas betrayed Me, the Jews persecuted and crucified Me’... In particular, this is the story of Judas; in general it is that of the Jews. Judas, in particular, was torn asunder by demons – and the people as well... Judas is cursed, that in Judas the Jews may be accursed. Whom do you suppose are the sons of Judas? The Jews. The Jews take their name, not from Juda who was a holy man, but from the betrayer... From this Iscariot, they are called Judaeans... Iscariot means money and price... Synagogue was divorced by the Savior and became the wife of Judas, the betrayer.”⁹⁶

The anti-Jewish literature reflects an official theology of Judaism which is essentially negative. At the same time it makes its own contribution to the development and perpetuation of hostile stereotypes, which had practical consequences for the treatment of Jews.⁹⁷ The hostile image of Jews which pervades the Byzantine Christian literature crossed the barrier that divided the learned elite from the Christian in the street, particularly through the vehicle of the sermon.⁹⁸

There is far more that could be said about the growth of anti-Semitic theology in the early church. The seeds of the particularly vehement charge of deicide against the Jews occurred as early as the latter half of the second century in the writing of Melito of Sardis.⁹⁹ An excerpt is included below from *On Pascha* to illustrate the strong anti-Jewish sentiment already present so early on in at least part of the church:

⁹⁵ Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” in Perry, M & Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 110

⁹⁶ Efrosom (n.15) 15 *Ibid*, 112

⁹⁷ Langer, N.R.M. “Jews and Christian in the Byzantine Empire”, in Wood, D (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism*, Studies in Church History, Vol 29, 26

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 27

⁹⁹ Wilson, S.G in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 100

You [Jews] were giving the beat,
He was being nailed up;
You were dancing,
He was being buried
You were reclining on a soft couch,
He is grave and coffin.
He who hung the earth is hanging;
He who fixed the heavens has been fixed;
He who fastened the universe has been fastened to a tree;
The Sovereign Lord has been insulted;
The God has been murdered;
The King of Israel has been put to death by an Israelite right hand.¹⁰⁰

When Melito wrote this Christendom had hardly been conceived. The early church as opposed to the later medieval church did not have as great an interest in the charge of deicide.¹⁰¹ The early church rather spoke in general terms of the blindness of the Jews and in this respect was nearer to the New Testament emphasis. The point being that Melito provides a framework in which the concept of deicide would later become attractive. The shift occurred when the church changed from being the persecuted church to a Christendom recognised and backed by the Roman Empire. The foundations had thus been laid for a Christendom in which ‘Christian’ powers assumed a divine mandate for lording it over the Jews. We now turn to the enigma that is John Chrysostom.

2.6 John Chrysostom and the Christian Roman Empire

The fourth century was a watershed moment for the church with the emergence of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, and the cessation of hostilities towards the church. The church still had to contend with several later emperors who effectively gave their support to the Arian heresy and with Julian, who reverted to vigorously championing paganism. John Chrysostom (CE 349 – 407), wrote and spoke in this tumultuous era of changing politics and power struggles both within and without the church. One hundred years after his death John Chrysostom was given the name, “the

¹⁰⁰ *On Pascha* 559-581 in Wilson, S.G in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 101

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 103

golden-mouthed” because, as Justo González writes,

“that was a title he well deserved, for in a century that gave the church such great preachers as Ambrose of Milan and Gregory of Nazianzus, John of Constantinople stood above all the rest, a giant above the giants of his time.”¹⁰²

Furthermore, González argues,

“for John Chrysostom the pulpit was not simply a podium from which to deliver brilliant pieces of oratory. It was rather the verbal expression of his entire life, his battlefield against the powers of evil, an unavoidable calling that eventually led to exile and to death itself.”¹⁰³

When John was consecrated bishop of Constantinople in CE 398, he set about reforming the life of the clergy, sorting out the finances of the church and taking seriously the care of the flock, which at that time was largely unattended.¹⁰⁴ Exposing the hypocrisy of rich clergy and the wealthy hierarchy of Christian nobility gained him both the respect of many and the hatred of others, such as Aelia Eudoxia, the wife of Emperor Arcadius.¹⁰⁵ He was finally exiled and died during his banishment. González poignantly describes John’s death:

“When he perceived that death was near, he asked to be taken to a small church by the roadside. There he took communion, bid farewell to those around him, and preached his briefest by most eloquent sermon: ‘In all things, glory to God. Amen.’ ”¹⁰⁶

There is another side to the golden-mouthed, John Chrysostom, that González neglects to bring to light. In a growing acknowledgment of the anti-Judaism theology bias of the church, John has been described as “perhaps the most bitter of the Church Fathers in regard to the Jews,”¹⁰⁷ and his polemic as “easily the most violent and tasteless of the anti-Judaic literature” within the patristic era.¹⁰⁸

In a recent edition of his works, the editor, Paul Harkins wrote that Chrysostom’s anti-

¹⁰² González, J. L. (1984) *The Story of Christianity: Vol I*, 194

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 194

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 196

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 197

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 200

¹⁰⁷ Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” in Perry, M & Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 113

¹⁰⁸ Reuther in Wilson, S.G in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 108

Jewish theological position “is no longer tenable. Even if he was motivated by an overzealous pastoral spirit, many of his remarks are patently anti-Semitic. For these objectively unchristian acts he cannot be excused, even if he is the product of his times.”¹⁰⁹

John Chrysostom delivered eight homilies between the autumn of CE 386 and 387 entitled *Eight Orations against the Jews*. He was not directly addressing Jewish people but was rather aiming at Christians who were participating in Jewish ceremonies, notably the autumn Jewish New Year and spring Passover.¹¹⁰ He wanted a clear division between the church and the synagogue. Keith remarks:

“It was not that Chrysostom believed the church was losing members to the synagogue; for many of the Judaizers saw no incongruity in participating in the life of the church as well as observing certain Jewish festivals and rituals. But their readiness to subscribe to the Jewish calendar as opposed to the ecclesiastical calendar...was tantamount to a public declaration that they felt closer to the presence and power of the divine in the synagogue than in the church.”¹¹¹

Chrysostom declared that

“if the ceremonies of the Jews move you to admiration, what do you have in common with us? If the Jewish ceremonies are venerable and great, ours are lies. But if ours are true, as they are true, theirs are filled with deceit.”¹¹²

Chrysostom attempted to vilify the synagogue, arguing that to go there was no better than visiting a brothel, a robber’s den, or any indecent place.¹¹³ Addressing the so called Judaizers who revered the synagogue, he said,

“This is the reason above all reason why I hate the synagogue and abhor it. They have the prophets and do not believe them; they read the sacred writings but reject their witness – and this is the mark of men guilty of the greatest

¹⁰⁹ Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” in Perry, M & Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 114

¹¹⁰ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 109

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, 109

¹¹² Chrysostom, *Adversus Judaism*, 48:852 in *Ibid*, 113

¹¹³ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 33

outrage.”¹¹⁴

Chrysostom argued that the Jews would be crucified through history because they had crucified Christ.¹¹⁵ Echoing Melito’s thought, he even abandoned the idea that Jews could be converted:

“You did slay Christ, you did lift violent hands against the Master, you did spill his precious blood. That is why you have no chance for atonement, excuse or defence. In the old days your reckless deeds were aimed against his servants, against Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. Even if there was ungodliness in your acts then, your boldness had not yet dared the crowing crime. But now you have put all the sins of your fathers into the shade. Your mad rage against Christ, the Anointed One, left no way for anyone to surpass your sin. That is why the penalty you now pay is greater than that paid by your fathers.”¹¹⁶

A sympathetic view of Chrysostom is that the problem he was trying to confront was much broader and more complex than he knew how to respond to. It was the continuing struggle the church had with continuity and discontinuity, or as Rowan Williams comments, of trying to write history as a consequence of revolution; maintaining one story, despite enormous breaks and redirections.¹¹⁷

Wherever Jewish Christians or Judaisers lived, they did so in various ways that invariably questioned ecclesiastical authority. They appealed to Jesus, who observed Jewish laws, customs and traditions. Herein lay the problem: if church authorities argued that Jewish rites had become a dead letter, the presence of a lively Jewish Christian community with its own merger of traditions appeared to put lie to that argument.¹¹⁸

Chrysostom’s sermons did not have the desired effect, but instead had the reverse effect by sparking interest in the practices of the Jews.¹¹⁹ Keith argues that his writings served as justifications for more direct manifestations of violence against the Jews in a later age when Christianity indisputably became the dominant religion.¹²⁰ Robert

¹¹⁴ Chrysostom, *Adversus Judaism*, 48:852 in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 113

¹¹⁵ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 33

¹¹⁶ Chrysostom (note 87) 6:2 in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 113

¹¹⁷ Williams, R. (2005) *Why study the past?* 8

¹¹⁸ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 111

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, 111

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 112

Michael argues that even within Chrysostom's lifetime, he was responsible for a change in the attitude of Emperor Arcadius towards the Jews that is more than historical coincidence.

Arcadius conferred certain privileges to the Jews in 396 and 397 but with the arrival of Chrysostom began issuing anti-Jewish edicts; when Chrysostom was expelled in 404, Arcadius re-established a policy favourable to the Jews.¹²¹ According to Chesler,

“At the close of the third century, the Jew was no more than a special type of unbeliever; by the end of the fourth, the Jew was a semi-satanic figure, cursed by God, marked off by the [Christian] State.”¹²²

From then on Jews were increasingly segregated, harassed, impoverished, repeatedly exiled from nations, jailed, tortured, and murdered – all in the name of Christ.¹²³ In the name of Christ: synagogues, Torah scrolls, and living Jews were burned; great centres of Jewish learning were destroyed; Jews were falsely accused of crimes they did not commit, were killed and their property was confiscated¹²⁴

In this John Chrysostom contributed a profound sense of rage to the anti-Jewish polemic.¹²⁵ It is perhaps unfair to Chrysostom to attribute all this as a consequence of his writings. The meaning of religious texts is not exhausted by their original setting. What happens to them later can be more significant than their first life. Keith argues that “Christendom required a belief in a rival religion which it had clearly vanquished” and in medieval times this extended to “a recognition of a devil (or devils) incarnate, whose whiles threatened the church's order and security.”

The Jews were made scapegoats for both roles.

Perhaps one last thing to note is the effect of the church's anti-Judaism teaching, not only on the church's order and security, but on civil law and order. Robert Michael summarises it as follows:

“It was the Christian Roman emperors who, under the powerful influence of

¹²¹ Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” in Perry, M & Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 115

¹²² Chesler, P (2003) *The New Anti-Semitism*, 32

¹²³ *Ibid*, 32

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 33

¹²⁵ Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” in Perry, M & Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 115

their faith and of the church, were the first whose Jewish policy was based on discrimination, that is, that Jews deserved less protection under the law than Christians.”¹²⁶

These theologically orientated law codes classified Jews as strangers and unbelievers; deprived them of civil rights, subjected them to special discrimination; punished conversion to Judaism by exile, expropriation or death; prohibited marriage between Christian and Jew; and prevented Jews from being in a position of authority over a Christian.¹²⁷ An example of this link between church and state is clearly demonstrated in the laws of Emperor Theodosius II:

“No Jew...may receive honours and dignities of office. For it is abominable that an enemy of God and of the Roman laws shall be empowered to execute these laws... and have the power to judge and pronounce sentence against Christians, many of whom are priests of the sacred religion, thereby insulting our faith.”¹²⁸

Another common refrain in the law was “Whatever differs from the faith of Christians, is contrary to Christian [Roman] law.”¹²⁹ Thus once the church became the religion of the Roman Empire, the concept of divine election was also understood in political terms.¹³⁰ Perhaps a gracious way to draw this section on the Church Fathers to a close is to highlight some thoughts from Gavin I. Langmuir’s essay, *The Faith of Christians and Hostility to Jews*:

“By 400 there was great hostility to Jews, but also great variation in attitude to Jews. On the one hand, there were attacks on synagogues, Ambrose’s support of them, and the intense hostility of John Chrysostom’s homilies. On the other hand, the fact that most Christians in Antioch were friendly to Jews was what provoked Chrysostom’s anger... This teaching did not express what all Christians believed either then or later, but it decisively influenced ecclesiastical teaching, preaching and legislation about Judaism and Jews in the long run because it was elaborated by individuals who came to be considered Fathers of

¹²⁶ Michael, R. “Antisemitism and the Church Fathers” in Perry, M & Schweitzer, F. M. (Eds) (1994) *Jewish Christian Encounters over the Centuries*, 116

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 117-118

¹²⁸ CT, *Novella*, 3 in *Ibid*, 118

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 118

¹³⁰ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 31

the Church.”¹³¹

2.7 Onwards and downwards from the early church

The focus of this thesis is the relationship between the Eucharist and the Passover in the early church. It is therefore not within the scope of this argument to examine in great detail anti-Judaism in the medieval and post reformation churches. Suffice to say, post-Chrysostom and the rise of dominant Christendom, there was a hardening of attitudes toward the Jews, especially in the late medieval period.

The stereotype of Jews as Christ-killers and as a despised, subservient, sub-human people beyond hope of atonement took root in ordinary people. Jews were accused of murdering Christian children to incorporate their blood into unleavened bread for Passover.¹³² As a consequence Jews were victimised for supposedly committing such atrocious acts. Jews were accused of blaspheming the Christian faith in their sacred literature.¹³³ As a consequence copies of the Talmud were burned. Jews were even blamed for causing the Black Plague that swept Europe.¹³⁴ Jews throughout Western Europe were massacred by the Crusading armies off to fight a Holy War to free Jerusalem. As Christian knights, monks and commoners set out on their holy mission, they took revenge on the Jews living in Christian lands.¹³⁵

Manifold ways were sought to exploit the social inferiority of the Jews, to which the teaching of the church pointed.¹³⁶ There were those who hated the Jews because they had been taught that God hated them. Cohn-Sherbok draws on the writing of an extant religious work as evidence of this teaching, which reads:

More bestial than naked beasts
Are all Jews, without a doubt.
Many hate them, as do I
And God hates them, as well I wist,

¹³¹ Langmuir, G. I. “The Faith of Christians and Hostility to Jews” in Wood, D (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism*, Studies in Church History, Vol 29, 81

¹³² Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 38

¹³³ *Ibid*, 38

¹³⁴ Jews supposedly poisoned wells, thus causing the Black Plague. The fact that Jewish communities were also decimated by the plague seemed to escape notice. *Ibid*, 38, 49

¹³⁵ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew: Twenty centuries of Christian anti-Semitism*, 39

¹³⁶ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 147

And everyone must hate them indeed.¹³⁷

Something of the sentiment of the age is expressed by an eminent French Inquisitor, Bernard Gui, in a manual for fellow-inquisitors:

“The perfidious Jews try, when and where they can, secretly to pervert Christians and drag them to Jewish perfidy, especially those who were previously Jews and converted and accepted baptism and the Christian faith, especially those who are of special concern or related to them. It has therefore been decreed [by the church] that just as one should proceed against Christians who go over or return to the Jewish rite... as against heretics, so one should proceed against those who aid them as against those who aid heretics.”¹³⁸

The Inquisition sought to purge the Roman Catholic church of heretics, especially *conversos* (Jews who had converted to Christianity) who were suspected of still practicing Jewish customs.¹³⁹ Even Humanism with its slogan *ad fontes* fared little better in regard to anti-Judaism. Renaissance humanist, Erasmus, wrote to an Inquisitor, “If it is Christian to hate the Jews, here we are all Christians in profusion.”¹⁴⁰

It would be convenient for Protestant theology if anti-Semitic attitudes in Christianity could only be linked to the teaching and doctrine of the papacy and Church of Rome. However, the great Reformation that showed a renewed interest in the text of Scripture, including the Hebrew Bible, as well as patristic writings, did little to improve the situation of Jewish-Christian relationships.

The diatribes of the later Luther against the Jews are notorious. Roland Bainton, wryly remarks that this is why biographers of Luther prefer to be brief in dealing with this period.¹⁴¹ When news came to Luther from Moravia that Christians were being induced to Judaize, he came out with a vulgar polemic. He recommended that all the Jews be deported to Palestine and failing that, they should be compelled to earn their living on the land, their synagogues should be burned, and their books including the Bible should be taken from them.¹⁴² His position was not motivated by racial hatred as

¹³⁷ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 42

¹³⁸ Gui, B. *Manuel de l'inquisiteur*, 2:6-7 in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 135

¹³⁹ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 84

¹⁴⁰ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 148

¹⁴¹ Bainton, R. (1978) *Here I Stand*, 373

¹⁴² Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 73

much as his *theological* belief that the persistent rejection of God's revelation of Himself in Christ was the supreme sin and consequently, the centuries of Jewish suffering were a mark of divine displeasure.¹⁴³ Thus Luther wrote:

“Dear Christian, be on your guard against the Jews, who...are consigned by the wrath of God to the devil, who has not only robbed them of a proper understanding of Scripture, but also of ordinary human reason, shame, and sense, and only works mischief with Holy Scripture through them. Therefore, they cannot be trusted and believed in any other matter either, even though a truthful word may drop from their lips occasionally. Therefore, wherever you see a genuine Jew, you may with a good conscience cross yourself and bluntly say: “There goes the devil incarnate.”¹⁴⁴

Luther viewed it as a pastor's duty to warn his flock against the Jews and to urge the secular ruler to take appropriate action.¹⁴⁵ The appropriate action Luther advocated was, *inter alia*, that synagogues be burnt to the ground and if anything survived that it was to be buried so that no trace remained; that the houses of Jews be destroyed, because of the significance of the home in their religion; that Jewish prayer books and Talmud be confiscated; that Jews be denied the right to travel on the highways of the Empire; and finally, that all able-bodied Jews be required to undertake hard manual labour.¹⁴⁶

Luther finally concluded:

“To sum up, dear princes and nobles who have Jews in your domains, if this advice of mine does not suit you, then find a better one so that you may all be free of this insufferable devilish burden – the Jews.”¹⁴⁷

Keith reflects on this side to the great Reformer saying: “Whatever Luther's motives, it was ironic that he should propose one of the most extensive and humiliating of anti-Jewish measures ever suggested up to this time.”¹⁴⁸ Although some anti-Semitic measures did result from Luther's activity, it was not on the scale he had envisaged: that would have to wait until the Nazis in the twentieth century were able to make capital

¹⁴³ Bainton, R. (1978) *Here I Stand*, 380

¹⁴⁴ *Luther's Works*, 47:213-4 in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 159

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 162

¹⁴⁶ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 73

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 73

¹⁴⁸ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 169

out of the popular perception of Luther as an anti-Semite and German nationalist.¹⁴⁹ The Nazis promoted a particular image of Luther to rationalize a stance they had taken up on other grounds. Keith concludes, arguing that

“Luther had examined contemporary Judaism after his own fashion, and found it desperately wanting. In some respects he had told the general public what they already wanted to believe for perhaps different reasons. Luther simply added theological rationale for anti-Jewish sentiments.”¹⁵⁰

Luther was not alone in his Reformation thinking towards the Jews. He had a notable parallel in the more moderate Martin Bucer who only wanted no new synagogues to be built, but his underlying rationale was the same as Luther’s.¹⁵¹ Thus Luther and Bucer are both representative of a hardening of attitudes towards the Jews in the first generation of the Reformation. There were other Lutherans who sought a more positive perspective of the Jewish question, such as Justus Jonas and Andreas Osiander. But given the anti-Semitic cultural climate of the day, Osiander’s work had to be published anonymously.¹⁵²

The Reformed tradition of John Calvin was by comparison far more sympathetic towards the Jews, although it did not translate into political change. Calvin insisted that when Scripture talked of the Jews and their sins, it mirrored the sins of all humankind. Thus Calvin argued that:

“The *world*, in general, while not daring to scorn God utterly or at least rise up against him to his face, devises a means of worshipping God’s shadow in place of God: just so it plays a game over the prophets.”¹⁵³

From a theological basis, Reformed teachers insisted on the total depravity of humankind and that all humans, both Jews and gentiles stood guilty before God and without excuse.¹⁵⁴ Some Reformed writers also began studying unchartered biblical prophecy and discovered that there was still a future for the Jews which had yet to be fulfilled.¹⁵⁵ In contradiction to Luther’s attitude, Calvin believed that it was improper

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 169

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 179

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, 176

¹⁵² *Ibid*, 177

¹⁵³ Calvin, Commentary on St John, 1:11 [italics mine] in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?*

¹⁵⁴ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 178

¹⁵⁵ Calvin, Commentary on St John, 178, in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?*

to despair of the salvation of the Jews:

“When the gentiles have come in, the Jews will at some time return from their defection to the obedience of faith. The salvation of the whole of Israel of God, which must be drawn from both, will thus be completed, and yet in such a way that the Jews, as the first born in the family of God, may obtain the first place.”¹⁵⁶

So Luther and Calvin were both products of their time as much as they were the great reformers of their age. The Reformation fell in a period of intense anti-Semitic activity; from the latter part of the fifteenth century a series of expulsions had been enacted against the Jews in Western Europe. This anti-Jewish agitation did not diminish after the Reformation, which reflects the weakness of the Reformer’s theology in this regard. Roland de Corneille sums up the Reformation in relation to Christian anti-Semitism thus,

“Any opportunity which Protestantism had to rectify the past, or at least to establish a segment of the Church on a new footing, was lost. This widespread failure to seize the second chance that history offered contributed, in a very real sense, to the church’s inability in Germany under Hitler to stir from its dumb silence.”¹⁵⁷

The Anglican church is not excluded from this charge of failing to seize the second chance. Jews first settled in England in the eleventh century at the time of the Norman Conquest, but were always considered as foreigners and were eventually expelled from England by King Edward 1 in the thirteenth century (1290).¹⁵⁸ It was not until the mid-seventeenth century (1656) that Oliver Cromwell was able to reopen England to them.¹⁵⁹ Yet even then Jews were not viewed as equal citizens. The entrenched relationship between the Anglican church and State played a significant role in this.

A Naturalization Bill was submitted to parliament in 1753 to enable Jews to acquire land. It was initially adopted in both the House of Lords and the Commons but six

¹⁵⁶ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated Without a Cause?* 180

¹⁵⁷ De Corneille, R. (1966) *Christians and Jews: The Tragic Past and the Hopeful Future*, 35

¹⁵⁸ d’Uzer, V. “The Jews in the Sixteenth-Century Homilies” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 269

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 277

months later was repealed.¹⁶⁰ Cohn-Sherbok remarks that:

“In this rejection of Jewish emancipation, the dark forces of traditional Christian prejudice against the Jews came to the surface: medieval conceptions of the demonic Jew polluting Christian society thwarted all efforts to grant the Jewish people the full rights of man.”¹⁶¹

Jews were also prevented from being admitted to the English Parliament until the mid-nineteenth century. Between 1830 and 1858 fourteen separate attempts were made to remove this legal disability against Jewish people.¹⁶² The House of Lords dismissed twelve of the proposed Jewish relief bills, the most important influence on the voting being Episcopal opposition and the debate being dominated by speeches from bishops and archbishops.¹⁶³ This lengthy campaign has provided the context for most discussions of Anglican attitudes to Judaism in the Victorian period.¹⁶⁴

The questions which Anglicans were confronted by in the Jewish relief bills were wide-ranging and predominantly theological not political in nature.¹⁶⁵ This included arguments about the nature of a Christian society – notice the historical resonances here - and the role of an established church within it. In this regard William Howley, Archbishop of Canterbury, opposed the bill because his thinking was shaped by the doctrine of the indissolubility of the relationship between Church and State.¹⁶⁶ Howley’s successor, J.B. Sumner opposed the bill on the basis that England was a particular beneficiary of divine blessing and that admitting Jews to parliament would incur the wrath of God because the Jews were under God’s judgment.¹⁶⁷

Samuel Wilberforce, bishop of Oxford, and son of William Wilberforce (who championed the emancipation of slaves), asserted that it was only because the law of England was based on the law of God as revealed in Jesus Christ that Parliament was

¹⁶⁰ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 119

¹⁶¹ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 119

¹⁶² Knight, F. “The Bishops and the Jews 1828-1858” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 387

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, 388

¹⁶⁴ Gill, S. “In a Peculiar Relation to Christianity: Anglican Attitudes to Judaism in the Era of Political Emancipation” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol.29, 399

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 400

¹⁶⁶ Knight, F. “The Bishops and the Jews 1828-1858” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 388

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 390

commissioned to make the laws that governed half the globe.¹⁶⁸ Samuel Wilberforce is noted as being the most hostile of the anti-emancipationist bishops during this period.¹⁶⁹ He believed that the Jews were devoid of genuine religious feeling and were solely motivated by the making of money, “a race immersed in the pursuit of gain.”¹⁷⁰ He told the House of Lords in 1848 that

“Judaism rejected the Messiah, cast itself into utter darkness, and became an empty and unmeaning, but false and blasphemous faith...Between the Christian and the Jew there was a gulf as wide as eternity itself.”¹⁷¹

One of the few outspoken supporters of the Jewish relief bill was Richard Whately, Archbishop of Durham. He reframed the argument, not in terms of the character of the Jews, but that the presence of Jews in Parliament was likely to prove less of a threat to the Established Church than the presence of Nonconformists and Roman Catholics, since Jews did not attempt to mix Judaism into Christianity.¹⁷² Yet even he viewed the Jews to be under divine judgment:

“I look on that nation as an extraordinary monument of the fulfillment of prophecies, and as paying the penalty of their rejection of the Messiah.”¹⁷³

In a rare demonstration of counter-voices, Connop Thirlwall, bishop of St David’s, dismissed these justifications of deicide and argued that,

“If there is any reason to dread that divine vengeance may be impending over us [the English], it would be rather on account of the crimes of which this nation [England] was guilty towards the ancestors of this people in times past, than of any indulgence which we may show them in the future.”¹⁷⁴

Benjamin Disraeli succeeded in angering all sides of the debate by concluding that

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 390

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 391

¹⁷⁰ Knight, F. “The Bishops and the Jews 1828-1858” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 392

¹⁷¹ Hansard, ser. 3, 93, col. 1380. in Gill, S. “In a Peculiar Relation to Christianity: Anglican Attitudes to Judaism in the Era of Political Emancipation” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol.29, 404

¹⁷² Knight, F. “The Bishops and the Jews 1828-1858” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 395

¹⁷³ Hansard, ser.3, 106, 26 June 1849, col. 892. in *Ibid*, 395

¹⁷⁴ Gill, S. “In a Peculiar Relation to Christianity: Anglican Attitudes to Judaism in the Era of Political Emancipation” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, 405

“Jesus of Nazareth, the Incarnate Son of the Most High God, is the eternal glory of the Jewish race.”¹⁷⁵

At the beginning of the twentieth century British hostility was again aggravated, this time by an influx of Jews from eastern Europe into London. The Bishop of Stepney in 1902 compared them to a conquering army that would eat the Christians out of house and home.¹⁷⁶ Even the sinking of the *Lusitania* in 1915 led to further anti-Jewish hostility.

Evidence of anti-Judaism attitudes within Anglicanism is not obvious and tends only be revealed in topical responses to issues such as the Jewish relief bill. The more recent movement to rediscover the Jewishness of Jesus has also been telling. A Jewish scholar in the early twentieth century, Joseph Klausner, spent many years writing his magnum opus on Jesus of Nazareth, in which he maintained that Jesus was born a Jew and died a Jew.¹⁷⁷ When the book was published in Jerusalem in 1921 it unleashed a scandal among both Jews and Christians. Anglican missionaries in Jerusalem demanded that the archbishop dismiss Dr Danby, the missionary who had translated *Jesus of Nazareth* into English.¹⁷⁸ Their motivation? It was a book that was “tainted with heresy”, in that it portrayed Jesus, “our Saviour as a kind of Reform rabbi, as a mortal, and as a Jew who has nothing at all to do with the Church.”¹⁷⁹

I have brought to the fore the attitude of anti-Judaism found in the background to theology throughout the history of the church. From the early church, through the rise of Christendom in the Christian Roman Empire, to the medieval age and the Reformation, there is also a darker narrative to the story of Christianity.

The debate in the Anglican church in the mid-nineteenth century serves to show that condemning the past attitude to Jews was one thing, overcoming contemporary prejudice was another since the image of the Jew as alien and materialistic was widespread in Victorian society.¹⁸⁰ This highlights the need to continually come to

¹⁷⁵ Hansard, ser.3, 93, cols 1361-4 in Gill, S. “In a Peculiar Relation to Christianity: Anglican Attitudes to Judaism in the Era of Political Emancipation” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 405

¹⁷⁶ Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1992) *The Crucified Jew*, 186

¹⁷⁷ Oz, A. (2005) *A Tale of Love and Darkness*, 58

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 58

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 58

¹⁸⁰ Gill, S. “In a Peculiar Relation to Christianity: Anglican Attitudes to Judaism in the Era of Political Emancipation” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, 403

terms with past and present Christian anti-Semitism.¹⁸¹

Recognition of this anti-Judaism and anti-Semitic narrative is almost non-existent in traditional treatments of church history. At most, the parting of ways in the early church and, as an aside, the killing of Jews in the crusades, is usually mentioned.¹⁸² In light of the whole scope of church history, de Corneille sadly concludes,

“As each succeeding chapter of history was written, Christians added, like bricks, new layers of persecution, false charges and degradations to the wall of separation. The bricks were cemented by the mortar of Jewish suffering.¹⁸³ ...It took Hitler’s atrocities to tear the veil that had sanctified hostility towards Jews and blinded Christian and agnostic historians alike to the reality of Jews; and the great price for that liberation was paid by Jews, not Christians.”¹⁸⁴

By contrast Banki notes that “The image of the institutional church as oppressor is a formidable one in Jewish history books” but is somewhat balanced by “a conscientious effort to acknowledge righteous Christians, both clergy and lay persons, who defended and protected Jews.”¹⁸⁵

Consequently I concur with both Keith and Wilson’s theses that awareness of anti-Semitism has yet to receive the prominence it merits within the Christian church. Does this represent a self-perpetuating blind-spot in our treatment of church history and theology?

The relationship between the two faiths has become more not less pressing because of the issues raised by the religiously pluralistic society of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.¹⁸⁶ Pope John Paul II reportedly dedicated much of his papacy to improving relations with Jews. In 1998, eleven years after it was first promised, the Vatican apologised to Jews on behalf of the Roman Catholic community for failing to speak out

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*, 403

¹⁸² See for example, Chadwick (1967), *The early Church*; Kelly (1968), *Early Christian Doctrines*; González (1984), *The Story of Christianity*, McKechnie (2001) *The First Christian Centuries*, and Patzia (2001) *The Emergence of the Church*.

¹⁸³ De Corneille, R. (1966) *Christians and Jews*, 53

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 92

¹⁸⁵ Banki, J.H. “What and How Jews Teach about Evangelical and Christianity” in Rudin, A.J & Wilson, M.R. (Eds) (1987) *A Time to Speak*, 97

¹⁸⁶ Gill, S. “In a Peculiar Relation to Christianity: Anglican Attitudes to Judaism in the Era of Political Emancipation” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, 407

against the Nazi holocaust.¹⁸⁷ In his letter accompanying the apology, the Pope said the holocaust remained an indelible stain on the twentieth century.¹⁸⁸ This official document, however, lacked a critical historical analysis – to the disappointment of many Jewish leaders – and neither raised nor answered the question of whether the Catholic church as an institution was complicit in any Nazi wrongdoings.¹⁸⁹

In December 2003, a combined letter was issued by the senior leadership (ie. primate, bishops, moderators, etc) of the Anglican Church of Canada, Baptist Convention, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Presbyterian Church in Canada, Reformed Church in Canada, Salvation Army and the United Church of Canada against anti-Semitism:

“We acknowledge with sadness and regret, and with no little shame, the historic burden of persecution, which Jews have borne throughout western history; a burden all too often inflicted by Christians, who have maligned Jesus' own people in Jesus' name. We challenge all churches, parishes, congregations and people of good will to find ways and means to expose and eradicate anti-Semitism within and from Canadian society.”¹⁹⁰

South Africa has remained relatively less affected by anti-Semitic behavior than most other major Diaspora communities, yet has not been above reproach. The old apartheid South Africa was also tarnished with anti-Semitism. Harry Oppenheimer was nicknamed “Hogenheimer” and demonized in some Nationalist newspaper cartoons.¹⁹¹ Before and during the Second World War anti-Semitism was “fairly rife among members of the National Party and one of its leading members, E. H. Louw, a subsequent Minister of Foreign Affairs, in 1939 introduced a private members bill to stop Jewish immigration but it failed.”¹⁹² In 1941 Jews were excluded from membership of the National Party in the Transvaal, but allowed membership again in 1951.¹⁹³

Jewish relations were strained again in 1957 when South African Jews were blamed for

¹⁸⁷ Celestine Bohlen, *New York Times*, 22nd March 1998

¹⁸⁸ new.bbc.co.uk/olmedia

¹⁸⁹ Celestine Bohlen, *New York Times*, 22nd March 1998

¹⁹⁰ *A Church Leaders' Letter Against Anti-Semitism*, Anglican Church of Canada, December 2003

¹⁹¹ Comment by Mike Harris, head of history and teacher at Pinelands High School

¹⁹² Wilson, M. & Thompson, L. (1971) *The Oxford History of South Africa*, Vol II, 389

¹⁹³ *Ibid*, 389

not dissociating themselves from Israel's critical attitude to apartheid in United Nations forums. National newspapers told the Jews to explain their loyalties.¹⁹⁴ And even under a new political dispensation, South Africa in 2006 recorded its highest number of anti-Semitic incidents since the commencement of detailed record keeping two decades ago.¹⁹⁵

However, it is difficult to generalize from this to the prevalence of anti-Semitic attitudes in South African society today and especially in the church. On paper, all forms of racism are dead in South Africa, and certainly racist behavior or activity both inside and outside the church is normally not blatant. Yet we know that racist attitudes can be deeply ingrained, often at a subconscious level, and so do not change simply because an official stance to it does.

The same will be true of anti-Semitic attitudes in our churches. It may not be public, but will be reflected in the nuances of sermons and liturgies, discussions on the Jewish roots of Christianity and stereotypes of Jewish people passed on in our community.¹⁹⁶ Consequently, Christian anti-Semitism remains an obstacle of unknown significance to the church. Yet it must be challenge in order to engage with roots that refresh and deepen our faith in "Jesus of Nazareth, the Incarnate Son of the Most High God; the eternal glory of the Jewish race."¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Re. Nationalist newspapers, October to November 1967; *Ibid*, 389

¹⁹⁵ *South Africa Antisemitism Report 06*, Institute of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism, Tel Aviv, University, 11th March 2007

¹⁹⁶ I was recently having lunch with a family in our church, when the conversation turned to where one could get the best deal on suits. The wife mentioned a Jewish-owned shop and hooked her index finger over her nose, saying 'You know what I mean.' She did it twice during the course of our conversation. I understood the implication.

¹⁹⁷ Hansard, ser.3, 93, cols 1361-4 in Gill, S. "In a Peculiar Relation to Christianity: Anglican Attitudes to Judaism in the Era of Political Emancipation" in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 405

Chapter 3. The Anglican church and the Eucharist

The aim of this thesis is to use a historical theological approach to engage with Jewish meal traditions, Jesus' table-fellowship and meal parables in order to find roots that refresh our understanding of the Eucharist. The rationale of a historical theological framework has been argued in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 has outlined the historically problematical twin phenomena of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, which can still potentially prevent us from being open to an engagement with our Jewish roots. This chapter, Chapter 3, will examine my social location. I am part of a faith community which has the label "Anglican." As an Anglican I am part of a worldwide Christian denomination that has its roots in the Reformation. But how influential are these roots? What has defined an Anglican historically and is it the same thing today? How have Anglicans historically celebrated the Eucharist? What theological strands are found in the Eucharistic liturgy of the Anglican church today and, in particular, the South African Anglican church? It is with an understanding of this historical Anglican context that my thesis will emphasize aspects of the Eucharist that an engagement with Jewish roots can refresh.

The Anglican church was a product of the Reformation and political contexts of the sixteenth century. Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, was instrumental in determining the form Anglicanism was to take, not by writing confessional statements or significant theological treaties, but through his authoring of the Book of Common Prayer in 1549 and 1552. All expressions of Anglicanism forever after defined itself in relation to the concept of the Prayer Book, whether being faithful to the Reformed tradition or seeking different approaches.

The Prayer Book today, in its many liturgical and theological derivatives, contains the liturgy of Anglican worship, including that of the Eucharist. Yet the Prayer Book is not the same one in South Africa as in Kenya or the United States. Herein lies the historic evolution of ideas in differing contexts in different eras. In some instances it is still possible to discern both the historical and contemporary liturgical forms which are anti-Judaism. In light of historical theological approach of this thesis it is important to have some idea of the history of the Anglican church as well as the historical points of continuity and discontinuity of the Eucharistic liturgy with Reformation and early church roots.

3.1 A brief history of the Anglican church

We need to understand the history of the Prayer Book to understand the phenomenon of Anglicanism in its various expressions around the world in Anglican churches.¹² The story of the Prayer Book clearly reflects the story of Anglicanism.³ Anglicanism describes a pattern of Christianity which arose in England, Wales and Ireland during the sixteenth century. According to the Anglican church historian, W.M. Jacob, those engaged in the reform held the belief they were reforming the Church

“according to the principles of the Church in its pristine youth, during the first four centuries of its existence, before the ‘Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria , and Antioch... erred as also the church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith’ (Article XIX).”⁴

The English looked to the early centuries of the church to purge the church of errors. Consequently they saw the English church being in succession to the ‘primitive church’. This succession was also in regard to the British Church, which predated the mission of Augustine. Augustine was a Benedictine monk from the same monastery as Gregory the Great (Pope from 590 to 604) and was sent by Gregory to convert the Angles in CE 599.⁵ Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury. He took the Benedictine Rule with him to the British Isles⁶ and helped to Romanize the British church.⁷ Thus the Reformation was merely the starting point, whereby the Church in England separated from the Roman jurisdiction. It then had to “develop a distinctive form as a national, reformed church standing in the historic succession of the universal church.”⁸ It maintained Episcopal succession, three orders of ministry, an ordered liturgy, and doctrines rooted in Reformed theology and the councils of the early church.⁹

Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, is credited as the great architect of the

¹ Williams, R in the Foreword to Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, xiii

² The “Anglican Church” is actually a global federation of Anglican regions or provinces officially known as the “Anglican Communion”.

³ Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 2

⁴ Jacob, W.M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 9

⁵ González, J. L. (1984) *The Story of Christianity*. Vol I, 236

⁶ *Ibid*, 242

⁷ Jacob, W.M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 10

⁸ *Ibid*, 1

⁹ *Ibid*, 1

Church of England. He drew on the thinking of continental Reformers - Lutheran, Swiss and Reformed - that preceded him, but his own scholarship gave the Church of England its distinctive character: he secured the authorization of the English Bible, created the liturgy of the Common Book of Prayer, drew up the Anglican confession (the Thirty-nine Articles), and supported the break with the papacy.¹⁰ Cranmer was burnt at the stake for heresy on 21 March 1556 during the reign of Queen Mary, who was Roman Catholic and tried to reestablish Roman Catholicism in England.

In particular, it was his Book of Common Prayer (1549 and 1552) which has exercised greater influence than any continental liturgy and until recently was the most powerful unifying force in the Anglican Communion.¹¹ Cranmer deliberately fashioned the first Prayer Book, the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, to take the Reformed side in the theological controversies of his day. Charles Hefling remarks:

“Indeed it was because the first prayer book did not go far enough in this direction that Cranmer went back to work and a second edition, with important changes, was issued in 1552. This was not the last time Cranmer’s work would be revised for theological reasons. Some of the later alterations were important, but not until the mid-twentieth century were any of them major.”¹²

As recently as the 1920s the Book of Common Prayer could still be said to function as an instrument of unity throughout the Anglican church.¹³ Other churches have found unity in confessional documents, or doctrinal formularies, or a systematically articulated theology, or the pronouncements of magisterial authorities; the Prayer Book was unique among the books of Christendom in having become the touchstone for the ethos and the unity of the Anglican church.¹⁴ But later in the twentieth century it had become, according to Hefling,

“an emblem of identity and independence for a member of the Anglican Communion to have its own version of the Book of Common Prayer, locally compiled and often locally produced.”¹⁵

¹⁰ Ferguson, S. B. & Wright, D. F. (Eds) (2003) *Anglicanism*, 21

¹¹ *Ibid*, 22

¹² Hefling, C. “Introduction: Anglicans and Common Prayer” in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 3

¹³ *Ibid*, 3

¹⁴ *Ibid*, xiii

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 4

There are historical reasons for this, which shall be discussed shortly, but the end result of these revisions has been the undermining of Anglican unity. Michael Nuttall, bishop of Natal, notes:

“It is important to bear in mind that this work was touching the nerve-centre of the Anglican ethos, for unlike some other branches of the Christian church, the Anglican Communion has no single focus of authority or dogma, nor is its memory governed by the historical role of some key reformer. Its identity takes a more intangible form, which is deeply dependent upon the influence and binding effect of its liturgical worship.”¹⁶

From originating in England as a fifteenth century Reformed response to the Roman Catholic Church, Anglicanism in subsequent centuries spread to other regions of the world through colonial expansion and missionary activity. There was reluctance to give complete authority to these indigenous churches, especially African churches, with the consequence that some churches broke away.¹⁷ By the 1960s many of the overseas dioceses, such as those in the United States, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa, were effectively independent of the Church of England.¹⁸ These countries had their own procedures for electing bishops, had sufficient bishops of their own to consecrate new bishops and were developing their own patterns of government and discipline.¹⁹ ‘Anglican’ had come to mean something more than ‘English’ or ‘European.’

Various groups developed within Anglicanism roughly known by the terms “Low church”, “Broad church” and “High church” but also variously as Puritan, Laudian, Latitudinarian, Evangelical, Tractarian, Anglo-Catholic, and Liberal.²⁰ Adherents of the “High church” tradition used the term “Low church” to be pejorative. It arose in a series of doctrinal and ecclesiastic challenges to the Established Church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, where “High Church” groups began to refer to theologians and politicians who sought more reform in the English church and a greater liberalisation of church structure as “Low Church.” The name was similar to the term “Latitudinarian”, which designated Anglicans who were prepared to concede much

¹⁶ Nuttall, M. “The Province of Southern Africa” in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 317

¹⁷ Jacob, W.M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 7

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 153

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 153

²⁰ Ferguson, S. B. & Wright, D. F. (Eds) (2003) *Anglicanism*, 22

latitude in matters of discipline and faith. “High Churchmen” came to be applied to those who took a high view of the exclusive authority of the Established Church, of episcopacy and of the sacramental system. The term received fresh impetus in the nineteenth century through the Tractarian or Oxford Movement and also came to be known as “Anglo-Catholics”. The Oxford Movement emphasized the authority of tradition, apostolic succession, and communion as the centre of worship.²¹ Consequently, “Low Churchman” became the equivalent of “Evangelical”. “Latitudinarian” was replaced by “Broad Churchman”, to designate those who stressed the ethical teaching of the Church rather than value of orthodoxy. The revival of pre-Reformation ritual by many of the High Churchman resulted in them being labelled “Ritualist” but in a somewhat contemptuous sense.

What is evident from this brief overview of groupings is the extreme diversity of theological perspectives that has historically evolved and comes under the banner of Anglicanism. Furthermore, these labels do not always work to adequately describe the theological dynamics. The Revd John Stott comments,

“I try not to forget... that the three broad Christian schools of thought (catholic, liberal and evangelical) are not always mutually exclusive, for along with their divergences there are points of convergence.”²²

Stott gives the example of Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1961 to 1974, who called himself an Anglican Catholic but was nevertheless committed to the gospel of justification by faith alone.²³ Another example given is of John Habgood, Archbishop of York from 1983 to 1995, who thought of himself as a conservative Liberal; open to the search for truth (having a critical mind) but being rooted in God’s revelation and in the created world (having a believing heart).²⁴

With such diversity of theological opinions, often not neatly boxed as John Stott illustrated, Bishop Stephen Neil, emphasizes the important role the Common Prayer Book has had to play,

“It was the aim of the Anglican reformers that there should be one form of worship for the whole realm, in which all would join.... It was this acceptance

²¹ González, J. L. (1984) *The Story of Christianity*, Vol. 2, 272

²² Stott, J. (1999) *Evangelical Truth: A Personal Plea for Unity*, 9

²³ *Ibid*, 8

²⁴ *Ibid*, 8-9

of liturgical uniformity which, more than anything else, kept in being the unity of the Anglican Communion through the period of its growth from an insular body to a worldwide fellowship of churches. For this reason liturgical change is more significant in this fellowship than in almost any other Christian communion.”²⁵

The more recent adoption of revised liturgies that differ from country to country, some not based on the Prayer Book at all, seriously weakened the common liturgical bond and historically Protestant theology of the Anglican church.²⁶ So much so that it was touted at the beginning of 2007 that there would be a schism in the Anglican Communion.

But this threat of schism is not new to Anglicanism. Anglicans have continually sought to define the relationship between the Church of England and the Anglican churches around the world. In the nineteenth century the pressure mounted for a forum that could bring together all the Anglican bishops from around the world. The first so-called Lambeth Conference was held in September 1867 as a response to the threat of disunity in the Anglican church on issues like the differences of opinion between the High Churchmen, Broad Churchmen and Evangelicals on the importance of the relationship between colonial churches and the See of Canterbury.²⁷ This gathering of bishops was at the invitation of the archbishop of Canterbury; it was not a synod, but a private meeting with no reporters and no record of the discussion.²⁸

The demand grew to hold another conference and in 1878 the second Lambeth Conference was called. On the agenda was the discussion about the best mode of maintaining union among the various churches of the Anglican Communion.²⁹ It was agreed again that the meeting would be a private affair.³⁰ The next conference was held in 1897 to coincide with the twelfth centenary of Augustine’s landing in Kent.³¹ The conference in 1908 made an important contribution to the development of liturgy by

²⁵ Neil, S, *Liturgical Continuity and Change in the Anglican Churches*, in Martin, D & Mullen, P. (1982) *No Alternative: The Prayer Book Controversy*, 1

²⁶ Ferguson, S. B. & Wright, D. F. (Eds) (2003) *Anglicanism*, 22

²⁷ Jacob, W.M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 158-159

²⁸ *Ibid*, 165-166

²⁹ *Ibid*, 238

³⁰ *Ibid*, 239

³¹ *Ibid* 243

accepting a proposal for a revision of the Prayer Book.³²

The European War of 1914 - 1918 delayed the following Lambeth Conference until 1920.³³ In light of the war, there was a renewed motivation for seeking ways for nations and peoples to coexist; the establishment of the League of Nations illustrated this – at Lambeth the focus was on the issue of reunion between denominations.³⁴ The general theme of the 1930 Lambeth Conference was the faith and witness of the church, and the unity of the Anglican Communion. The “Anglican Communion” was defined as:

A fellowship, within the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, of those duly constituted dioceses, provinces, or regional Churches in communion with the see of Canterbury, which have the following characteristics in common:

- a. They uphold and propagate the Catholic and Apostolic faith and order as they are generally set forth in the Book of Common Prayer as authorized in their several Churches;
- b. They are particular or national churches, and, as such, promote within each of their territories a national expression of Christian faith and worship; and
- c. They are bound together not by a central legislative and executive authority, but by a mutual loyal sustained through the common counsel of the Bishops in conference.³⁵

Because of the 1939 - 1945 War, the conference was only held in 1948. It was again noted that the Prayer Book “has been and is, so strong a bond of unity throughout the whole Anglican Communion that great care must be taken to ensure that revisions of the Book shall be in accordance with the doctrine and accepted liturgical worship of the Anglican Communion.”³⁶

By 1952 when the next conference was called, there was a growing awareness of the revisions, renewed emphasis on the Eucharist and of alternative liturgies in various

³² Jacob, W.M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 249

³³ *Ibid*, 254

³⁴ *Ibid*, 255-256

³⁵ *The Lambeth Conference 1930: Encyclical Letter from the Bishops with Resolutions and Reports* (1930), 55

³⁶ Jacob, W.M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 280-281

countries.³⁷ A statement from the conference highlighted the weakening unifying force of the Prayer Book and consequently, of a common doctrine:

“Loyalty [to the Prayer Book] may easily be overstated... Now it seems clear that no Prayer Book... can be kept unchanged for ever, as a safeguard of established doctrine... Our unity exists because we are a federation of Provinces and Dioceses of the One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, each being served and governed by a Catholic and Apostolic Ministry, and each believing the Catholic faith. These are the fundamental reasons for our unity.”³⁸

Thus it was not until the 1960s that the Anglican Communion achieved its present form as a multi-national and multi-racial association of Episcopal churches in communion with the see of Canterbury.³⁹ Yet along with the evolution throughout history, a distinct paradigm shift has occurred in Anglicanism since the English Reformation of the sixteenth century: the appeal to the unifying place of the devotionally expressed Reformed doctrine of the early Prayer Book has been replaced with an appeal to ecclesiastical unity - ‘One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church’. So the nature of what it means to be an Anglican is still being debated. Rowan Williams in his address to the General Synod in February 2007, said

“the debate has forced us to ask what we mean by speaking and thinking about ourselves as a global communion. When 'gentlemen's agreements' fail, what should we do about it? Now there is a case for drawing back from doing anything much, for accepting that we are no more than a cluster of historically linked local or national bodies. But to accept this case...would be to unravel quite a lot of what both internal theological reflection and ecumenical agreement have assumed and worked with for most of the last century.”⁴⁰

The Anglican Communion is now seeking to find common ground by drawing up an ‘Anglican Covenant’, motivated by a real desire to see the interdependent life of the Communion strengthened by a covenant which would articulate common foundations, and set out principles by which the life of Communion in Christ could be strengthened and nurtured. It was also recognized, however, that the proposal for a covenant was

³⁷ Jacob, W.M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 281

³⁸ *Ibid*, 282

³⁹ *Ibid*, 1

⁴⁰ Williams, R, *Presidential Address at General Synod*, ACNS4259 (26 February 2007)

born out of a specific context in which the Communion's life was under severe strain.⁴¹ While the Primates met in Dar es Salaam in February 2007 to discuss various challenges facing the Anglican Communion, the media picked up on the precariousness of the historical unity of Anglicanism.

Under the banner line, "Anglican Church on verge of Schism", Jonathan Petre commented that

"the worldwide Anglican Church was battling to survive last night after talks broke down amid acrimony during the final stages of the primates' meeting in Tanzania...They have until the end of today, the last day of the meeting near Dar es Salaam, to reach agreement before issuing an official communiqué, which is supposed to reflect the consensus of the primates."⁴²

One of the events during this intense periods, which is of particular interest to my thesis, was the refusal of some bishops to share in the Eucharist with their fellow bishops. A group of primates, representing more than half of all Anglicans in the world, refused to partake of the Eucharist in the Anglican cathedral in Zanzibar.⁴³ The dissenting primates explained their absence as follows:

"We each take the celebration of the Holy Eucharist very seriously. This deliberate action is a poignant reminder of the brokenness of the Anglican Communion. It makes clear that the torn fabric of the Church has been torn further. It is a consequence of the decision taken by our provinces to declare that our relationship with the Episcopal Church is either broken or severely impaired."⁴⁴

Some would disagree with the stance they took, arguing that it is possible to overcome differences through the very act of communion. Berkouwer argues that it is paradoxical to unite at the communion table while living in ecclesiastical separation; true unity can only be achieved through confessional unity.⁴⁵ These two contrasting views, the Eucharist as a means of ecclesial unity and the Eucharist as the expression of doctrinal

⁴¹ Gomez, D. (Chair) (January 2007) *The Report of The Covenant Design Group meeting*, Nassau

⁴² Petre, J. "Anglican Church on Verge of Schism", Religion Correspondent, Zanzibar, *London Telegraph*, 19/02/2007

⁴³ Petre, J. *Ibid*,

⁴⁴ CONN/100207. *Sitting at the Lord's Table: Primates explain absence at Holy Eucharist*, Friday, 16 February 2007, Tanzania

⁴⁵ Berkouwer, G.C. (1981) *The Sacraments*, 284-296

unity, will be discussed later in greater detail. Charles Hefling, Anglican minister and scholar, reflecting on the historical development within the Anglican church, comments:

“The endeavor to hold diversity of practice and expression together with unity of faith, hope, and love is not, in the nature of things, an endeavor that is ever finished once and for all.”⁴⁶

3.2 The Eucharist in South African Anglicanism

At this juncture of my thesis I will narrow the discussion of Anglicanism to South Africa, its Prayer Book and celebration of the Eucharist. This is the specific Eucharistic liturgy and practice that I will engage with in light of the Jewish meal context and meal-parables of Jesus to discuss potential roots that can refresh. But first one must acknowledge the many complex and often contradictory influences evident in the present Eucharistic liturgy.

The first South African version of the prayer book was the *South African Book of Common Prayer*, introduced in 1954.⁴⁷ Unfortunately it was a cause of disunity and not unity as many low church congregations were unable to use it for doctrinal reasons. A revision was sought and a new prayer book was published in 1989 called *An Anglican Prayer Book* (APB). The *Anglican Prayer Book* stands alongside the *South African Book of Common Prayer* (1954).⁴⁸ Both the 1989 and 1954 books are grounded in the English *1662 Book of Common Prayer*. The *1662 Book of Common Prayer* is itself the heir to the three Prayer Books of the English Reformation: the 1549 and 1552 Prayer Books written by Thomas Cranmer and the 1559 Prayer Book, reintroduced by Queen Elizabeth I, after the reign of Queen Mary.⁴⁹ The *1662 Book of Common Prayer* is enshrined in the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA).⁵⁰

The 1662 Prayer Book retained much of the same content as the 1559 version but some concessions were made to specifically Puritan and Laudian views.⁵¹ The Laudians were a group at the time that wanted to reintroduce pre-Reformation practices in the Church

⁴⁶ Hefling, C. “Introduction: Anglicans and Common Prayer” in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 6

⁴⁷ General Preface, *An Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) Church of the Province of Southern Africa, 9

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 9

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 9

⁵⁰ Nuttall, M. “The Province of Southern Africa” in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 315

⁵¹ Buchanan, C, Lloyd, T. & Miller, H. (1980) *Anglican Worship Today*, 26

of England (the term “Laudian” has dropped from use). When the English prayer book was again revised in the twentieth century it reflected the growing influence of the liturgical movement.⁵² From an historical theological perspective it is important to note that the work of this revision in South Africa also reflected the worldwide liturgical renewal, most notably in the Roman Catholic Church as a result of decisions reached at its Second Vatican Council.⁵³ Another influence was the charismatic renewal, which has had a marked impact on the Anglican church in Southern Africa.⁵⁴

In South Africa attempts were made in the formulation of the 1989 *Anglican Prayer Book* to accommodate different theological preferences and convictions.⁵⁵ Michael Nuttall, chairman of the Liturgical Commission which produced the 1989 Anglican Prayer Book, reflects on this process:

“Particular care was taken to meet evangelical concerns in a province that is historically ‘high church’ rather than ‘low church’ in its main emphasis. Theological breadth – catholic, evangelical, charismatic, and liberal – was aimed at in order to achieve balance and to accommodate these various convictions.”⁵⁶

These sensitivities and influences are most evident in the Eucharistic liturgy. Five Eucharistic prayers are given to accommodate different theological preferences. Two are taken from the Church of England, one is borrowed with permission from the Roman Catholic canon, another is based on the ancient consecration prayer attributed to Hippolytus (c.170-236), and pride of place is given in the First Eucharistic Prayer to an indigenous product.⁵⁷ The influence of the liturgical movement can be clearly seen in the overall structure and language of the Eucharist, including seeking a sense of continuity with the early, apostolic church. One result of this influence has been to reintroduce the Good Friday *Reproaches*, historically an anti-Judaism liturgy, back into the South African Anglican Prayer Book.

3.2.1 Reintroduction of the Reproaches

Easter is the crux of Christian theology and identity, the high point of the Christian

⁵² Buchanan, C, Lloyd, T. & Miller, H. (1980) *Anglican Worship Today*, 27

⁵³ Nuttall, M, “The Province of Southern Africa” in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 320

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 319

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 318

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 318

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 320

calendar and the primary inspiration of all Eucharistic liturgies: it was on the night that Jesus was betrayed that he took bread and gave thanks. Unfortunately the liturgy associated with Easter in many church traditions has reflected an attitude of Christian anti-Judaism. Jews were scorned and denigrated in the liturgy spoken or sung during the *Adoration of the Cross*, particularly in what is known as the *improperia* or *Reproaches*.

The *improperia* appears in the *Pontificale* of Prudentius (846-61), gradually came into use throughout Europe in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and was incorporated into the Roman *Ordo* in the fourteenth century.⁵⁸ Included in the Good Friday liturgy was the use of a litany of intercessions, where the Church was asked to pray for various categories: catechumens, the afflicted, heretics, schismatics, and Jews.⁵⁹ In the fifteenth century the adjective “perfidious” was added to qualify “Jews”.⁶⁰

The Reformation brought about a significant realization of the sinfulness of all humanity, the subsequent responsibility of all people for Christ’s death and that the Jews had only been an instrument of it.⁶¹ The *Reproaches* were therefore suppressed by Thomas Cranmer when he authored the first Anglican prayer book in the sixteenth century.

The Vatican took longer to respond to the obvious anti-Judaism sentiment and only eliminated the phrase “perfidious Jews” from their Holy Week liturgy in 1965. It has also taken subsequent steps to downplay the corresponding charge of deicide leveled against the Jews. Yet this philo-Semitic liturgical and doctrinal trajectory is by no means universal. The Egyptian Coptic Patriarch Shinoda III, in a recent TV interview, said that the Vatican was wrong to offer an apology to contemporary Jews, which exonerated them of the spilling of the blood of Christ since the New Testament is clear that they killed Christ.⁶²

A declaration recently issued by Orthodox priests from Russian, Greek, Ukrainian, Georgian and Ecumenical Orthodox Churches, some in open defiance of directives from church leadership, called for the removal of anti-Semitic passages from Orthodox

⁵⁸ d’Uzer, V, “The Jews in the Sixteenth-Century Homilies” in Wood, D (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 270

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 270

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 271

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 277

⁶² To view the interview: www.memritv.org/search.asp?ACT=S9&P1=1432

Church liturgy. Dmitry Radyehsvky, director of the Jerusalem Summit, said the anti-Semitic passages were most conspicuous during Easter services as *Reproaches*, and included statements such as "the Jewish tribe which condemned you to crucifixion, repay them, Oh Lord," which is repeated half a dozen times, and "Christ has risen but the Jewish seed has perished," as well as references to Jews as "God-killers."⁶³

The desire to connect with ancient liturgical traditions led the South African revisers of the 1989 prayer book to reintroduce the *Reproaches* in "The Solemn Adoration of Christ Crucified."⁶⁴ Here is an excerpt from the re-introduced *Reproaches* in the 1989 Anglican Prayer Book:

My people, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!

For forty years I led you safely through the desert. I fed you with manna from heaven, and brought you to a land of plenty; but you led your Saviour to the cross.⁶⁵

My people, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!

I led you on your way in a pillar of cloud, but you led me to Pilate's court.

My people, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!

I bore you with manna in the desert, but you struck me down and scourged me.

My people, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!

I gave you saving water from the rock, but you gave me gall and vinegar to drink.

My people, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!

I raised you to the height of majesty, but you have raised me high on a cross.⁶⁶

The revisers of the prayer book have sought to downplay the anti-Judaism historically inherent in the *Reproaches*. The congregants are meant to identify themselves as the actors in this story; being God's people who are in need of mercy because of our natural inclination to resist the saving works of God. I would counter that the weight of history, especially the history of the *Reproaches*, is against a philo-Semitic interpretation ascribing the negative sentiments to *us* as God's people (present) and may be viewed by congregants as referring to the Jewish people as God's people (past) in "My people, what have I done to you?" The history of the church demonstrates a

⁶³Lefkovits, E, *Priests Remove anti-Semitic Liturgy*, Jerusalem Post, 20 April 2007 - www.jpost.com

⁶⁴ *An Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) Church of the Province of Southern Africa, 194

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 195

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 196

natural leaning to discontinuity when contrasting the response of God's people in history (the Jews) to the church's response now.

3.2.2 Continuity with the early church through Hippolytus

The relatively recent movement to root the South African Anglican Eucharist in liturgy from the early church is symptomatic, in my opinion, of a desire to seek roots that refresh; corroborating my argument in Chapter 1 about a need for a sense of rootedness. Among the most widely influential twentieth century hypothesis about Eucharistic origins in relation to the Passover context is one proposed by the Anglican Benedictine scholar Gregory Dix in his 1945 classic, *The Shape of Liturgy*.⁶⁷ A clear aim of this hypothesis was to trace a single line of literary evolution from the Lord's Supper, through historical liturgies, to the liturgy of the modern church.⁶⁸

In tracing this line of continuity from the Lord's Table to the communion table, a prayer traditionally ascribed to Hippolytus (c215), bishop of Rome, called the *Apostolic Tradition*, captured the imagination of contemporary liturgists and now appears in the modern liturgical books of different churches both Roman Catholic and Protestant.⁶⁹ This link and continuity with the prayer of Hippolytus is clearly seen in the 1989 *Anglican Prayer Book*, primarily in the Fourth Eucharistic Prayer. The opening lines of all five Eucharistic prayers closely mirror the wording of Hippolytus:

The Lord be with you.	The Lord be with you.
And also with you.	And with your spirit.
Lift up your hearts to the Lord.	Up with your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.	We have (them) with the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.	Let us give thanks to the Lord.
It is right to give him thanks and praise. ⁷⁰	It is fitting and right. ⁷¹

The Eucharistic preface of the Fourth prayer has an amazing resonance with the wording of Hippolytus:

⁶⁷ Johnson, M.E. "The Apostolic Tradition" in Wainwright, G. & Westerfield Tucker, K. B. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, 45

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 45

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 56

⁷⁰ *An Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) Church of the Province of Southern Africa, 104

⁷¹ Hippolytus in Jasper, R. C. D & Cuming, G.J. (1990) *Prayers of the Eucharist*

We give you thanks and praise, almighty God, through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer.

He is your living Word, through whom you have created all things.

By the power of the Holy Spirit he took flesh of the Virgin Mary and shared our human nature. He lived and died as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

In fulfillment of your will he stretched out his hands in suffering, to bring release to those who place their hope in you; and so he won for you a holy people.

He chose to bear our griefs and sorrows, and to give up his life on the cross, that he might shatter the chains of the evil one, and banish the darkness of sin and death. By his resurrection he brings us into the light of your presence.⁷²

We render thanks to you, O God, through your beloved child, Jesus Christ, whom in the last times you sent as a saviour and redeemer and angel of your will; who is your inseparable Word, through whom you made all things, and in whom you were well pleased.

You sent him from heaven into a virgin's womb; and conceived in the womb, he made flesh and was manifested as your Son, being born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he stretched out his hands when he should suffer, that he might release from suffering those who have believed in you.

And when he was betrayed to voluntary suffering that he might destroy death, and break the bonds of the devil, and tread down hell, and shine upon the righteous, and fix a term, and manifest the resurrection, he took bread....⁷³

The Hippolytus prayer contains the basic Pauline words of institution, which all five 1989 Anglican Prayer Book liturgies have slight variations of:

He took bread and gave thanks to you, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body, which shall be broken for you." Likewise also the cup, saying, "This is my blood, which is shed for you; when you do this, you make my remembrances."

There is then a call to remembrance and empowering of the Holy Spirit. Interestingly, provision is made in the 1989 Anglican Prayer Book for both Anglo-Catholic and Reformed theology in the respective wording of "we *offer* you" and "we *bring before* you". Michael Nuttall explains that

"The optional use of 'bring before' avoids any notion of the sacramental offering of Christ in the Eucharist and makes it easier for people of evangelical persuasion to use this Eucharistic prayer."⁷⁴

⁷² *An Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) Church of the Province of Southern Africa, 125

⁷³ Hippolytus in Jasper, R. C. D & Cuming, G.J. (1990) *Prayers of the Eucharist*,

⁷⁴ Nuttall, M. "The Province of Southern Africa" in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford*

The Fourth Eucharistic Prayer closely maintains the link with the Hippolytus liturgy:

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we *offer/bring before* you this bread and this cup, giving thanks that you have made us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you.

We ask you to send your Holy Spirit upon the offering of your holy Church. Gather into one all who share in these sacred mysteries, filling them with the Holy Spirit and confirming their faith in the truth, that together we may praise you and give you glory through your Servant, Jesus Christ.

All glory and honour are yours, Father and Son, with the Holy Spirit in the holy Church, now and for ever. Amen.⁷⁵

Remembering therefore his death and resurrection, we offer to you the bread and the cup, giving you thanks because you have held us worthy to stand before you and minister to you.

And we ask that you would send your Holy Spirit upon the offering of your holy Church; that, gathering her into one, you would grant to all who receive the holy things (to receive) for the fullness of the Holy Spirit for the strengthening of faith in truth; that we may praise and glorify you through your child Jesus Christ; through whom be glory and honour to you, to the Father and the Son, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and to the ages of ages. Amen⁷⁶

Unfortunately for those seeking the authentication of modern liturgy by appealing to Hippolytus' Apostolic Tradition, recent scholarship has brought into question Dix's hypothesis of liturgical continuity from a single source. The authorship of Hippolytus is also not so straight forward as first believed. Maxwell Johnson in his essay, *The Apostolic Tradition*, comments that

“this influential document has been long thought to be, if not exactly what its title claims, an authentic, authoritative, and dependable witness to early third century Roman liturgical practice...reflecting what the ‘tradition’ of liturgy in Rome had been up to and including his own time.”⁷⁷

He argues that it was not authored by Hippolytus, and is probably not early third century in date but “may well reflect a synthesis or composite text of various diverse liturgical patters and practices, some quite early and other not added until the time of its final redaction.”⁷⁸ Johnson candidly states that ““There is no one clearly deduced

Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey, 319

⁷⁵ *An Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) Church of the Province of Southern Africa, 126

⁷⁶ Hippolytus in Jasper, R. C. D & Cuming, G.J. (1990) *Prayers of the Eucharist*

⁷⁷ Johnson, M. E. “The Apostolic Tradition” in Wainwright, G & Westerfield Tucker, K. B. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, 32

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 32

“apostolic tradition” of Christian worship, but...a variety of traditions.”⁷⁹

Jasper and Cuming, in their book *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed*, also caution us against this simplistic thinking. It is important to understand the complex factors that must be taken into account when examining Eucharistic liturgical links with the early church:

- There is no such thing as a specific early liturgy; one can only speak in terms of the surviving manuscripts of that liturgy.⁸⁰
- Very few manuscripts bear the date of writing; it is important to distinguish between the date of writing of a manuscript and the date of its contents.⁸¹
- Catecheses, addresses given to baptismal candidates, form an important source of information about the liturgies; the Fathers do not deal in full with the text of the Eucharistic prayer.⁸²
- Scholarly attempts to trace all extant Eucharistic prayers back to one original have yielded the opposite; the evidence shows that an original variety was gradually reduced to uniformity.⁸³

Despite the evidence that the Apostolic Tradition is a synthesis of liturgical patterns, some from the third century and some later, it still provides a tangible link with much earlier traditions and herein lay its profound romantic appeal to modern liturgists. There is a sense of continuity with the ‘early church’, and the early church, with the historical person of Jesus Christ, and the liturgical traditions of Israel.

Does this express a desire for roots that refresh, authentic roots that, in this instance, refresh liturgical traditions? In the General Preface to the 1989 *Anglican Prayer Book* this roots-relatedness with the worship traditions of the Jews is sought, although the more neutral term “Israel” is used:

“Behind these products of the sixteenth century lay the liturgical tradition, strongly influenced by the monastic movement with its sevenfold office of

⁷⁹ Johnson, M. E. “The Apostolic Tradition” in Wainwright, G & Westerfield Tucker, K. B. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, 67

⁸⁰ Jasper, R. C. D & Cuming, G.J. (1990) *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 3

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 3

⁸² *Ibid*, 4

⁸³ *Ibid*, 5

prayer, which reached back into the early centuries of the Church's life and ultimately to our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and through him to the worship of Israel."⁸⁴

3.2.3 Discontinuity with the Eucharist of Thomas Cranmer

There are few remnants left in the 1989 Anglican Prayer Book of the prayer book first envisaged by the reformer Thomas Cranmer. Most noticeably, his Eucharistic theology has been adapted or revised until it can no longer be said to be Reformed.

Cranmer produced two *Books of Common Prayer*, in 1549 and 1552. The 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* was an interim measure in the Church of England's break from Rome and movement towards a more Reformed position.⁸⁵ A successor was already envisaged when it was being produced in 1549.⁸⁶ The 1549 prayer book was critiqued by many bishops and also, most notably, by Martin Bucer in his *Censura*.⁸⁷

One main concern was that it was still possible to interpret the 1549 rite in accordance with Roman Eucharistic theology. Consequently the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer* was clearly Reformed, with none of the ambiguity of doctrine of its predecessor.⁸⁸ On the surface of church practice, Jasper and Cuming comment,

“the title ‘Mass’ disappeared; vestments were replaced by the surplice; the stone altar became a wooden table standing in the chancel or body of the church running east to west, with the priest on the north side of it; all singing ceased; and the whole rite became more penitential in tone.”⁸⁹

In the 1549 Eucharist the main changes from the Mass were that rite was in English, the Gospel was followed by the Creed and then the Sermon (in the Lutheran position) and the Offertory was concerned only with the giving of alms.⁹⁰ In the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer*, the Eucharistic Prayer was significantly dismembered: the intercessions became a self-contained entity and was followed immediately by the Exhortations; the position and wording of the Prayer of Humble Access was changed so

⁸⁴ *An Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) Church of the Province of Southern Africa, 9

⁸⁵ Jasper, R. C. D & Cuming, G.J. (1990) *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 232

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 244

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 244

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 244

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 244

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 232

that there would be no adoration of the consecrated elements; and the anamnesis disappeared altogether.⁹¹ The eucharistic prayer ended abruptly with the Institution Narrative and was followed immediately by the distribution of Communion. This was the practice of Zwingli, Bucer, and other Reformers.⁹²

The epiclesis was also removed so that the prayer no longer contained the petition to God to bless and sanctify the bread and wine. The words of distribution, “Take, eat...”, avoided the identification of the elements directly with the body and blood of Christ. These changes, and others, brought Cranmer, and the Church of England, much closer to Zwingli’s theology of the Eucharist.⁹³ Yet Cranmer still envisaged communion as a weekly, not a quarterly practice and still regarded the sacraments as ‘effectual signs of grace’ – so was not as radical as Zwingli in this regard, but more akin to Bucer.⁹⁴

Apart from its temporary lapse during the reign of the Roman Catholic Queen Mary, the 1552 rite remained substantially unchanged until 1662.⁹⁵ Even then, while there were a large number of changes to the overall Prayer Book, most of them were of a very minor nature; the most significant changes, though small, were made to the Eucharistic rite, making it more acceptable to the Laudians.⁹⁶ Colin Buchanan, member of the Church of England Liturgical Commission, notes that

“although the 1662 liturgy kept Cranmer’s text (as opposed to rubrics) almost unchanged, yet the seventeenth century was finally riveted onto that text. The opening rubrics were surprisingly left unchanged, but thereafter the Laudian picture emerged.”⁹⁷

The result of this was that the feel of the service was subtly changed; “The priest functions ‘up there’. The consecration is a priestly event. The consecrated elements have a special character independent of reception.”⁹⁸ This has been carried through into the 1989 *Anglican Prayer Book* and has become even more Anglo-Catholic in nature. Consequently there is considerable discontinuity between the South African Anglican Eucharist and our historical Reformation roots. The root of Anglo-Catholicism runs

⁹¹ Jasper, R. C. D & Cuming, G.J. (1990) *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 245

⁹² *Ibid*, 244-245

⁹³ *Ibid*, 245

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 245

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 245

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 277

⁹⁷ Buchanan, C (1982) *What did Cranmer think he was doing?* 31

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 31

deep in South Africa and to this we now turn.

3.2.4 Revival of Anglo-Catholicism

At the start of the twentieth century there were ritual controversies in the Church of England that resulted in the appointment of a Royal Commission, which reported that the provisions for worship were too narrow.⁹⁹ Liturgical scholars and ecclesiastical factions each argued their own agenda, which resulted in revisions of the English prayer book that were, according to Bryan Spinks, “not Catholic enough for Anglo-Catholics ... too Catholic for many Evangelicals.”¹⁰⁰

The Episcopalian (Anglican) Church in the United States, on the other hand, was more radical in its pursuit of a renewed Anglo-Catholicism. It purposely distanced itself from Reformed roots by removing the traditional term “Protestant” from the name of the church-province on the title page of its revised Prayer Book.¹⁰¹ Lesley Northup, Episcopalian priest, notes that

“Not only was Morning Prayer replaced by the Eucharist as the principal Sunday rite...but the Eucharist was also restored to its older place as the proper context for baptisms, weddings, and funerals. Establishing the pre-eminence of the Eucharist as the church’s normative rite seemingly capped the long term efforts of the ‘high church’ wing to move the church in a more Catholic direction.”¹⁰²

A consequence of this distancing from the Reformation was also to re-examine the pervasive language of unworthiness in earlier Prayer Books in light of what Northup calls the, “contemporary values and emerging images of God’s relationship with the faithful, increasingly understood to be cooperative partnership rather than an authoritarian hegemony.”¹⁰³

The Anglican church in South African in making revisions for the 1989 prayer book adopted a more conciliatory approach to the various ecclesiastical factions. Perhaps this foreshadowed the conciliatory context of South African politics in the early 90s in

⁹⁹ Spinks, B. “Anglicans and Dissenters” in Wainwright, G & Westerfield Tucker, K. B. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, 525

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 525

¹⁰¹ Northup, L. A. “The Episcopal Church in the USA” in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 365

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 365

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 366

regard to political factions and political change. The Eucharistic liturgy sought to accommodate linguistically those minority groupings still rooted in Reformed theology. The overall structure of the Eucharistic liturgy is now closer to the Roman rite than to Cranmer's rendition of the Eucharist. Nevertheless, within this dominant Anglo-Catholic paradigm, there are five different Eucharistic Prayers, which allow congregations to avoid the Third Eucharistic Prayer, which is closely based on the Roman Catholic Canon. As noted previously, the Fourth Eucharistic Prayer has two alternative wordings to allow one to avoid the notion of the sacramental offering of Christ in the Eucharist. The fifth prayer, "An Alternative Order for Celebrating the Eucharist", accommodates a freer form of worship and may include readings, music, dance and other art forms, comment, discussion and silence.¹⁰⁴ This is to accommodate the charismatic wing of the Anglican church in South Africa.

One wonders to what extent Spink's observation of the revisions of the English prayer book, "not Catholic enough for Anglo-Catholics ... too Catholic for many Evangelicals", applies to South Africa and the 1989 Anglican Prayer Book. Yet there may be another criticism here too, that the prayer book has failed to be Africanised and so still reflects an English liturgical form and consequently misses out on being rooted in *community* and *celebration*; also two very Jewish emphases.

3.2.5 Africanization of the prayer book

Although pride of place is given to the First Eucharistic Prayer as an "indigenous product", it hardly reflects an African context. One has only to compare liturgies with the Anglican Church of Kenya to notice this. Grant LeMarquand comments that

"perhaps no Anglican liturgical innovation of recent decades has been so far-reaching. *Our Modern Services* is clearly an African book which encourages an African style of language, African prayer, and musical traditions within worship, and seeks to meet the needs of Kenyan realities. Yet it is also a book which in its forms and much of its theological content is clearly a descendent of the *Book of Common Prayer*."¹⁰⁵

The style of the Eucharist service, unlike the versions in the 1989 *Anglican Prayer*

¹⁰⁴ *An Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) Church of the Province of Southern Africa, 131

¹⁰⁵ LeMarquand, G. "The Anglican Church of Kenya" in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 287

Book, is structured around short, fast-moving, rhythmic phrases, which LeMarquand notes “encourages a high level of congregational involvement.”¹⁰⁶ There is a great love of rhyme and alliteration in African literature and the Kenyan liturgy includes plenty of both.¹⁰⁷ The Kenyan Eucharistic liturgy reflects an African worldview. LeMarquand summarizes it as “I am because we are.” He argues that

“the African identity is essentially communal: Africans understand themselves to be defined by their relationships, as opposed to the individualistic worldview of the western world as it was articulated in Cartesian terms: ‘I think, therefore I am.’”¹⁰⁸

In the original draft of the Eucharist service the minister would say “I am because we are” and the people respond, “We are because he is.”¹⁰⁹ LeMarquand wryly remarks that “since most African lay people do not spend a significant amount of their time and energy struggling against the Enlightenment, the line was found to be too obscure.”¹¹⁰ The final draft was amended to so that the minister says, “Christ is alive forever” and the people reply, “We are because he is.”

At a global level, what is self-evident from this chapter is the historical tension around unity in the Anglican Communion. Groups with differing agendas and understandings of what it means to be Anglican continually challenge this federation of churches to define its theology – in the absence of a unifying Confession - and its congregational worship – in the absence of a unifying liturgy.

Each group tends to draw from a root it hopes will authenticate and refresh its worship and this is reflected in the form of its liturgy. Some hark back to a romanticized view of the Apostolic Tradition (Hippolytus) or the Roman Catholic church. Others want to remain within the Reformation tradition and seek to be rooted in the *Book of Common Prayer*. Yet others, like the Anglican Kenyan Church, find a liturgical resonance within their own culture to bring their corporate worship and faith alive. Some examples of liturgical revisions, such as the re-introduction of the *Reproaches* into the South African liturgy, serve to confirm my argument that the church is not as sensitive to its anti-

¹⁰⁶ LeMarquand, G. “The Anglican Church of Kenya” in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 288

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 288

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 290

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 291

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 291

Jewish history as it needs to be. Yet all this also indicates a desire for roots that refresh.

Within the rich tapestry that makes up South African society and cultures are elements and worldviews yet to be incorporated into our celebration of the Eucharist, such as the community spirit of Ubuntu, the traditional importance of the home, and of hospitality. Re-engaging our Jewish roots may be a powerful catalyst in shifting our western-dominated thinking to be open to the collective experience of the body of Christ in communion rather than remaining locked into the individualistic worldview of the western world.

It is also my hope that our engagement with our Jewish roots may provide a depth of rootedness that goes beyond the ecclesiastical factions and allows for a fresh take on entrenched historical Eucharistic perspectives and emphases. It is to this historical theological engagement with Jewish meal traditions and the celebration of the Eucharist that I now turn.

Chapter 4. Jewish meals, community and the Eucharist

Having acknowledged our possible anti-Jewish bias or resistance to our roots in the earlier chapters, one can now address my thesis question, “What is there in the context of our Jewish roots that can refresh our experience of the Eucharist?” This is not to attempt to seek direct, linear continuity from the ‘then’ to ‘now’; the limitations of this liturgical attempt have been discussed in the previous chapter. It is, according to McGrath, “to recover the sense of belonging in history, however fractured the social location of one’s life may be”¹ and in the Eucharist to “return to Christian roots – to recall, and to recollect, the importance of the death of Jesus Christ for the life of the believer and the church.”²

Part of being re-rooted in a Jewish context is to reaffirm the fullness of all that Jewish meals represent in the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. To do this will be to change the emphasis from the body of Christ as the elements of bread and wine involved in a clerical ritual and discerned by individuals to the body of Christ as the gathered meal community living with eschatological hope and discerned in a congregation.

4.1 Discerning our roots

Ralph Martin in his book, “*Worship in the Early Church*”, comments that

“No event in the last days of the Lord’s earthly ministry has fastened itself more securely upon the Christian imagination than what took place, in the Thursday of Holy Week, in the guest-chamber of one of His nameless friends in Jerusalem. He gathered His followers around Him in sacred association as they shared together the traditional Passover meal.”³

Or as Robert Wilken articulates,

“Before there were treatises on the Trinity, before there were learned commentaries on the Bible, before there were disputes about the teaching on grace, or essays on the moral life, there was awe and adoration before the

¹ McGrath, A. E. (1991) *Roots that Refresh*, 67

² *Ibid*, 63

³ Martin, R (1964) *Worship in the Early Church*, 110

exalted Son of God alive and present in the church's offering of the Eucharist."⁴

The Eucharist in the early church was a celebration of the living Christ; it was Trinitarian in nature; it was prayerful – “To praise God is to narrate what he has done” – and it focused on re-presenting Christ in a manner that had parallels in the ritual remembrance of Passover.⁵ Yet today there are many different approaches to the Eucharist among churches. It has no place in the worship of some Christians, others celebrate it only occasionally; some have the Eucharist every Sunday, frequently during the week, or even daily; some approach the Eucharist with great solemnity and reverence, others show a marked informality and casualness to the occasion. J. Kodell remarks that, “Every Christian group looks to the New Testament as a source of its doctrine, its worship, its way of life.”⁶ He argues that church tradition, whether we acknowledge it not, powerful influences the shape of a Christian's attitude toward even the central realities of the faith.⁷

4.1.1 Resistance to a Jewish approach

Although the Eucharist has parallels in the Passover, the celebration of the Jewish Passover quickly became the poorer cousin of the Eucharist in the Gentile church. The increasingly anti-Judaism attitude and theology of the early church first negated and then, by the beginning of the fifth century, repudiated distinctly Jewish practices in the church. Any form of Jewish practice in the church was seen as anti-Christian.⁸ This was particularly true of Passover. Jerome emphatically denied that any believer could reasonably abide by Jewish ceremonies:

“I shall maintain, and, though the world were to protest against my view, I may boldly declare that the Jewish ceremonies are to Christians both hurtful and fatal; and that whoever observes them, whether he be Jew or Gentile originally, is cast into the pit of perdition.”⁹

Augustine adopted a similar line to Jerome, describing any Christian who wished to

⁴ Wilken, R.L. (2003) *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought*, 36

⁵ *Ibid*, 34

⁶ Kodell, J. (1988) *The Eucharist in the New Testament*, 11

⁷ *Ibid*, 12

⁸ Keith, G. (1997) *Hated without a Cause?* 104

⁹ Jerome, *Ep.*, 112:14, in *Ibid* , 105

revive Jewish ceremonies as acting impiously.¹⁰ This attitude in the early church effectively made the divide between the Jewish community and the church unbridgeable. The church therefore grew distant from Jewish traditions and meal culture. Along with this a profound shift occurred in the understanding of the nature of the Body of Christ in the Eucharist.

4.1.2 Historical change of a community within Messianic time

William Cavanaugh, in his book, *'Torture and Eucharist'* draws our attention to the historical understanding and shift of the threefold nature of the Body of Christ. First there is the historical body - the physical body or person of Jesus of Nazareth. Then there is the sacramental body - Christ present in the elements. And lastly, there is the ecclesial body - Christ present as the church.

In the early church the sacramental body was understood to be the *corpus mysticum* (mystical body) and the church body as the *corpus verum* (true body).¹¹ The church and the Eucharist formed a liturgical pair of visible community (*corpus verum*) and invisible action (*corpus mysticum*), which together served to re-present and re-member Christ's historical body – the person and work of Christ.¹² The logical gap in the Eucharist was temporal. The link between the past and present was in the invisible action of the sacrament. The mystical experience of the Eucharist was the unity of time.¹³ In other words, entering into Messianic time, living in light of Messianic time, was the focus: the Messiah has died, the Messiah is risen, the Messiah will come again. Not only was the risen Christ linked to the historical Christ but there was a further dimension to the mystery in that it was linked with a future time too, the return of Christ; the eschaton.

A historic shift occurred in this understanding of the Eucharist and this understanding was weakened. When faced with the massive influx of new Christians in the fourth century, bishops like Ambrose, Theodore of Mopsuestia and John Chrysostom, attempted to heighten the sense of *mysterium tremendum* surrounding the Eucharist, often using awesome images not unlike those of the old mystery religions.¹⁴ The

¹⁰ Augustine, *Epp.*, 82:18, in Keith, G. (1997) *Hated without a Cause?* 105

¹¹ Cavanaugh, W. T. (1998) *Torture and the Eucharist*, 212

¹² *Ibid*, 212

¹³ *Ibid*, 212

¹⁴ Holeyton, D. "Children and the Eucharist in the Tradition of the Church" in Buchanan, C. (Ed) (1985)

process of separation between the Eucharistic ritual and the gathered community was reinforced by the Arian crisis.¹⁵ Arianism taught the absolute uniqueness and distinctness of God who could not possibly have communicated his essence to any other, thus the Son was a being created by the will and power of God.¹⁶

The Christian church responded by an increased emphasis on the adoration of the divinity present in the bread and wine of the Eucharist.¹⁷ Holeton notes that

“this adoration cultivated a devotion which fostered Eucharistic abstinence out of respect for the Eucharistic elements themselves. Eventually criteria would be introduced for communicant status which involved qualities associated with attaining the age of reason (recognition, devotion, discretion, confession.)”¹⁸

Eventually by the twelfth century the divorce between the Eucharist and community had truly formalized and the laity stopped receiving the cup.¹⁹ The Lord’s Table became the site of the *corpus verum*, Christ’s true and knowable body; the body of the church became the *corpus mysticum*.²⁰ The result, argues Cavanaugh, is that

“The church, as a body mystical, must lose its transparency to the body of Christ, which is individualized and commodified in the host, and whose effects become a reality hidden in the interior of the individual heart.”²¹

The historical body of Christ and the sacramental body of Christ therefore now formed a new liturgical pair; a pairing which had to be theological and philosophically justified. The ecclesial body was the one whose essence was hidden and a mystery. The sacramental body became the visible signifier of the hidden, signified, social body of Christ.²² In other words, the Eucharist now acted as the visible indicator of the secret effects of grace and salvation that makes up the hidden life of the church.²³ Consequently the emphasis increasingly became on watching Christ’s body (the

Nurturing Children in Communion, 9

¹⁵ Holeton, D. “Children and the Eucharist in the Tradition of the Church” in Buchanan, C. (Ed) (1985) *Nurturing Children in Communion*, 9

¹⁶ Ferguson, S. B. & Wright, D. F. (2003), *Arianism*, 42

¹⁷ Holeton, D. “Children and the Eucharist in the Tradition of the Church” in Buchanan, C. (Ed) (1985) *Nurturing Children in Communion*, 9

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 15

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 10

²⁰ Cavanaugh, W. T. (1998) *Torture and the Eucharist*, 212

²¹ *Ibid*, 220

²² *Ibid*, 213

²³ *Ibid*, 213

elements) in the Eucharistic ritual rather than being Christ's body (the gathered community) in the Eucharistic service. The Eucharist became a spectacle for the laity.²⁴

We have theologically and corporately lived with the profound consequences of this inversion and the paths down which it has led us. The eschatological imagination of the Eucharist which reconfigured the temporal not as space but as time was lost.²⁵ The connection of Christ's first coming with His second was increasingly weakened and with it, the sense of the inbreaking of the future Kingdom of God into our reality.

The church lost the reality of living as a community in Messianic time. And as the church made itself at home in the world's time, the urgent sense of pilgrimage of a visible community through a temporary world toward an eternal end was muted.²⁶ The significance of the Eucharist came to be centred on the elements and action of the bread and wine and so too, the theological and philosophical debates. The liturgy became retrospective, emphasizing the sacrifice of Christ and the engagement of unworthy individuals with this event. The Eucharistic service lost the focus on community and more importantly, of a joyful community gathered to celebrate the temporal mystery of our faith that Christ has died, Christ is risen and Christ will come again. More recently, some scholars have been seeking to redress this historical imbalance in order to regain the eschatological and visible community dimensions. Linking the Eucharist with its Jewish meal roots has been instrumental to this movement.

4.1.3 Regaining community and Messianic time

Ruth Meyers, in her essay, *One Bread, One Body*, argues that the ecclesial dimension of Paul's words on the Eucharist have often been overlooked in favour of an individualistic interpretation.²⁷ Thus she says,

“Those who partake of the Eucharist share not only in the body and blood of Christ, they are bound together as a community which *is* the body of Christ. This has important implications for relationships in the Christian community.”

Welker comments that the Eucharist is a symbolic community meal that “is celebrated

²⁴ Cavanaugh, W. T. (1998) *Torture and the Eucharist*, 213

²⁵ *Ibid*, 207 & 222

²⁶ *Ibid*, 222

²⁷ Meyers, R. A. “One Bread, One Body” in Holeton, D. (Ed) (1998) *Our Thanks and Praise: The Eucharist in Anglicanism Today*, 84

by a meal community, a table fellowship.”²⁸ Acknowledging that the Eucharist was never simply a meal to sate physical hunger, but is a liturgical meal employing symbolic words and actions, he argues that this nevertheless must not lead to a separation of the celebration from the idea of a community meal.²⁹ Welker draws on the research of Matthias Klinghardt which demonstrated that the Eucharistic community meal had a long practice in early Christianity:

“All Christian communities – in the most diverse areas of mission, with the most diverse theological profiles, from the most diverse background and traditions, and with a broad spectrum of social backgrounds...would gather for a meal.”³⁰

As the practice of sharing a full meal waned in the early churches the community was no longer constituted by the concretely experienced meal community in communal eating and drinking but in the communion of Eucharistic communication.³¹

A very real benefit to re-rooting Eucharistic thinking in Jewish meal culture is that it provides a safeguard against the distorting or obscuring of the profound fact that the Eucharist is “an act of worship of the *community* gathered in Jesus’ name.”³² In Welker’s view, when the Eucharist has been divorced from the idea of community the consequences in church practice have been that:

- The celebration of the Eucharist is not necessarily dependent on the presence of community.
- The eating of a shared, symbolic meal is not an essential component of the Eucharist.
- The giving and taking, the charge to eat and drink, the eating and drinking themselves and in general, the meal community are in principle dispensable.³³

In order for us to connect to this root that refreshes our concept of community we must understand the special role Jesus gave to table-fellowship in his ministry. Jesus was the guest at meals with esteemed Jewish citizens.³⁴ He participated in wedding feasts.³⁵

²⁸ Welker, M. (2000) *What happens in Holy Communion?* 29

²⁹ *Ibid*, 29

³⁰ Klinghardt cited in *Ibid*, 40

³¹ *Ibid*, 40

³² *Ibid*, 41

³³ *Ibid*, 31

³⁴ Mark 14:3

He shared meals with his friends and disciples.³⁶ He quite controversially even ate with Jewish social outcasts: sinners and tax collectors.³⁷ This provoked his detractors to say that he was a glutton and a drunkard who kept company with the wrong type of people.³⁸ The significance of this may be lost on us because we are removed from a middle-Eastern cultural understanding of meals. As Kodell points out,

“To share a meal with someone was a particular form of intimacy that had to be protected. It meant not only sharing of food but of life.”³⁹

Thus in the context of the Eucharist, breaking bread with someone is a sign of communion, solidarity, and friendship and recognition of the common dignity and worth of those with whom we eat.⁴⁰ Sharing the “meal” of bread and wine is meant to celebrate and reinforce the basic bonds and moral ties that connect us one to another.⁴¹ Geoffrey Wainwright has been instrumental in elevating the importance of Jewish meal culture in our understanding of the Eucharist. In his book *“Eucharist and Eschatology”* he remarks that

“perhaps the most obvious thing about the Eucharist from the New Testament point of view is that it was instituted during the course of a meal, the Last Supper, and that it has to do with food and drink.”⁴²

He notes that its nature as a meal is not prominent in popular conceptions but that a few theologians have suggested that this is a fundamental category for developing a whole Eucharistic theology. He argues that the Eucharist must be seen against the backdrop of Jewish meal-parables and meal-activity in the ministry of Jesus.⁴³

Meals play a prominent role in Jewish religious traditions. In the Hebrew Scriptures meals were linked with the making of a covenant both between peoples and with God, and with sacrifices to the Lord. Examples of this are Jacob and Laban⁴⁴, Jethro, Aaron

³⁵ John 2:1-11

³⁶ Luke 10:38-42

³⁷ Matthew 9:10, Mark 2:13-17, Luke 6:27-31

³⁸ Matthew 11:19

³⁹ Kodell, J. (1988) *The Eucharist in the New Testament*, 17

⁴⁰ McCormick, P. T. (2004) *A banqueter's guide to the all night soup kitchen of the Kingdom of God*, 61

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 61

⁴² Wainwright, G (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 21

⁴³ *Ibid*, 22

⁴⁴ Genesis 31:54

and the elders⁴⁵, the Covenant on Mount Sinai⁴⁶ and descriptions of sacred meals in the sanctuary.⁴⁷ In Psalm 23:5 we are told that God spreads out a banquet for those who put their trust in God. In some of the prophetic writings meals take on an added significance in a future salvation. Ezekiel points to a future salvation marked by there being food in plenty.⁴⁸ Passages from Isaiah speak of a future feast of all peoples, the abolition of death, a time of salvation and rejoicing;⁴⁹ a future freedom and provision for God's people;⁵⁰ as well as an everlasting covenant.⁵¹ Kenneth Bailey argues that the Isaiah 25:6-9 passage is particularly informative and brings together a number of important themes:

“Salvation is described in terms of a great banquet, which shall be for *all* the peoples/nations. The gentiles will participate after God has swallowed up death and their veil...Ordinaryily the nations who come to the Lord must come bringing gifts. Here the banquet is pure grace – the participants from the nations bring nothing.”⁵²

According to Wainwright, Jewish meals gained an even stronger messianic and futurist colouring during the inter-testamental period.⁵³ But along the way the idea that gentiles would be invited to attend was muted and the inclusive vision of Isaiah lost.⁵⁴ A coming age of plenty was anticipated. In particular, the renewal of the gift of manna would be associated with the advent of salvation:

“And it shall come to pass at that selfsame time that the treasury of manna shall again descend from on high, and they will eat of it in those years, because these are they who have come to the consummation of time.”⁵⁵

The new manna – bread of heaven – was also linked to the coming Messiah: “Just as the former deliver [Moses] made manna descend...so also the latter deliverer [Messiah]

⁴⁵ Exodus 18:12

⁴⁶ Exodus 24

⁴⁷ Deuteronomy (eg. 18) & 1 Samuel 1

⁴⁸ Ezekiel 34:25-31

⁴⁹ Isaiah 25:6-9

⁵⁰ Isaiah 49:8-13

⁵¹ Isaiah 55:1-5

⁵² Bailey, K. E. (1983) *Through Peasant Eyes*, 90

⁵³ Wainwright, G (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 21

⁵⁴ Bailey, K. E. (1983) *Through Peasant Eyes*, 90

⁵⁵ 2 Baruch 29:8 cited by Wainwright, G (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 26

will make manna descend.”⁵⁶

It is hardly surprising then, that the teaching and meals of Jesus were invested with a messianic significance that resonated with the both the Hebrew Scriptures and inter-testamental development of these ideas. A feast with Levi the tax collector is the first meal written about in Luke’s Gospel,⁵⁷ which is therefore significant. It is programmatic for all other meals’ introducing the major themes that are associated with Luke’s table fellowship matrix.⁵⁸ Arthur Just remarks that

“The community invited to share in the table fellowship of Jesus is made up of the outcasts of society, the tax collectors and sinners. These sinners receive the blessings of the kingdom of God... This table fellowship with sinners characterized the essence of Jesus’ whole ministry, and was at the centre of his controversy with the religious establishment.”⁵⁹

The question of who was and who was not a sinner was a major one in Jerusalem society at the time.⁶⁰ The meal with the tax collector takes place in this society. The table fellowship with Levi the tax collector provided the occasion for Jesus to relate two parables about the kingdom. What Jesus does and teaches in a Jewish meal context is therefore highly provocative.

Wainwright argues that the feast in the coming kingdom of God formed part of the contemporary fulfillment and hope indicated in the gospels.⁶¹ Jesus first demonstrated at a meal and then taught that those who follow his example of serving at a table will eat and drink with him in the kingdom.⁶² The teaching of Jesus on the Beatitudes (eg. messianic kingdom), the Parable of the Talents and the Marriage Feast (eg. messianic banquet) and actions such as eating with sinners and tax-collectors (eg. messianic salvation) and feeding the multitude (eg. messianic manna) highlighted and confirmed messianic themes already embedded in Jewish thinking. Kodell notes that

“Jesus often used meal imagery in his teaching, a favourite theme being that of the heavenly wedding banquet. This stress lent an eschatological significance to

⁵⁶ Midrash Rabbah ; Midr Qoh 1,9 cited by Wainwright, (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 26

⁵⁷ Luke 5:27-39

⁵⁸ Just, A. A. (1993) *The ongoing feast*, 130

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 131

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 132

⁶¹ Wainwright, G. (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 29

⁶² Luke 22:30

his own meals.”⁶³

Jesus likened his presence among his followers as a wedding banquet.⁶⁴ He also tells a parable about a Great Banquet.⁶⁵ It is worth discussing this parable in some depth simply to illustrate the richness of the Gospel as it resonates in a story about a Jewish meal. Kenneth Bailey, commenting on the Lukan Great Banquet parable, remarks that “the unqualified offer of grace to sinners is set forth in all its majesty.”⁶⁶

The parable tells of a great banquet where property owners are the chosen guests. They accept his invitation to attend but refuse to do so once the good news that the banquet is ready is sent by the messenger, humiliating the host by giving weak excuses for their non-attendance. So the master sends his messenger to invite people from the city as well as the highways and the hedges. The people he invites are the outcasts, unworthy guests.

The poor, maimed, blind, and lame from the city are part of the community, although ostracized from Jewish religious-community life; they represent the outcasts of Israel that were attracted to and welcomed by Jesus.⁶⁷ Thus the master’s offer is an unexpected visible demonstration of love in humiliation.⁶⁸ But it does not end there.

The master sends his servant to go out into the highways and hedges beyond the town to find yet more unworthy guests. This latter invitation symbolically represents an outreach to gentiles.⁶⁹ In the parable the servant *does not* go out after the outsiders along the highways and by the hedges; the command is given but not carried out. Bailey therefore argues that

“It remains an *unfulfilled future task* as the parable closes. The order to invite outcasts *within* the community *is* carried out in the parable. This parallels Jesus’ own ministry in that he *did* carry out a ministry of inviting the outcasts of Israel into his fellowship. He *did not* carry out any major outreach to the gentiles.”⁷⁰

The compelling of the gentiles to attend the banquet is thus a future task. And the word

⁶³ Kodell, J. (1988) *The Eucharist in the New Testament*

⁶⁴ Luke 14:13-14

⁶⁵ Luke 14:15-24; Matthew 22: 1-14

⁶⁶ Bailey, K. E. (1983) *Through Peasant Eyes*, 88

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 100

⁶⁸ Bailey, K. E. (1983) *Poet & Peasant*, 182

⁶⁹ Bailey, K. E. (1983) *Through Peasant Eyes*, 101

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 101

“compel” is a term of grace. In the Middle East the unexpected invitation must be refused, all the more so if the guest is of a lower social rank, so that the host can demonstrate his intention to have him attend.⁷¹ In the parable the invitation would be from someone of a higher rank to a stranger from outside the city who is not even a relative or citizen of the host’s city. Bailey explains the encounter to be one where

“the offer is generous and delightful but (thinks the stranger) he cannot possibly mean it. After some discussion the servant will finally have to take the startled guest by the arm and gently pull him along [compel him]. There is not other way to convince him that he is really invited to the great banquet, irrespective of his being a foreigner. Grace is *unbelievable!*”⁷²

Jesus tells this parable in defense of the gospel of grace to the outcasts.⁷³ The parable of the Great Banquet is the first of five parables in Luke that proclaim the concept of God’s free offer of grace.⁷⁴ But the arrangement of the material counters the question that if grace is free, is it not also cheap?⁷⁵ Bailey notes that in between the two great banquet parables of the Great Banquet and the Prodigal Son, each declaring pure grace, is a collection of sayings which clearly speak of the high cost and demand of discipleship.⁷⁶ Matthew deals with it slightly differently by describing a Great Banquet to which guests are freely invited, yet are held accountable to appear in proper garments; the banquet is free but acceptance carries with it responsibilities.⁷⁷ But in all this another message is also made plain: “table fellowship with Jesus is participation in the messianic banquet in anticipation of the completion of all things in the end time.”⁷⁸

Wainwright argues that the Eucharist, rooted in the messianic meaning of Jesus meal-miracles and parables expresses:

- both the continuity and the difference that mark the relationship between the present and future forms of the kingdom.⁷⁹
- the structure of the reality in which God has chosen to be bound together with

⁷¹ Bailey, K. E. (1983) *Through Peasant Eyes*, 108

⁷² *Ibid*, 108

⁷³ *Ibid*, 111

⁷⁴ The Great Banquet; the Lost Sheep; the Lost Coin; the Prodigal Son; the Unjust Steward.

⁷⁵ Bailey, K. E. (1983) *Through Peasant Eyes*, 112

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 112

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 113

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 111

⁷⁹ Wainwright, G. (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 72

people.⁸⁰

- the fact that the kingdom has to do with the whole of creation and the whole of the human being (ie. No dualism).⁸¹
- the communal nature of the kingdom.⁸²

The climax of this eschatological emphasis is evident in the Last Supper where Jesus promises not to eat or drink until the kingdom of God comes.⁸³ Berkouwer argues that keeping alive an “eschatological perspective is the profound responsibility of the church.”⁸⁴ This brings us to discuss the relationship between the Last Supper, Passover and the Eucharist.

4.1.4 Historical change of the Passover with Messianic meaning

The Lord’s Supper was established by Jesus in the presence of his Jewish disciples in connection with the Passover meal. Without a careful study of this event, the rich Hebraic background of the Christian concept of the Eucharist, and especially of redemption, would be lost.⁸⁵ Unfortunately the study of Passover is not straightforward. Liturgy was not codified either in early Christianity or early Judaism and as a result liturgical information has to be deduced from limited sources.⁸⁶ Alistair Stewart-Sykes and Judith Newman in their book, *Early Jewish Liturgy*, comment that what compounds the situation is that the developments within Judaism in the first two centuries of the common era were potentially as great as those taking place in English Christianity as a result of the Reformation.⁸⁷ Further difficulties arise because, according to Stewart-Sykes and Newman,

“any source which we have may reflect solely the practice of one, perhaps eccentric, group, and both religions were made up of a variety of such groups; the variety in both groups was so great that to talk of either as a single

⁸⁰ Wainwright, G. (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 73

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 73

⁸² *Ibid*, 74

⁸³ Mark 14:25, Luke 22:15-18

⁸⁴ Berkouwer, G. C. (1981) *The Sacraments*, 9

⁸⁵ Wilson, M. R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 238

⁸⁶ Stewart-Sykes, A. & Newman, J. H. (2001) *Early Jewish Liturgy*, 3

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 3

phenomenon is dangerously anachronistic.”⁸⁸

Even when one moves into the field of post-first century literature where the evidence is more ample, its applicability becomes somewhat problematic, according to Beckwith.⁸⁹ It is possible, because of the fact that the rabbinical literature is a record of oral tradition, that written statements may shed light on earlier centuries.⁹⁰ When examining the specific context of a festival like Passover it is complicated by the dramatic destruction of the temple in CE70 and the fluidity of ancient liturgical texts, where the liturgical structure was fixed before their actual wording was.⁹¹

According to Jewish Scriptures, Passover was instituted by God to commemorate the redemption of Israel from the bondage of Egypt.⁹² The Lord passed over the houses of the children of Israel, while killing the firstborn of the Egyptians, forcing Pharaoh to let them go.⁹³ It is also called the “feast of unleavened bread”, derived from the commandment to eat unleavened bread instead of the ordinary leavened bread during the Festival. This commemorates the mode of their departure from Egypt.⁹⁴ (And it marks the season of the early harvest.) Passover is therefore a commemoration of two distinct moments in the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery: the special protection which God granted them in Egypt and their departure from the house of bondage.⁹⁵ Consequently the name “Passover” signifies the act of passing over or sparing⁹⁶, the sacrifice of Passover, especially as object to the verb “to make”⁹⁷, the time when the Passover was offered and consumed, and the whole of Passover Mishnah or teaching. Passover is also not simply a commemorative or memorial meal, because the instruction is given that “in every generation it is one’s duty to regard himself as though he personally had gone out of Egypt...It was not only our fathers whom the Holy One redeemed from slavery; we, too, were redeemed with them.”⁹⁸ The ancient Jewish rabbis taught that Passover was effective in bringing about change in people;

⁸⁸ Stewart-Sykes, A. & Newman, J. H. (2001) *Early Jewish Liturgy*, 3

⁸⁹ Beckwith, R. T. The Jewish Background to Christian Worship in Jones, C., Wainwright, G. & Yarnold, E. (Eds) (1989) *The Study of Liturgy*, 39

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 40

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 40-41

⁹² Gold, A, (1990) *The Complete Artscroll Machzor: Pesach*, xxv

⁹³ Exodus 12:27-33

⁹⁴ Exodus 12:34-39

⁹⁵ Friedlander, M. (1937) *The Jewish Religion*, 374

⁹⁶ Exodus 12:11

⁹⁷ Exodus 12:47,48

⁹⁸ Friedlander, M. (1937) *The Jewish Religion*, 101

through observant actions, their thoughts would be influenced and lives improved.⁹⁹

Passover is kept for eight days from the 15th to the 22nd Nisan in the diaspora and for seven days within Israel. Nisan, in Jewish thinking, has been ordained by God as the month for redemption.¹⁰⁰ Ancient Jewish rabbis reasoned that God appointed Nisan as the month in which Israel would be redeemed from Egypt and when they are destined to be redeemed in the future, for it is said, “This month shall be for you...”¹⁰¹ and “The counsel of God remains forever.”¹⁰² Passover, being in the month of Nisan, is still understood by Jews to not only bring Israel’s past redemption into the present time but heralds future redemption; a future redemption that will also burst forth from the midst of darkness.¹⁰³

Consequently to Jews today, the first Passover remains an eternal festival of redemption, an eternal promise of what every Jewish generation can anticipate. It is not a fleeting moment to be celebrated simply as a remembrance, a memorial, of times long past.¹⁰⁴ Rabbi Avie Gold, argues that “it remains the embodiment of all redemptions, and it bears within itself the seed of the one that we now await.” Rabbi Eliyahu Kitov remarks that the ancient Jewish rabbis teach

“that even when the Messiah comes, this story will continue to be told, for every redemption – from the first to the ultimate one – finds its echo in the story of this redemption from Egypt.”¹⁰⁵

Every Passover *Seder* comes to a close on a note of hope with the statement, “Next year in Jerusalem!” Marvin comments that

“It is to Jerusalem that every Jew continues to look at Passover, anticipating the final day of redemption; and it is to this same city to which every Christian looks back to focus upon the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus in anticipation of his future return.”¹⁰⁶

The original celebration of Passover envisaged an ordinary meal of the household, in

⁹⁹ Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of our Heritage*, 234

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 121

¹⁰¹ Shmot 12, in *Ibid*, 117

¹⁰² Tehilim 33, *Ibid*. 122

¹⁰³ *Ibid*.. 122

¹⁰⁴ Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of our Heritage*, xxvii

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 297

¹⁰⁶ Wilson, M. R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 250

which the whole family participated in recounting the story of Exodus¹⁰⁷ and where the two ordained observances, the sacrifice of the Passover-lamb on the eve of Passover, *Erev Pesach*, and the eating of unleavened bread, while abstaining from *Chametz* (leavened bread), which symbolizes sin and inequity,¹⁰⁸ were fulfilled. In the many centuries between its inception and the reform of King Josiah, Scripture does not record how it was celebrated or where the Passover lamb was eaten.¹⁰⁹ It simply records that Passover was not celebrated according to the laws laid down in the Torah. From being a celebration orientated towards family participation, the Passover supper lost much of its character as a family event when the Temple became the main centre for Passover observance.

The Passover-lamb had to be brought to the Temple to be sacrificed, to the place where the Lord had chosen to place his name.¹¹⁰ During the era of the Second Temple, where laws were observed literally, only men were bidden to attend at the chosen place, Jerusalem, and the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed in the Temple.¹¹¹ Consequently, only those dwelling in Jerusalem could enjoy Passover as a family festival in the home. Since the focus of the celebration at this time was the Temple in Jerusalem, there is little information as to how the Passover meal was celebrated during Temple times by the Jews outside of Jerusalem, who did not "go up to the feast."¹¹²

The destruction of the Temple is therefore a significant point of historical discontinuity in the development of the Passover. Sacrificial practices, including the Passover sacrifice, were discontinued. Yet the idea of the Passover lamb was developed in the thinking of the early church. Jesus, in referring to his death as a sacrifice, had linked himself with the symbol of the Passover lamb.¹¹³ This link was picked up by early Jewish-Christians. In his letter to the church at Corinth, Paul writes "For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed."¹¹⁴ Peter describes God's children as being redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect."¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ Exodus 12:1 onwards

¹⁰⁸ Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of our Heritage*, 196

¹⁰⁹ II Kings 23

¹¹⁰ Deuteronomy 16:5-7

¹¹¹ Deuteronomy 16:5-6

¹¹² Adler, C & Dembitz, LN (2002) Seder, *Jewish Encyclopedia*

¹¹³ Wilson, M. R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 247

¹¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 5:7

¹¹⁵ 1 Peter 1:19

While the importance of the Passover lamb has diminished in the Jewish celebration of the Passover, it continues to be an important symbol in the church's celebration of the Eucharist.¹¹⁶ However the instruction to eat unleavened bread and bitter herbs was continued after the fall of the Temple and is still observed by Jews to this day as well as the special duty of *haggadah*, or "relating."¹¹⁷ This is the duty of the Jewish man to relate to his children the history of their departure from Egypt and to explain to them the rites connected with the celebration of Passover.

The purpose of passing on the meaning of Passover to the next generation was considered so important that the narrator was expected to explain the contents of the *haggadah* in the common vernacular in order that everyone could understand and participate.¹¹⁸ Children were central to this and were expected to participate and ask questions.

After the destruction of the temple one of the traditional questions, "Why is it that on all other nights we may eat meat either roasted or stewed or boiled but on this night only roasted?" had to be substituted by the question, "Why is it that on all other nights we eat either sitting or reclining but on this night we can only recline?"¹¹⁹ The focus therefore came back onto the home in the celebration of the Passover and enabled the father to comply more closely with the command to pass on the story of the exodus to the next generation.¹²⁰

In terms of structure, the arrangement of the table, the psalms, the benedictions, and other recited matter contained in the *Seder* of the present day basically reflects the order laid down in the Mishnah, and was the set order as far back as the middle of the third century¹²¹ Even in the layout of the Passover, consideration is given to provoking the curiosity of children. An explanation given for the washing of hands by the father at a certain point and the highlighting of *Karpas*, usually a piece of parsley dipped in salt water or vinegar, is so that the curiosity of children would be aroused.¹²² When the Passover was originally celebrated the table was removed immediately after the

¹¹⁶ The refrain, "Jesus, Lamb of God" or a variation therefore, is contained in many Eucharistic liturgies.

¹¹⁷ Exodus 13 v14-15

¹¹⁸ Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of our Heritage*, 304

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, 293

¹²⁰ Adler, C & Dembitz, LN (2002) *Seder, Jewish Encyclopedia*

¹²¹ Adler, C & Dembitz, LN, *Ibid*

¹²² Babylonia Talmud, Pesachim 114b in Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of our Heritage*

partaking of the parsley, bitter herbs or other vegetables. The child, unaccustomed to this, was meant to be provoked to ask why things are being done differently and the table being removed. In modern Jewish custom the table is not removed, but the *Seder* dish containing curious elements is lifted up and explained.

Another ritual that engages everyone present at the table is the breaking of the matzah. This is a universal rite found in all versions of the Passover *Seder* and so is considered to be an ancient ritual.¹²³ The leader takes the middle of three matzos and breaks it in two. He puts the smaller part back between the two whole matzos, and wraps the larger part for later use as the *Afikoman*. The *Afikoman* is thus reserved or hidden, wrapped in a napkin, which serves as a reminder of Exodus 12:34.¹²⁴ The meal ends with the hidden matzoh being searched and found by a child. A portion of the *Afikoman* is given to each participant and eaten while reclining. Various traditions and explanations have evolved around this ritual.

Some people pass the wrapped *Afikoman* around the group, briefly placing the *Afikoman* portion on their shoulders and say “*In haste we went out of Egypt,*” thus recounting that Israel left Egypt carrying their matzos on their shoulders.¹²⁵ When it gets to the last person, they take four paces and the rest of the company ask him, “*Where do you come from?*” “*From Egypt,*” he answers. “*And where are you going?*” “*To Jerusalem.*” Then everyone choruses together, “*Next year in Jerusalem.*”¹²⁶ The *afikoman* is then taken away and hidden. According to Eliyaho Kitov, among Sephardi communities the *afikoman* is not hidden but tied on the shoulder of a child who goes out of the room and knocks on the door. “*Who are you?*” he is asked. “*An Israelite.*” “*Where do you come from?*” “*From Egypt.*” “*Where are you going?*” “*To Jerusalem.*” “*What are you carrying?*” “*Matzah.*” Only then can the child enter the room and, glancing at the festive table, is expected to ask “*Why is this night different from all other nights?*” thus prompting the telling of the *Maggid*.¹²⁷ The broken matzah in Sephardic tradition is lifted up by the leader for all to see and he says:

This is the bread of affliction our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Whoever is hungry – let him come and eat! Whoever is needy – let him come and celebrate

¹²³ Daube, D. (1966) *He That Cometh*, 6

¹²⁴ Friedlander, M. (1937) *The Jewish Religion*, 386

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 89

¹²⁶ Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of our Heritage*, 290

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 290

Passover! Now, we are here; next year may we be in the Land of Israel! Now, we are slaves; next year may we be free men!¹²⁸

Modern Jewish commentaries give various explanations for the three *matzot*. Friedlander explains that the two unbroken matzos are called the ‘double portion.’ They represent in Jewish thinking, the Sabbath and Holy day or Day of Atonement. The third represents the “bread of poverty”, which is why it is broken. It is intended as a reminder of the affliction eaten by the Jewish forefathers when kept as slaves in Egypt. But the Hebrew term for “bread of poverty” also admits the meaning “bread of song.” It can therefore also be taken to signify the bread eaten at the joyous meal that the Israelites in Egypt ate the night of their liberation.¹²⁹

Kitov gives several other meanings for the three matzot: placed one on top of the other, they are given the names of Cohen, Levi and Israel to distinguish them; Cohen is the uppermost one because the Cohen take precedence in all things, the middle one is Levi because Levi is next in rank and the third is called Israel.¹³⁰ The three matzot also remind celebrants of the three forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the three measures of fine flour Abraham asked Sarah to bake with when the angels visited them. It is a reminder of the first Passover sacrifices that were brought by the firstborn in Egypt.

The meanings ascribed to the *matzos* and the *Afikomen* have not always been so and were historically far more Messianic in nature. Daube argues that the Christian potentialities were suppressed as the celebration of the Passover had to increasingly dissociate from Christianity.¹³¹

Early parts of the Talmud describe striking ceremonies of members of the company asking the master questions and listening to his long and varied discourses. After AD300, however, the questions and responses were formalized, thus forestalling attempts to divert the explanations into heretical ones, towards Christianity.¹³² The figure of Moses, a human mediator between God and people, dominates the narrative of the exodus from Egypt and was prominent in the early celebration of Passover; whereas

¹²⁸ Gold, A, (1990) *The Complete Artscroll Machzor: Pesach*, 89

¹²⁹ Friedlander, M. (1937) *The Jewish Religion*, 380

¹³⁰ Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of our Heritage*, 275

¹³¹ Daube, D, (1966) *He That Cometh*, 12

¹³² *Ibid*, 12

in the later *Seder* formalized by the Great Synod his name is not mentioned and no Biblical passage mentioning him is read. Kitov counters that this is so the night belongs to God alone and His mighty works, and it not to be undermined by any other focus.¹³³

Ironically, one proof for the existence of Messianic imagery in the Passover may be from the account of Jesus taking the *matzah* on the night he was betrayed and given it added meaning. It would have been difficult for Jesus to introduce to his disciples both the general idea of eating the *matzah* in remembrance of the Messiah and the specific identification of it with himself.¹³⁴ The novelty lay not in the abstract Messianic notion of the *matzah* but in the identification of this with an actual person. (Hillel, for example, took the basic ritual elements that were already present in the Passover meal to make for himself and his disciples a sandwich of lamb and *matzah*, which became identified with him and known as the “Hillel sandwich”.)

A final ritual that must be mentioned for the sake of this thesis is the drinking of four cups of wine during the Passover meal. Rabbinic tradition links the drinking of four cups of wine to the fourfold promise of redemption that God made to the Israelites. The four cups of wine are taken at different places in the Seder.¹³⁵ The first cup, *Kos Rishon*, serves for Kiddush, the second, *Kos Sheni*, is taken at the conclusion of the first part of the Seder, the third, *Kos Shlishi*, after Grace and the fourth at the conclusion of the second part of the Seder. The four cups indicate: (1) the joy or celebration of liberation from bondage; (2) deliverance from service; (3) redemption from Egypt; and (4) the appointment as the people of the Lord.¹³⁶ The third cup, *Kos Shlishi*, is of particular significance.

The third cup is known as the “cup of redemption” which rabbinic tradition links to the third of the fourfold promise of redemption that God made, “I will redeem you.”¹³⁷ It is drunk after the Passover meal has been eaten. If the Last Supper was indeed a Passover meal, then it seems clear that it was the third cup that Jesus took up, gave thanks, and proceeded to instruct his disciples to associate it with his atoning death. After drinking

¹³³ Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of Our Heritage*

¹³⁴ Daube, D. (1966) *He That Cometh*, 13

¹³⁵ It also became customary to pour a fifth cup, *Kos Revi*, the cup of Elijah, to anticipate his arrival as foretold in scripture. It would not be drunk. Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of our Heritage*, 380

¹³⁶ Friedlander, M. (1937) *The Jewish Religion*, 380

¹³⁷ Exodus 6:6-7

the third cup, Jesus refused to drink what would have been the fourth cup of wine. The fourth cup in rabbinic tradition is known as the “cup of consummation”.¹³⁸ This cup recalls the promise that God will take his own people to be with him.¹³⁹ Wilson argues therefore that

“the unfinished meal of Jesus was a pledge that redemption would be consummated at the future messianic banquet when he takes the cup and ‘drinks it anew in the kingdom of God (Mark 14:25; cf Matt. 26:29; Rev 3:20; 19:6-9).”¹⁴⁰

Today the fourth cup of wine still reminds Jewish people that their deliverance from Egypt was the first step to the fulfillment of the promise, “I will take you as my own people”¹⁴¹ An ancient Jewish rabbi, Abarbanel, viewed the fourth cup as representing the redemption that awaits the Jewish people in the future.¹⁴² This promise of a future redemption would have been especially poignant since the persecution of Jews often historically reached a climax during Passover.

The *Bircas HaMazon* (grace) is recited after the third cup has been poured. This consists of the reading of Psalm 126, and then the leader blesses God is for several things: for nourishment, for the land, for Jerusalem and for His goodness. Sadly, during the Middle Ages a tradition arose to also read Psalm 129 or Lamentations 3v66 because of the hostilities of Christians against Jews, which would become particularly evident during the season of Passover.¹⁴³ The guests at a Passover meal too often had a tragic tale to tell of their experiences on the street. Helpless and defenseless, they gave expression to their feelings in the above verses and also in song at the conclusion of the Passover when the second half of the Hallel (Psalms 115-118) was sung. The Lord’s Supper also concluded with the singing of a hymn.¹⁴⁴ This could have been the second half of the Hallel.

Two traditions are interesting to note: the use of red wine and obligatory reclining. In Jewish thinking, the red wine is a reminder of the blood of the circumcision (covenant)

¹³⁸ Mishnah, Pesachim 10:7; cf. Exodus 6:7

¹³⁹ Wilson, M. R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 247

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 247

¹⁴¹ Exodus 6:7 in Friedlander, M. (1937) *The Jewish Religion*, 380

¹⁴² Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of our Heritage*, 271

¹⁴³ Friedlander, M. (1937) *The Jewish Religion*, 387

¹⁴⁴ Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26

and the blood of the Passover offering, which through the Exodus¹⁴⁵ became closely connected.¹⁴⁶ The red wine is also a reminder of the blood which the Israelites sprinkled on the doorposts of their houses when God passed over them and spared them from death.

Throughout the *Seder*, the cups are drunk while the participants recline to the left. Reclining during a meal was regarded in Roman custom as the mark of a free man or a noble man, which became current among the Jews¹⁴⁷ and consequently the Seder celebration required the participant's actions to symbolically celebrate their freedom from bondage.¹⁴⁸ However, it is not only conceived of as freedom from slavery to another people, it is in recognition that they accepted the highest form of freedom, servitude of the Kingdom of Heaven; they became servants of God instead of servants of Pharaoh.¹⁴⁹ Thus Passover is rightfully a solemn occasion but it is also a joyous one. The emphasis is on the people of God – the gathered meal community – celebrating and remembering God's act of redemption in the *historic* Exodus event, in the *present* Exodus community and in the *future*, final redemption of all time. "Memory" is at heart of Passover.

Thus memory serves not only to link Israel to the past redemptive action of God, but also to God's future redemption. William Crockett unpacks the importance of memory to Israel. The phrase "Israel remembers" has a distinctive eschatological meaning.¹⁵⁰ He argues that

"the function of remembering God's past deeds is to point to Yahweh's sovereignty over history and to the divine purpose in history. God's sovereignty and historical purpose, however, are not confined to the past, but encompass the beginning and the end of history."

The rituals, the liturgy, the stories, and the elements serve to reaffirm the goodness and faithfulness of God to his people.

It is unfortunate that the Passover service came to suppress the Messianic imagery

¹⁴⁵ Exodus 12:43-45

¹⁴⁶ Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of Our Heritage*, 273

¹⁴⁷ Adler, C & Dembitz, LN (2002) *Seder*, *Jewish Encyclopedia*

¹⁴⁸ Mishnayos Pesachim 10:1 in Gold, A, (1990) *The Complete Artscroll Machzor: Pesach*, 176

¹⁴⁹ Kitov, E. (1978) *The Book of Our Heritage*, 279

¹⁵⁰ Crockett, W. R. (1990) *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation*, 24

contained in its traditions as the relationship between Christianity and Judaism became increasingly adversarial. The Eucharist, on the other hand, lost much of its sense of Messianic time and the rich Jewish understanding of “memory” as it distanced itself from the Passover and Christianity’s Jewish roots.

4.2 The Lord’s Supper and Passover

Wainwright gives only cursory credence to the Passover meal in Eucharistic meal theology and argues that

“according to the synoptic presentations the Eucharist was instituted during the course of the Passover meal, and the Lucan account in particular seems to suggest that the Eucharist was intended to supersede the Passover...We may therefore expect the Eucharist to take over, possibly to modify, certain theological themes connected with the Jewish Passover.”¹⁵¹

He accepts that in the time of Jesus there was a strong messianic expectation around Passover but avoids linking the Eucharist too directly to the Passover by instead emphasizing the fellowship aspect, remarking that “The Last Supper, Passover meal or not, was a fellowship meal between Jesus and his chosen twelve.”¹⁵² Thus Wainwright and other scholars have argued convincingly that the Eucharist must be viewed against the broadest possible backdrop of meal-parables and meal-activity (fellowship) in the ministry of Jesus. Yet I do not think it is theologically prudent to gloss over the question – however convenient it may be – of whether the Eucharist was instituted by Jesus in the midst of a Passover meal. If our understanding of the Eucharist is to be refreshed by viewing it against the backdrop of Jewish meal-parables and meal-activity in the ministry of Jesus, then this should also include the one Jewish meal of particular significance, namely, the Passover meal.

4.2.1 An open question?

One problem in discussing the richness of the roots of the Eucharist in Jewish meals is the extent to which we may draw from the Passover meal. The gospel accounts of the Last Supper do not allow for ease of argument that the Lord’s Last Supper and Passover are one and the same thing. Welker notes that,

¹⁵¹ Wainwright, G. (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 27

¹⁵² *Ibid*, 42

“Precisely because most of the pronouncements are very nuanced and differentiated, it is all the more astounding that the ‘night in which he was betrayed’ is notoriously left out of the picture. This fact carries major consequences. It leads to a situation in which the relation between the Supper and Passover is defined in a very unclear way, if an attempt to define it is made at all.”¹⁵³

The synoptic gospels speak of the preparation of the Passover meal, before they report on Jesus’ last meal.¹⁵⁴ The Lukan text explicitly records Jesus as saying, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.”¹⁵⁵ Some New Testament scholars argue that contained within these texts are various clues to the Passover nature of the Last Supper.

Firstly, Jesus’ meal was held when it was evening or night.¹⁵⁶ Only festival meals could stretch into the night and from its inception the Passover was eaten at night.¹⁵⁷ Secondly, Jesus reclined at the table with his disciples.¹⁵⁸ This too, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter, can only be explained on the basis of being one of the distinctive rituals associated with Passover meals.¹⁵⁹ Two of the gospels record that Jesus breaks bread only in the course of the meal.¹⁶⁰ This describes a sequence quite different from an ordinary Jewish meal, which begins with the breaking off the bread.¹⁶¹ The Passover meal was the only family meal of the year at which the serving of a dish preceded the breaking of bread.¹⁶² Lastly, Jesus’ institution of the bread and wine can only be fully explained within the framework of Passover. Jesus transformed the established interpretation of the particular elements of the meal in the Passover ritual.¹⁶³ There are other more subtle clues, such as the use of red wine, the singing of a hymn and that Jesus remained within the greater district Jerusalem.¹⁶⁴

Another group of New Testament scholars point to the several incongruities, especially

¹⁵³ Welker, M. (2000) *What happens in Holy Communion?* 43

¹⁵⁴ Mark 14:12; Matthew 26:17

¹⁵⁵ Luke 22:15

¹⁵⁶ Mark 14:17; Matthew 26:20; 1 Corinthians 11:23; John 13:30

¹⁵⁷ Jeremias, J (1964) *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 46

¹⁵⁸ Mark 14:18; Matthew 26:20; Luke 22:14; John 13:22, 23, 25, 28

¹⁵⁹ Jeremias, J (1964) *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 48-49

¹⁶⁰ Mark 14:18-22; Matthew 26:21-26

¹⁶¹ Jeremias, J (1964) *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 49

¹⁶² *Ibid*, 50

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, 56

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 53-55

the timing in the Johannine report, to argue that this was not actually a Passover meal that Jesus ate. Joachim Jeremias, in his book, *“The Eucharistic Words of Jesus”*, comprehensively documents these objections, namely:

- Luke speaks of ‘bread’, whereas only unleavened bread is used in the Passover;¹⁶⁵
- That the daily repetition of the supper in the early churches speaks against the Passover character of the supper, which was an annual event.¹⁶⁶
- In Mark 14v22-25 there is no explicit reference to the Passover ritual - the paschal lamb and bitter herbs - and that the description is inconsistent with Passover ritual.¹⁶⁷
- In Mark 14v2 the Sanhedrin were concerned to not arrest Jesus during the feast.¹⁶⁸
- In 1 Corinthians 5v7b, “For Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed” presupposes that Jesus was crucified at the time of the Passover slaughter and therefore before the eating of the Passover meal.¹⁶⁹
- In 1 Corinthians 15v20, where Christ is designated as the ‘first fruits of those who have fallen asleep’, presupposes the offering of the first-fruits on Nisan 16 and therefore also his resurrection on that day, consequently making the date of his death the 14th Nisan.¹⁷⁰
- Many of the incidents in Mark 14v17-15v47, *inter alia* Jesus going to Gethsemane on the night of Passover, the bearing of arms by temple guards, the meeting of the Sanhedrin and condemnation of Jesus during the night of the feast, the tearing of the robe at the trial, participation of the Jews in the session of the Roman court on the morning of the feast day, the coming of Simon of Cyrene on the morning of Nisan 15, the execution of Jesus on the high feast day, the purchase of the shroud on the evening of the feast day, the burial of Jesus, and lastly, the preparation of spices, could not have taken place on the first day

¹⁶⁵ Jeremias, J (1964) *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 62-65

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 66

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid* 66-70

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 71-73

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 73

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 74

of the feast of Unleavened Bread.¹⁷¹

- John 18v28 refers to the Jews not entering the palace of the Roman governor for the trial of Jesus because they ‘wanted to eat Passover’ and so not become ritually unclean by entering the palace. This would seem to indicate that the Passover had yet to take place, thus confirming that the Last Supper was not the Passover meal.¹⁷²

Jeremias systematically counters every objection, demonstrating that many of them are as a result of our own ignorance of Jewish customs and *halakah*. His investigation demonstrates that none of the objections are sufficient to refute the synoptic reports that the Last Supper was a Passover meal.¹⁷³ However, the last objection concerning the Johannine report remains valid and is the chief objection. Jeremias thus concludes that, “The synoptic and Johannine datings of the Last Supper sharply contradict one another, and that means that the question remains an open one: Was the Last Supper of Jesus a Passover meal or not?”¹⁷⁴ This unfortunately creates a difficult situation for scholars, whichever way they argue the relationship between the Passover and the Eucharist.

4.2.2 Leaving Passover out

Berkouwer begins his profound “*Studies in Dogmatics: The Sacraments*” by stating:

“The nature of the sacraments turns precisely upon the concrete givenness of baptism and the Lord’s Supper in the historical revelation in Jesus Christ.”

He speaks of the danger, evidenced throughout the history of the church, of adopting any other philosophical or phenomenological methodological approach. In his inspiring discussion on the relationship between Word and sacrament he goes as far as saying that the sacraments are authenticated by the Word.¹⁷⁵ “The sacraments show us anew what has already been said.”¹⁷⁶ Calvin believed that faith refuses to separate the sign from that which is signified.¹⁷⁷ The great cry of the Reformation, *sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone) was that all church traditions are subject to the Word. Berkouwer speaks of the

¹⁷¹ Jeremias, J (1964) *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 74-79

¹⁷² *Ibid*, 79-84

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, 84

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 26

¹⁷⁵ Berkouwer, G. C. (1981) *The Sacraments*, 47

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 55

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 80

historical progress from the Passover to the Lord's Supper; that the Lord's Supper is a fulfillment of the Passover and the whole Old Testament system of sacrificial worship.¹⁷⁸ But he also argues that the Passover and the Lord's Supper may not be identified with each other.¹⁷⁹

Arthur Patzia's view is that the Last Supper was not a true Passover meal but a supper set within the context of the Passover celebration.¹⁸⁰ He discusses the meaning and interpretation given to the words of institution and argues that this concurs with the tendency in the early church to understand Jesus as the Passover lamb.¹⁸¹ He also discusses the eschatological perspective of the Lord's Supper, using as one example, Luke's linking of the Passover meal to the kingdom.¹⁸² He briefly mentions the dimension of remembrance as a concept that conveys not merely the idea of looking back but the idea of the event present.¹⁸³

As has been seen in a previous section, Geoffrey Wainwright argues that the Eucharist is intended to supersede the Passover and that "We may therefore expect the Eucharist to take over, possibly to modify, certain theological themes connected with the Jewish Passover."¹⁸⁴ Thus Wainwright is happy to settle for the Eucharist having displaced Passover and being seen simply against the backdrop of the more general meal-parables and meal-activity in Jesus ministry.

Michael Welker acknowledges the tension of Jeremias' 'open question'. He describes it as being completely appropriate:

"On the one hand, there is continuity between the Passover meal and the Supper, insofar as both cases institute "a memorial" of God's decisive action of deliverance towards and among human beings. On the other hand, we must pay attention to the difference...It is obvious the early church perceived the difference between the Supper and the Passover festival. Nothing argues for the Supper having been celebrated, like Passover, only once per year!"

Jeremias would counter Welker's argument about 'only once per year' by drawing his

¹⁷⁸ Berkouwer, G. C. (1981) *The Sacraments*, 196

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 196

¹⁸⁰ Patzia, A.G (2001) *The Emergence of the Church*, 224

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*. 223 – c.f. John 1:36, 39

¹⁸² *Ibid*. 223 – c.f. Luke 22:15-16

¹⁸³ Patzia, A.G (2001) *The Emergence of the Church*, 223

¹⁸⁴ Wainwright, G. (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 27

attention to the fact that there was one group in the early church which did practice a yearly repetition of the Last Supper at Passover time: the Jewish Christians. But by the end of the first Century there had been a parting of ways between Christianity and Judaism and a split between Jewish and Gentile Christianity.¹⁸⁵ Consequently there was also a shift in the status quo and influence of the power hierarchy in the church from Jew to Gentile.

This serves, again, to highlight the important theme of continuity and discontinuity which Rowan Williams has underlined in regard to revolution and historical theology. However, what is true of the development of theological ideas can be true of church practices; that the practices of the early church sought to demonstrate discontinuity with Jewish practices in order to emphasize the distinctiveness of the expanding movement. Welker does not dwell on this but instead argues that “If Jesus did celebrate a Passover meal here, he in any case transformed it.”¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, he ingeniously tries to sidestep the problem altogether by arguing:

“If Jesus celebrated his last meal with his disciples not as a Passover meal, but only as a normal Jewish meal...this meal still points backwards and forwards toward the Passover festival.”¹⁸⁷

In fact he asserts that the majority of New Testament scholars today come to a similar judgment that the Last Supper was not a Passover meal, but an extra-ordinary Jewish meal.¹⁸⁸ It is understandable, then, to sympathize with Welker’s observation that pronouncements on the ‘night in which he was betrayed’ tend to be very nuanced and differentiated and furthermore, why it is notoriously left out of the picture. It is also possible to see why a situation in which the relation between the Supper and Passover is defined in a very unclear way, if an attempt to define it is made at all, has major consequences. Some Eucharistic truths simply cannot be derived from a non-specific, ordinary Jewish meal, completely divorced from the Passover, even if Jesus made it “extra-ordinary”. Therefore the argument the Last Supper was a normal Jewish meal pointing backwards and forwards toward the Passover festival is not convincing.

Firstly, having a normal Jewish meal turned into a pseudo-Passover would not have

¹⁸⁵ Patzia, A. G. (2001) *The Emergence of the Church*, 145

¹⁸⁶ Welker, M. (2000) *What happens in Holy Communion?* 51

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 52

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 49

made sense to Jesus and his disciples as devout Torah observant Jews. The teaching of Jesus, while having some originality, owed its source to traditional Judaism rather than to any other source.¹⁸⁹ The Passover is only Passover at Passover as commanded by God in the scripture. Secondly, this would have involved Jesus taking bread, be it leavened or *matzah*, and giving it added meaning. It is a stretch to argue that Jesus could have introduced to his disciple's framework of belief both the general idea of eating the bread as the body of the Messiah and the specific identification of it with himself.¹⁹⁰ The ritual elements already present in the Passover would have allowed the identification of the bread with Jesus' actual person. The novelty lay not in the abstract Messianic notion of the *matzah* but in the identification of this with an actual person during the Passover meal. Outside of Passover, this did not exist. Lastly, it would not explain the clear Lucan account of Jesus expressing happiness at being able to celebrate an actual Passover meal with his disciples.

Berkouwer links the idea of the authenticity of the Lord's Supper, the sign and signifier, and *Sola Scriptura* with the celebration of the sacraments, and with the Eucharist. What he fails to see is the impoverishment of his argument apart from Jewish roots. He is understandably concerned with drawing on the richness of Reformation roots. What we now rightly think of as the weighty Word of God is rooted in a largely Jewish context or was written by Jewish authors, which give the words of the Word significance. Certain signs accrue significant meanings only in specific Jewish rituals. The Jewish paschal lamb (that Jesus identified with), the Jewish *matzah*/afikomen (that Jesus broke), the Jewish cup of salvation (that Jesus shared), the Jewish act of remembrance (that Jesus drew from), and a community in messianic time (that Jesus instituted) gain significance in the ritual of Passover.

4.2.3 Incorporating Passover

The rituals that Jesus transformed so that the early church could understand him as the Paschal lamb, bread as his body and wine as his blood could only originate from within an established Torah and Rabbinical Passover meal framework of meaning. To avoid the consequences of leaving Passover out of the picture involves the opposite approach

¹⁸⁹ Beckwith, R. T. "The Jewish Background to Christian Worship" in Jones, C., Wainwright, G. & Yarnold, E. (Eds) (1989) *The Study of Liturgy*, 39

¹⁹⁰ Daube, D. (1966) *He That Cometh*, 13

to dealing with the open question, which is to be true to the literal understanding of Scripture. Marvin Wilson adopts this position and writes that

“A straightforward reading of the Synoptic Gospels indicates that the Last Supper in the Upper Room in Jerusalem was a traditional Jewish Passover meal commemorating the Exodus.”¹⁹¹

Ralph Martin argues that

“If we take this fact as our starting point, it will help us to see the setting of the meal and give us a window into the mind of Jesus and His disciples on the ‘night when He was betrayed.’”¹⁹²

Markus Barth says:

“Whether we like to be reminded of it or not, all Christian Churches owe a debt of gratitude to the Jews. The bond is especially close when the Passover and the Lord’s Supper are compared. Within a traditional Jewish Passover celebration, according to the first three Gospels, Jesus Christ instituted the Lord’s Supper.”¹⁹³

Contrary to Welker’s argument, Oskar Skarsaune, in his book, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, notes that “the majority of scholars take for granted that the early Eucharist should be seen against a Passover meal background.”¹⁹⁴

In the context that the question remains an open one in regard to the Last Supper being a Passover meal, I am intentionally going to take the pro-Passover position, accepting at face value the Lukan record of Jesus saying on the night he was betrayed, “I have eagerly desired to eat *this* Passover with you before I suffer.”¹⁹⁵ I do so conscious of the inability to resolve the complexity of the differing and sometimes contradictory scholarly differences. Nevertheless I would rather the gap that emerges in my thesis argument be historical timing (ie. that the Synoptic gospels cannot be reconciled to Johannine account) than the gap be in relation to the signifier of the sign, the source of important Eucharistic theological meaning, namely Passover. Consequently I will

¹⁹¹ Wilson, M, (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 237

¹⁹² Martin, R, (1964) *Worship in the Early Church*, 110

¹⁹³ Barth, M (1988) *Rediscovering the Lord’s Supper*, 7

¹⁹⁴ Skarsaune, O. (2002) *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 399

¹⁹⁵ Luke 22:15

draw on the richness of the Passover meal in my thesis on Jewish roots that refresh our Eucharistic understanding.

4.3 Roots that refresh our Eucharist

Seen against the backdrop of Jewish meals and Passover as well as Jesus meal-parables and ministry, our understanding of the Eucharist can be refreshed in a manner which challenges many of our religious worldviews. While it is true that the Eucharist is about an individual being cognizant of his or her sinfulness and through the partaking of the elements of bread and wine, entering into the sacrificial work of Christ, it is not the full scope of the revelation of God in and through the Eucharist. Berkouwer argues that there cannot possibly be an individualistic enjoyment of the gift of Holy Communion because communion with Christ cannot be detached from mutual communion¹⁹⁶ This is not to undermine the historical evolution of this ancient revolution, but rather to challenge the prevailing spirit of individualism in the Western church today.

The Reformers began this when they insisted that the lay person should take communion of “both kinds” – bread and wine. Architecturally, the Lord’s Table was brought from the far off chancel, separated by the clerical hierarchy, to a position in the midst of the people (or at least in the same space). The design of the Lord’s Table was simplified to look again like a table and not an altar, to communicate that it is not about a priestly sacrificial ritual done on behalf of the individual but an invitation to the gathered people of God to be present in community around His Table at the behest of the crucified and risen Lord, who shall come again in glory. The Reformation was simply the beginning of realizing *ad fontes*: roots that refresh. The modern liturgical movement has built on this. Ruth Meyers thus argues,

“Though the Reformation made some steps towards correcting distortions, a renewed consciousness of the Eucharistic community as the body of Christ has been primarily the fruit of the twentieth-century liturgical movement.”¹⁹⁷

Re-rooting the Eucharist in Jewish meal culture gives one an entirely different lens to engage with Eucharistic liturgy and the respective traditional interpretation of Scripture. Where previously the ecclesial dimension has been overlooked for an individualistic

¹⁹⁶ Berkouwer, G. C. (1981) *The Sacraments*, 279

¹⁹⁷ Meyers, R. A. “One Bread, One Body” in Holeyton, D. (Ed) (1998) *Our Thanks and Praise: The Eucharist in Anglicanism Today*, 85

interpretation, this can be redressed. For example, Paul chastises the church in Corinth for failing to discern the body of Christ.¹⁹⁸ In the Anglican church the Prayer Book exhortation cites Paul in admonishing communicants to examine themselves and repent of their sins. Meyers argues that

“while there is a call to live in charity with one’s neighbours, the emphasis is on the individual and that person’s relationships, rather than on the body a whole.”¹⁹⁹

More particularly, the failure to discern the body of Christ is directed towards an individual’s inability to recognize the bread and wine as Christ’s body and blood. God’s judgment then is seen in relation to believing and discerning the elements as the *corpus verum* – however one may argue the elemental action theologically as transubstantiation or consubstantiation or even memorialism. The emphasis is on an individual’s right response (recognition, devotion, discretion, confession) and partaking of the elements of bread and wine. The ramifications of an individualist interpretation have been felt across the centuries and across church traditions, *inter alia*:

- the exclusion of infants and children from the Lord’s Table;
- the exclusion of people cast out (ie. excommunicated or disciplined) by the church;
- the exclusion of people from other denominations who may not discern correctly the body and blood of Christ because of their theology;
- the emphasis on solemnity, because of the terrible seriousness of the individuals partaking of the elements.

What has been overlooked in favour of an individualistic interpretation is something quite obvious: that Paul himself is rooted in a worldview that is corporate (Middle-eastern/Jewish) rather than individualistic (Western). His chastisement on failing to discern the body of Christ therefore is directed to a community in the context of a group identity that Jesus himself had defined as being ‘salt’, ‘light’ and discernibly different because of their love, one for another.

¹⁹⁸ 1 Corinthians 11:27-29

¹⁹⁹ Meyers, R. A. “One Bread, One Body” in Holeton, D. (Ed) (1998) *Our Thanks and Praise: The Eucharist in Anglicanism Today*, 84

The bread and wine are meant to be shared in a manner appropriate to a community united together as the one body of Christ: “A body whose members respect and love one another without regards for social distinctions.”²⁰⁰ “Communion in the body of Christ implies community in the body of Christ.”²⁰¹ An ecclesial interpretation also connects sharing in the Eucharist with service and justice.²⁰² The early believers understood that celebrating the Eucharist and imitating God’s justice were both an extension of Jesus identity.²⁰³ The Christological and the ecclesiological themes stand together and should not be separated.²⁰⁴ Patrick McCormick powerfully articulates this link:

“In the Eucharist we are called to remember all the blessings we have received from God and all the ways in which neighbours, strangers, even enemies – indeed all other creatures – are part of this blessing. We are called to remember all the duties that bind us to others. Injustice begins with forgetting, with forgetting the faces and cries of the poor. In the Eucharist we are called to remember ourselves to those we have forgotten, for we cannot remember Christ and forget the poor.”²⁰⁵

The traditional individualist interpretation of the Eucharist has needed to be challenged and has been in the twentieth century. “To participate in the Lord’s Supper means to be transformed in the totality of...one’s social relationships.”²⁰⁶ Understanding communal Jewish meals, the emphasis of Passover on the “people of God”, the people Jesus ate with and his meal-parables has provided impetus to this movement.

4.3.1 Children are welcome

The exclusion of infants and children from the Eucharist until they reached an age whereby they could truly discern the body of Christ has been challenged in most church traditions today. This is important because the experience of exclusion is a painful one,

²⁰⁰ Meyers, R. A. “One Bread, One Body” in Holeyton, D. (Ed) (1998) *Our Thanks and Praise: The Eucharist in Anglicanism Today*, 85

²⁰¹ Crockett, W. R. (1990) *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation*, 32

²⁰² Meyers, R. A. “One Bread, One Body” in Holeyton, D. (Ed) (1998) *Our Thanks and Praise: The Eucharist in Anglicanism Today*, 85

²⁰³ McCormick, P. T. (2004) *A banqueter’s guide to the all night soup kitchen of the Kingdom of God*, x

²⁰⁴ Crockett, W. R. (1990) *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation*, 34

²⁰⁵ McCormick, (2004) *A banqueter’s guide to the all night soup kitchen of the Kingdom of God*, xi

²⁰⁶ Crockett, W. R. (1990) *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation*, 34

whether or not the exclusion is questioned, whether or not it is explained.²⁰⁷ Exclusion should therefore not be taken lightly. Kenneth Stevenson, reflecting on his own experiences of inclusion and exclusion, comments that

“It divides families. The eucharist, we keep telling ourselves, is a corporate activity of the whole church. When families are divided within themselves, whether because one or two children are not confirmed, or because in other instances husband or wife belongs to another church, exclusion is a form of spiritual blackmail.”²⁰⁸

The exclusion of children is challenged by Jesus, his own incarnated life as well as his attitude towards them. Daniel Young, in his book, *Welcoming Children to Communion*, argues:

“We know that Jesus welcomed children; we know that he made childlikeness a condition for entry into the Kingdom; we know that he thanked the Father for revealing to babes what had been hidden from the wise and understanding. We must not dissolve the force of all this by treating these references to children metaphorically. Their import is underlined by the incarnation: Jesus was born, and lived and grew, as a true child; and at every stage ‘...in him the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.’”²⁰⁹

Children were related to a major ruckus in the life of Jesus.²¹⁰ The disciples prevented children from coming to Jesus and it was their actions that were to blame and not the behaviour of the children.²¹¹ Brad Young notes that when it came to their attitude towards children, the disciples were put down strongly by Jesus and he, in fact, took the opportunity to teach them a deeper message concerning the kingdom of heaven.²¹² Jesus showed that children were a gift and model for believers.²¹³ The New Testament shows that children were an integral part of the church, despite not mentioning whether they were communicants. (It does not mention that women were either). The early church was not against the idea of children taking communion; Augustine dwelt on the nature

²⁰⁷ Stevenson, K. W. “A theological reflection on the experience of Inclusion/Exclusion at the Eucharist” in Meyers, R. A (1995) *Children at the Table*, 52

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 52

²⁰⁹ Young, D. (1983) *Welcoming Children to Communion*, 4

²¹⁰ Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17

²¹¹ Young, B. H. (2004) *Jesus the Jewish Theologian*, 95

²¹² *Ibid*, 95

²¹³ Matthew 19:14

of childhood as the ideal state for the communicant.²¹⁴ The medieval developments in sacramental theology and the separation of baptism from admission to the Eucharist undermined this practice in the Western Church.²¹⁵ David Holeton argues that

“the withdrawal of communion from the very young is as lamentable as the withdrawal of the chalice from the laity. They were done, in fact, for the same reason.”²¹⁶

He continues by saying that the reformers succeeded in righting part of the abuse of Eucharistic practice and while not succeeding to admit children, established the authenticity of this as an historical practice.²¹⁷ Thus, given the broader context, the burden of proof lay with those who held that children should not be admitted to communion.²¹⁸ By the end of the twentieth century in the Anglican church (in principle) and in many other churches, children of any age were being admitted to communion.²¹⁹

But how can the Jewish context refresh our Eucharistic practice? An important factor in the celebration of the Passover meal is its character as a family festival. This implies, according to Howard Marshall, that

“God’s act of redemption is concerned not merely with individuals but with the creation of people composed of *families* who will love and serve him.”²²⁰

Similarly, against the backdrop of Passover, it becomes evident that the emphasis is on teaching and communicating the essential meaning of the celebration to the next generation in the family. It is expected that the explanations are given in the common vernacular so that there is no impediment to the transmission of the meaning of Passover. All manner of devices are used to attract and keep the children’s attention, even games. Things are done differently at Passover. Children are encouraged and expected to ask questions, no matter how immature those questions may be. A patient explanation by someone more knowledgeable is the correct and very Jewish way to

²¹⁴ Young, D. (1983) *Welcoming Children to Communion*, 7

²¹⁵ *Ibid*, 7

²¹⁶ Holeton, D. R. “Communion of all the Baptized and the Anglican Tradition” in Meyers, R. M. (Ed) (1995) *Children at the Table*, 36

²¹⁷ *Ibid*, 36

²¹⁸ Young, D. (1983) *Welcoming Children to Communion*, 7

²¹⁹ *Ibid*, 7

²²⁰ Marshall, I. H. (1993) *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 77

respond to these types of questions.

Thus in the context of the Eucharist, the act of remembering what Christ has done has a future impetus to remember and communicate what Christ has done to the next generation. Tom Wright remarks, referring to the special things children do as part of the celebration of Passover, that “I look forward to the day in my own church when the liturgy will include the youngest child present asking, ‘Why is this meal different from all other meals?’ – and getting a good answer.”²²¹ If children are not full participants in the Eucharist and if it is not done with sensitivity to the context of children, then we neglect the full import of our responsibility to remember Christ until he comes again. This challenges us to re-look at the symbolism and words of our Eucharistic liturgy and how it is encountered by a child.²²²

But there is another dimension that prevents this from merely being a patronizing act and that is to remember Jesus’ teaching about children and the kingdom of God. Jesus tells his adult disciples that they have a lot to learn from the faith of children. Children today are still able to teach adults what it means to enter God’s reign.²²³

4.3.2 All believers are welcome and even outcasts

In the early church, despite a diversity of practices and theological opinions on what constituted orthodox views, believers could still share in the Eucharist at different churches. The focus was on being the body of Christ; living out the reality of being a new community shaped by messianic time. Yet eventually people would be excluded on the basis of the church tradition they belonged to. Tom Wright calls this one of the greatest scandals of the church:

“The meal that should declare, every time, that all Christians belong together has come to be, often enough, a sign of our disunity. The newspapers love to get hold of scandals in the Church – some wretched minister caught with his trousers down or his hand in the till – but the real scandal goes on every week

²²¹ Wright, N. T. (2002) *The Meal Jesus Gave Us*, 81

²²² It is at this juncture that historical-theology in interacting with the present time on these issues crosses the boundary into Practical Theology. I will endeavor not to stray too far in that direction, but simply hint at how these refreshed understandings of the Eucharist can change our church practices.

²²³ Young, B. H. (2004) *Jesus the Jewish Theologian*, 100

whenever the Jesus-meal is a sign, not of Christian unity, but of division.”²²⁴

The exclusion of people from other denominations who may not discern correctly the body and blood of Christ because of their theology has been challenged in recent decades. Geoffrey Wainwright has been at the forefront of the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM) World Council of Churches intercommunion process. He describes two positions on the question of intercommunion arising from the 4th World Conference on Faith & Order (Montreal, 1963):

- Position one: we share a fundamental faith that is the same. Our unity is the person of Christ who invites us to the table (Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, some Baptists, some Anglicans).
- Position two: the Eucharist is the acceptance of the whole Christ and implies full unity in the wholeness of his truth: unity in doctrine and ministry (Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholics, many Lutherans, some Anglicans).²²⁵

Within these two positions, Orthodox and Roman Catholics have acknowledged that they are united at a deeper level in that they essentially celebrate the same Eucharist - their differences are canonical – and so have established some common ground²²⁶ Wainwright notes that Anglicans in the modern ecumenical movement have always been generous in their invitations to others to communicate at Eucharists.²²⁷

Despite these divisions and churches being more or less cooperative or open to other traditions, Wainwright is adamant that the rediscovered eschatological nature of the Eucharist should impel divided Christians towards the practice of intercommunion:

- Lord’s Supper or Church’s supper – when a state of Christian disunity obliges us to choose between the Lord’s Supper and the church’s supper, eschatology impels us to choose the Lord’s Supper.”²²⁸
- Creative of unity or Expressive of unity – when the Eucharist as an expression of unity has been reduced in a divided church, Eschatology impels us to choose

²²⁴ Wright, N.T. (2002) *The Meal Jesus Gave us*, 35

²²⁵ Wainwright, G. (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 169

²²⁶ *Ibid*, 169

²²⁷ *Ibid*, 170

²²⁸ *Ibid*, 176

the causative value over the expressive value to promote reconciliation.²²⁹

- Love or Truth - eschatology impels us to choose love over exclusion so that the primacy of love should be exercised as generously as possible to preserve or restore church fellowship and that the demarcation of heresy be drawn as reluctantly as possible.²³⁰
- Mission or Church Order - ministerial order is secondary to the witness of unity to the world and the common celebration of the Eucharist demonstrates unity, thus eschatology impels us to choose missionary witness.²³¹

Berkouwer argues that the Eucharistic divisions form a pathetic part of church history:

“It remains one of the most pathetic features of the history of the Lord’s Supper that there has been so much controversy about a sacrament that is so eminently the sacrament of communion.”²³²

It is an act that is meant to reveal the communion of believers with Christ and with each other: there is only one baptism, one faith and one Lord; there is only one Supper because it is the Supper of Christ himself and we sit at his table.²³³ Like Wainwright, Berkouwer recognizes the fact that it is paradoxical to unite at the communion table while continuing to live in ecclesiastical separation.²³⁴ It makes a mockery of the truth that “we, who are many, are one bread, one body; for we all partake of the one bread.”²³⁵ Berkouwer cautions against doing nothing and doing too much to overcome this situation. On the one hand, “no one can take refuge in the notion of one invisible church to quiet one’s conscience”²³⁶ yet one must be careful to acknowledge that “the contemporary state of distress of the Church produces the temptation to seek a common Lord’s Supper at any price”²³⁷

Thus, contrary to Wainwright’s view, Berkouwer questions the worldview of the World Council of Churches that intercommunion precedes communion; that the very act or

²²⁹ Wainwright, G. (2002) *Eucharist and Eschatology* 177

²³⁰ *Ibid*, 178

²³¹ *Ibid*, 179

²³² Berkouwer, G. C. (1981) *The Sacraments*, 279

²³³ *Ibid*, 279

²³⁴ *Ibid*, 284

²³⁵ *Ibid*, 285, referring to 1 Corinthians 10v17

²³⁶ *Ibid*, 288

²³⁷ *Ibid*, 287

ritual of communion overcomes differences and divisions.²³⁸ He acknowledges that eschatology kindles urgency²³⁹ but, he argues that

“the problem cannot be simply solved by an appeal to ‘love’ because it can never be detached from the body of Christ, the message of the supper and from its content.”²⁴⁰

The revelation of ‘love’ is based on the foundation of Scripture. Thus if one neglects to seek a common basis of truth, of doctrine, one ultimately undermines a unifying love. Therefore, for Berkouwer, reunion (overcoming confessional differences) precedes communion and is the first step to a common worship.

One does not need to look far to see these same tensions at work in the Anglican church. In February 2007 a group of primates felt deeply unhappy about some doctrinal differences in the Anglican church and refused to partake of the Eucharist in the Anglican cathedral in Zanzibar.²⁴¹ My interpretation of their position is that it would be a farce to partake of the Eucharist if they had not in fact overcome the divisions in their midst: ie. the view that reunion precedes communion. Yet another view in the Anglican church is that the Eucharist is an instrument of unity and so participation in the Eucharist brings us together as the body of Christ despite our different theologies and ecclesial divisions: the view that communion precedes reunion.

Does it matter? Jesus welcomed people with differing Jewish religious views – from Pharisees and Zealots - and religious standing – from the righteous, taxmen, sinners and prostitutes - to his table. The position of the Anglican church I am a member of is that all believers are welcome. If you love and serve the Lord, you are welcome at His Table irrespective of your denominational or church background. The table-fellowship of Jesus demonstrated his open invitation to all believers. But what about outcasts?

Jesus welcomed outcasts. He ate with those who betrayed him. He re-instated Peter after a meal. He brought revelation to two people fleeing Jerusalem for Emmaus in the context of breaking bread. Jesus embraces a table service that forsakes the honoured place at dinner, takes a seat with the lowly, and picks up a basin and towel to wash the

²³⁸ Berkouwer, G. C. (1981) *The Sacraments*, 286

²³⁹ *Ibid*, 294

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 288

²⁴¹ Petre, J. *Anglican Church on Verge of Schism* Religion Correspondent, Zanzibar, London Telegraph, 19/02/2007

feet of assorted dinner guests.²⁴² He proclaims and practices a hospitality that makes room for the poor and a friendship that welcomes sinners and outcasts.²⁴³ Marshall notes that

“One particular form in which this welcome was expressed was in the table-fellowship which Jesus extended to such people. The fellowship was both a sign of forgiveness and acceptance and also an anticipation of the heavenly meal when all God’s people are gathered round his table.”²⁴⁴

He continues to argue that the Gospels attach considerable significance to these meals because they were not just occasions for satisfying hunger but are filled with theological significance.²⁴⁵ For those gathered around the table with Jesus, the margins between social categories like Jew and gentile, holy and profane, righteousness and forgiveness were strongly motivating, realistic and powerful.²⁴⁶ Jesus blurred those lines of social and religious division.

Jesus’ meal parables, such as the Great Feast which has been previously discussed, directly challenged the religious views of the time about exclusivity. We noted how the banquet theme was developed in the intertestamental period and was related to the coming of the Messiah. Furthermore, the idea that gentiles would be invited to attend was eliminated. As a case in point, the Qumran community specifically connected the great banquet with the coming Messiah.²⁴⁷ A short work from this community called “The Messianic Rule” describes how in the last days the Messiah will gather the whole congregation to eat bread and drink wine. But this congregation would only be made up of the wise, the intelligent and the perfect.²⁴⁸ No Jew who is smitten in the flesh, paralyzed, lame, blind, deaf or dumb is included in this congregation and certainly all gentiles are excluded.²⁴⁹ It is evident in the attitude of the pious guest in Luke 14:15 that something of this background was influential at the time of Jesus.²⁵⁰ Jesus challenges this exclusive view of the Messianic meal and recaptures Isaiah’s

²⁴² McCormick, P. T. (2004) *A banqueter’s guide to the all night soup kitchen of the Kingdom of God*, 63

²⁴³ *Ibid*, 63

²⁴⁴ Marshall, I. H. (1993) *Last Supper and Lord’s Supper*, 95

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 95

²⁴⁶ Vander Wilt, J (1998) *A church without borders*, 27

²⁴⁷ Bailey, K. E. (1983) *Through Peasant Eyes*, 90

²⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 90

²⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 90

²⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 91

open-ended vision, which included the gentiles.

Consequently recognizing who Jesus ate and the implications of his meal parables in the context of Jewish meal traditions refreshes our Eucharistic perspective and challenges the use of exclusion from the Eucharist as a disciplinary means against an individual. Welker argues that

“the acceptance of all persons, which is characteristic of the meals celebrated by the pre-Easter Jesus, reaches an exemplary apex in the Supper.”²⁵¹

In other words, against the backdrop of who Jesus welcomed to his table-fellowship, and especially given that the Eucharist unfolds on the night on which he was betrayed, in the company of people who betrayed or broke fellowship with him, it “becomes impossible to cast doubt upon the fundamental acceptance of sinners in the Supper.”²⁵² In the tradition of Passover among those engaged in the ritual of asking questions is one who is meant to represent the agnostic or atheist who sees no value to the ceremony. Yet they are welcome at the table. Welker therefore condemns the use of the Eucharist for the purposes of moral or church disciplinary control:

“It is a total perversion of communion to turn it into a process of judgment by some persons over others, or to use it to support such an undertaking. The Supper is not a test case for the moral self-assertion of a community. It is not a religious opportunity to render or refuse moral or judicial recognition to other human beings.”

Instead those who sit in judgment over others may be in danger of celebrating the Eucharist in an unworthy manner by failing to “take seriously the radicality and breadth of the reconciling work of God and Jesus Christ in the Supper!”²⁵³ This is where a corporate rather than an individualistic understanding of the Eucharist changes the emphasis. Welker explains that

“we must not separate the celebration of the eucharist from the celebration of the communal meal, the grateful celebration of the reconciliation of human beings with God and the symbolic reconciliation of human beings with each other.”²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ Welker, M, (2000) *What happens in Holy Communion?* 83

²⁵² *Ibid*, 73

²⁵³ *Ibid*, 73

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 73

Unfortunately, settling for only a “symbolic reconciliation of human beings with each other” falls short of the full import of Cavanaugh’s observation about the body of Christ - the gathered body of believers – being the *corpus verum* and not simply the *corpus mysticum*. The Eucharist is not merely ‘symbolic’ of a group of people reconciled with each other; it is meant to be a group that in reality *is* reconciled with one another. Cavanaugh argues that in the Eucharist there must be a “literal re-membering of Christ’s body, a knitting together of the body of Christ.”²⁵⁵ Humankind was created for communion, but is everywhere divided.²⁵⁶ Therefore the communion of the body of Christ is meant to be *visible* in the gathered community. He looks to the early church where “participation in the Eucharist was demanding, requiring not simply proper disposition but right conduct.”²⁵⁷ He gives the example of an instruction in the *Didache* that anyone who has a difference with his fellow believer was not to take part in the Eucharist until they had been reconciled in order to avoid profaning the Eucharist.²⁵⁸ If this reconciliation is not self-evident in the body of believers, Cavanaugh argues for the use of excommunication in extreme cases to discipline individuals, with the intent of a future reconciliation with the gathered community.

This may seem at odds with Welker’s previous argument that all should be welcome at the Table and nobody should be excluded. Cavanaugh too, does not have a moralistic paradigm in mind. He is mindful of his experience as a priest in Chile under the Pinochet regime when, within the Roman Catholic church, torturers and tortured were present in the same body of believers. In this context he interprets Paul’s warning against failing to discern the corporate body of Christ and argues that exclusion be reserved for those who fail to discern the body in this manner and consequently undermine the unity and reality of the body of Christ.²⁵⁹

Cavanaugh’s justification is that by excluding someone from the Eucharist who attacks the body of believers, one tangibly defines the whole body, not along moral lines but on corporate lines:

“Excommunication re-members the tortured body of Christ and anticipates

²⁵⁵ Cavanaugh, W. T. (1998) *Torture and Eucharist*, 229

²⁵⁶ Cavanaugh, W. T. “The City: beyond secular parodies” in Milbank, J., Pickstock, C. & Ward, G. (Eds) (1999) *Radical Orthodoxy*, 182

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 237

²⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 238

²⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 246

judgment against the torturers, thus making visible in the present what is and is not the church.”²⁶⁰

This takes cognizance of the fact that the church must act for the reconciliation of the whole world through the in breaking kingdom of God.²⁶¹ It can offer a Christian resistance to the power-hierarchies, politics, violence and despair of this world. Through the witness of table-fellowship, Jesus challenges all the embedded structures and practices that create and protect privilege and power for elite groups of every sort.²⁶² He challenges the hierarchy of the world with the hierarchy of God’s heavenly banquet.²⁶³ Cavanaugh argues that

“the Eucharist is the true ‘politics’, as Augustine saw, because it is the public performance of the true eschatological City of God in the midst of another City which is passing away.”²⁶⁴

The Eucharist, for Cavanaugh, transgresses all boundaries, even national boundaries. It redefines who our fellow citizens are.²⁶⁵ It can even be a threat to the unity of a state which seeks ultimate allegiance and identity.²⁶⁶ It is a form of non-violent resistance to the corrupted power-hierarchies of this world and a practice that anticipates a heavenly banquet where divisions have been finally overcome.²⁶⁷ It stands as a regular reminder that those who are many are gathered into one body.²⁶⁸ In the Eucharist there is an anticipation of the eschatological realized unity of all in Christ. To conclude this section it is worth including a fairly lengthy argument by Cavanaugh who articulates better than I can the relationship between Christ found at the centre of the Eucharist and yet also at the margins among the outcasts:

“The Eucharist aims to build the Body of Christ, which is not simply centripetal: we are united not just to God, as to the center, but to one another. This is no liberal body, in which the center seeks to maintain the independence of

²⁶⁰ Cavanaugh, W. T. “The City: beyond secular parodies” in Milbank, J., Pickstock, C. & Ward, G. (Eds) (1999) *Radical Orthodoxy*, 243

²⁶¹ Cavanaugh, W. T. (1998) *Torture and Eucharist*, 272

²⁶² McCormick, P. T. (2004) *A banqueter’s guide to the all night soup kitchen of the Kingdom of God*, 63

²⁶³ *Ibid*, 63

²⁶⁴ Cavanaugh, W. T. (1998) *Torture and Eucharist*, 14

²⁶⁵ Cavanaugh, W. T. “The City: beyond secular parodies” in Milbank, J., Pickstock, C. & Ward, G. (Eds) (1999) *Radical Orthodoxy*, 196

²⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 197

²⁶⁷ McCormick, P. T. (2004) *A banqueter’s guide to the all night soup kitchen of the Kingdom of God*, 64

²⁶⁸ cf. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

individuals from each other, nor a fascist body, which seeks to bind individuals to each other through the center. Christ is indeed the Head of the Body, but the members do not relate to one another through the Head alone, for Christ himself is found not only in the center but at the margins of the Body, radically identified with the ‘least of my brothers and sisters’ (Matthew 25:31-46), with whom all the members suffer and rejoice together (1 Corinthians 12:26).”²⁶⁹

4.3.3 Celebratory emotions are welcome

My experience of celebrating the Eucharist in various churches – Methodist, Presbyterian, Anglican, Baptist - is that it is only a “celebration” in the narrowest, spiritualized, internalized sense of celebrating that as an unworthy sinner I have been saved by grace. This of course is true, and a very Protestant emphasis, but it seems in need of being refreshed by the joyful, corporate identity of the Passover context.

Those participating in the Passover are instructed to do so with both solemnity and joy. Solemnity and reverence at the significance of the occasion and what it represents in terms of God’s saving action in time, past, present and future. But it is also meant to be a celebration, a joyful party of people, thanking God for his goodness and faithfulness: for redeeming for himself a people; for liberating them from bondage; for freeing them from slavery. Reconnecting with the Passover challenges contemporary Christians to reconsider the importance of joyful celebration in connection with the Hebraic background to the Last Supper.²⁷⁰ Wilson notes that

“It is not our intention in any way to demean the death or atonement of Jesus, or to downplay the significance of self-examination in the conduct of the Lord’s Supper. Nevertheless, the note of joyful praise and celebration of life in the light of redemption – so much so a part of the festival of Passover from Bible times to the present – has often become lost through the Church’s singular focus on death.”²⁷¹

And he continues with an argument, which resonates with Bonehoeffer’s invitation to a deeper life, that “as central in Christian thought as the redeeming death of Jesus may be,

²⁶⁹ Cavanaugh, W. T. “The City: beyond secular parodies” in Milbank, J., Pickstock, C. & Ward, G. (Eds) (1999) *Radical Orthodoxy*, 196

²⁷⁰ Wilson, M. R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 251

²⁷¹ *Ibid*, 252

it is of little consequence unless it leads directly to the joyful experience of life through the resurrection.”²⁷² Thus celebratory emotions are welcome and appropriate in the Eucharist. A re-emphasis on a celebratory response directs our worship towards a faithful God, rather than been continually tempted into the terminal introspection of our individualistic age. Add to this the commodification and consumer worldview prevalent in society and the Eucharist becomes a solemn ritual with the individual “me” at the centre rather than a celebratory, “Thou.”

²⁷² Wilson, M. R. (1989) *Our Father Abraham*, 252

Chapter 5. In conversation with a Low Anglican church

I turn now to bring my thesis into conversation with my own faith community. This is my social location and one that is fairly unique within Anglicanism. The parish of St John the Evangelist¹ has an interesting history and is an anomaly in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA). As a consequence, the church I belong to has a degree of clerical and lay freedom to engage and respond to issues such as those in my thesis, which is absent from other church traditions, both Anglican and other.

5.1 A low-Anglican church in an Anglo-Catholic province

In 1658 Wynberg village received its name and subsequently was chosen as a British army outpost between Cape Town and Simons Town.² At that time members of the Church of England had to travel to Cape Town to worship in the Groote Kerk.³ Consequently the first services held in Wynberg were in people's homes and officiated by Army chaplains and visiting clergy from England, who tended to be Low Church in their churchmanship. This form of Anglicanism took root in what became the Parish of St John the Evangelist, Wynberg.

From the mid-nineteenth century the Church of England, at home in England and abroad in South Africa, was significantly affected by the Oxford Movement which wanted to move closer to the Roman Catholic church both liturgically and theologically. Those who were more comfortable remaining within the Reformed tradition established by Thomas Cranmer found themselves increasingly at odds with the Anglican church in South Africa. One of the criticisms of provinces like South Africa is that as a result of the powerful influence of early bishops one form of Anglicanism has come to dominate over another.⁴

In 1870 when the Church of the Province of Southern Africa, later renamed in 2007 the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, was established as an autonomous province within the Anglican Communion, St John's Parish refused to join.⁵ The province was

¹ The identity of St John's Parish and Christ Church is used with the permission of the parish rector, Revd Duncan McLea.

² Bamford, M (Ed) (March 2005) *St John's Parish – Its History and Ethos*, 1

³ *Ibid*, 1

⁴ Jacob, W. M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 290

⁵ Bamford, M (Ed) (March 2005) *St John's Parish – Its History and Ethos*, 4

considered the most Catholic of all the Anglican provinces in the worldwide communion at the time.⁶ Instead the parish sought to remain within the ambit of English Reformation legislation and the Church of England in England.⁷ In the following two decades the province sought to bring the legal position of the St John's Parish into line with the new constitutional development. St John's Parish applied for a separate Act of Parliament to guard their particular form of Anglican heritage and was granted one: Act 9 of 1891 – “The St John's Act 1891”.⁸

In the 1930s many evangelical churches found themselves in an untenable situation within the Anglican province and after protracted legal battles, eventually formed the Church of England in South Africa (CESA). However, St John's Parish declined to join CESA and negotiated an agreement with the Province in 1938 to better define their unique relationship. In 1956 a formal Declaration of Association between St John's Parish and the Diocese of Cape Town was signed.

Thus St John's Parish retains its independence from the Province while at the same time being in association with it. The unique identity of the six churches that make up the parish – beliefs, practices and governance – has been developed further still into a Descriptive Document, which was granted legal status in May 1997. In regard to the Eucharist – “*Sacrament of Holy Communion*” it reads as follows:⁹

4. Sacrament of Holy Communion

- 4.1 The Eucharist is central, but not essential, to our corporate acts of praise and worship. Baptism admits people to Holy Communion (see Rites of Passage: Baptism)
- 4.2 We have an “open table” to which communicant members from other churches are welcome.
- 4.3 Communion by extension (home communion) is an important part of pastoral care and may be administered by licensed lay ministers.
- 4.4 When people are suspended from Holy Communion, procedures for pastoral discipline are applied in accordance with Canon 35.

⁶ Mort, J (June 1989) *St John's Parish: Its History and Background*, 4

⁷ Jacob, W. M. (1997) *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, 290

⁸ Bamford, M (Ed) (March 2005) *St John's Parish – Its History and Ethos*, 4

⁹ *Parish of St John the Evangelist Wynberg: Descriptive Document*, 8

This discussion document has provided an historical frame of reference for my faith community.

In the past decade our church building has undergone and continues to undergo a reordering. The style of our Sunday worship services has become markedly less formal. The significance of the reordering of the church building and the services becoming less formal will be brought into conversation with my thesis. Before that, however, it is important to note some of the unique *influences* as far as Jewish roots are concerned. The conscious attempt to reconnect with our Jewish roots has partially been reflected architecturally, but has been more keenly demonstrated in the context of the exposition of the Hebrew Bible and understanding of the Jewish Jesus.

5.2 Changing architecture and pattern of our Sunday services

A critique of Christian history is not limited to historical figures or their extant writings. From a historical-theological perspective church architecture gives important clues about how people of any time and place have practiced and understood their worship.¹⁰ The Reformers were conscious that the medieval church buildings they inherited embodied an understanding of the Christian community and its worship which they rejected.¹¹ Changed practice called for changes in its architectural setting.¹² Early Anglican churches, restricted to adapting medieval architecture, moved the table closer to the lay people, some even positioning it in the nave.¹³ Consequently, Peter Cobb notes that

“when churches were built designedly for the reformed liturgy they were essentially one-roomed buildings of a size to enable all present both to hear and see everything clearly.”¹⁴

The Lutherans on the Continent, for example, espoused the ideal of a single-roomed, chancel-less building, with the three essential pieces of furniture – table, font and pulpit

¹⁰ White, J. “Prayer Book Architecture” in Hefling, C. & Shattuck, C. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey*, 106

¹¹ Cobb, P. E. “The Architectural Setting of the Liturgy” in Jones, C., Wainwright, G. & Yarnold, E. (Eds) (1989) *The Study of Liturgy*, 477

¹² White, J. *Prayer Book Architecture*, 114

¹³ *Ibid*, 108

¹⁴ Cobb, P. E. “The Architectural Setting of the Liturgy” in Jones, C., Wainwright, G. & Yarnold, E. (Eds) (1989) *The Study of Liturgy*, 477

– grouped together as the main focus.¹⁵ The eighteenth century Anglican architect, Sir Christopher Wren was scornful of Romanist architecture with their bigger churches, where only a murmur could be heard and the elevation of the host seen from a distance; he designed churches to be fitted for what he called, ‘Auditories’.¹⁶ Yet in the nineteenth century Gothic architecture came to dominance and continued to determine the building and arrangement of Anglican churches in England, and elsewhere, until the middle of the twentieth century.¹⁷ It represented a contemporary romanticisation of the Middle Ages and was responsible for the return of the basic two-roomed medieval arrangement of the nave for the people and the chancel for the clergy, and also now for the choir.¹⁸

Our church building was completed and consecrated in 1907. It originally conformed to the Reformed ideal of a single room with the liturgical focus on the Word and the Table close to the people. Despite our Reformation roots, this was an accident of finance and when the money had been raised a chancel was added: the clergy and choir now separating the Table, placed against the far wall, away from the people. Thus, in essence, our church was built to reflect the prevailing “contemporary” style of church for that era, although to an observer almost a hundred years on this would be hard to imagine.

Towards the end of the last century a process was embarked on to reorder the church building to again reflect a contemporary feel and create opportunities for more modern liturgical expressions, but would take many years before being realized. The problem, well documented by James White, is that many churches face existing structures that have “needed to be adapted if new ways of conceiving liturgy were to be put into practice.”¹⁹

The Minister-in-Charge, Revd Duncan McLea, commented in 1997 that

“I have been personally challenged to review my own priorities and... to be less focused on the ‘holy place’ and to join you in the ‘market place.’ What this

¹⁵ Cobb, P. E. “The Architectural Setting of the Liturgy” in Jones, C., Wainwright, G. & Yarnold, E. (Eds) (1989) *The Study of Liturgy*, 478

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 477

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 478

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 478

¹⁹ White, J. *Prayer Book Architecture*, 115

means in practice I would value your help in discovering.”²⁰

The following year he put forth the challenge that “we want to make Christ Church a more welcoming, caring environment.”²¹ “To be more welcoming” became the philosophy behind changes to the church building. Consequently in his address to the Church Meeting in 1999, McLea motivated that

“we are looking at how we can make this property and its facilities more welcoming to strangers, easier to manage and more adaptable and flexible to the variety of uses to which it is put.”²²

The tangible implications of this process began to be felt when it was realized that removing the pews would create a much more user-friendly space. McLea addressed this issue in a letter to the church in 2000: “This would involve replacing the pews with chairs to give us greater flexibility so that this, our largest venue, could be more effectively used in worship and outreach.” Three years later, having pastorally navigated the politics of replacing the pews, the pews were removed on Sunday 13th October 2003. McLea reflected on the process and argued for our church to always be seeking to adapt to the changing world:

“When the church was built in 1907, life and customs were very different...It was an age of formality... Today, informality and networking are the hallmarks of our society. The chairs and carpet give a warm, homely feel and blend in with the ambience of stone and stained glass. More importantly, they give us flexibility in the way we use the church building... We live in a rapidly changing world and unless we adapt, we will become a relic of the past and a museum piece for students of history.”²³

In 2006 the church was fitted with multi-media screens and data-projectors and so the process continues, driven by the vision of being a welcoming, contemporary church. It is the modernizing of Wren’s fitting the church for “Auditoriums” as well as for visual communication. Within the last decade this reordering of the church has also worked its way out in the pattern of our worship services.

²⁰ Minutes - Annual Vestry Report 1997

²¹ *Ibid*

²² McLea, D. Report to Church Meeting, 23 August 1999

²³ McLea, D. (2003) *Where have all the Pews Gone?* Parish Profile, Vol.22, Issue 1, 2

The nineteenth century practice of a formal choir in the chancel has gradually been replaced by various music bands at the 10am and 7pm services. The choir is quite literally dying out and now only participates every alternate week in the 8am service. The organ too is only prevalent at the 8am service. Formal vestments worn by the ordained ministers and lay-ministers have been dropped from both the 10am and 7pm services. The 1662 liturgy has now been replaced by the 1989 APB at all three services, with its use at the 8am service only phased out this year. It is still in use at the Wednesday 10am Eucharist service. The preacher now speaks from behind a lectern and does not enter into the formal wooden pulpit. The communion table is movable and is only placed in a central space on the raised chancel on Communion Sundays; ie. every other week. The music band occupies centre stage at other times.

One wonders what critique will be given of these changes towards a more informal, ‘welcoming’ use of space in another hundred years time, given the judgment of White, that space “reveals what has happened in worship at any given time.”²⁴ A long view of history gives an important perspective. The use of church buildings has swung back and forth, like a pendulum, between being considered a *sacred* space where no ‘worldly’ activities may be permitted to being an *open* space, where everyday activities are accommodated. In the sixteenth century the naves of many English churches and adjoining cemeteries were used for entirely secular purposes.²⁵ Such was the perceived profanity that an appeal was made to respect church buildings in a manner akin to the way *Jews* respected the sanctity of their places of worship.

Several homilies written at this time by Anglican Church leaders espoused the Jews to be our teachers in this regard. John Jewel, in his *Homily on the Right Use of the Church*, argued that “if we could compare our negligence of resorting to the house of the Lord...to the diligence of the Jews...we may justly condemn our slothfulness.”²⁶ And in a *Homily for Repairing and Keeping Clean of Churches*, Jewel instructed,

“keep your churches comely and clean: suffer them not to be defiled...It is the house of prayer, not the house of talking, of walking, of brawling, of minstrelsy,

²⁴ White, J. F. “The Spatial Setting”, in Wainwright, G. & Westerfield Tucker, K. B. (Eds) (2006) *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, 793

²⁵ d’Uzer, V. “Jews in Sixteenth-century Homilies” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 274

²⁶ *Ibid*, 272

of hawks, of dogs.”²⁷

The then Archbishop of York forbade the giving of dinners in churches and balls in cemeteries.²⁸ It is worth engaging with this at two levels with respect to my thesis. Firstly, it clearly demonstrates the continual ebb and flow of theology and practice in the church over time. Whatever is has already been, and what will be has been before.²⁹ There is nothing new under the sun. Now in the twenty-first century, Christ Church is not averse to having a good party in the church building. At least once a semester a banquet is held for the Alpha Course, complete with wine, food, live music, and sometimes dancing. The pendulum has swung towards a more informal, open use of space, rather than a formal, reverencing of sacred space. As previously discussed, this is also reflected in our Sunday services of worship.

Secondly, one must appreciate the caution of Rowan Williams about the foreignness of history and similarly apply it to the interpretative gap when appealing directly to Jewish practices. The Anglican Homilists of the sixteenth century used multiple examples from the Hebrew Bible and Jewish practices to give practical instructions for the present time. While they correctly discerned that Jews respect the holiness of space, it is not the emphasis of their religion. Space is not intrinsically sacred, except in the more general sense that everything has been created by God, which God has deemed to be good.

Judaism is a religion of time aiming at the sanctification of time.³⁰ Jewish ritual may be characterized as the art of significant forms in time, as architecture of time.³¹ Heschel argues that when history began there was only one holiness in the world - the holiness of time - for God sanctified time before sanctifying any object in space.³² It was after the people succumbed to the temptation of worshiping an object, the golden calf, that the erection of a Tabernacle was commanded, initiating holiness in space.³³ Consequently it is remembering God’s faithful intervention in history, in time, as recounted in the Hebrew Bible that defines the nature of sacred space. The synagogue is sanctified through the faithful reading of the Hebrew Bible in community. The

²⁷ d’Uzer, V. “Jews in Sixteenth-century Homilies” in Wood, D. (Ed) (1992) *Christianity and Judaism Studies in Church History*, Vol. 29, 274

²⁸ *Ibid*, 274

²⁹ Ecclesiastes 3:15

³⁰ Heschel, A. J., (1951) *The Sabbath*, 8

³¹ *Ibid*, 8

³² *Ibid*, 9

³³ *Ibid*, 10

Hebrew Bible is holy because it contains the words that recall the faithfulness and mystery of God's engagement with humanity, in time. Furthermore, from a Jewish perspective the working week is sanctified by observing the Sabbath as commanded by God, and the space used for this is the home where everyday activities and work is conducted for six days of the week. Thus Heschel judges that "the true sanctuary has no walls; spirit and commitment must be alive in homes as well as in churches; man's total existence is the challenge."³⁴

Heschel argues that the "ultimate decision for Jew or Christian is whether to be involved in the Hebrew Bible or to live away from it."³⁵ Furthermore, the Protestant cry of *sola scriptura* means little if we have much to say *about the Bible* but are not prepared to hear what the Bible has to say about us.³⁶ He notes that

"The Hebrew Bible is quoted in sermons but is absent from minds. Its intellectual relevance is ignored. Its way of thinking has not affected modern man...What we face is a profound alienation from the Bible...The words are still with us. Scripture has vanished from our hearts. Yet the miracle of re-engagement is possible."

This miracle of re-engagement has been witnessed in my own faith community through the influence of people such as Atkinson, Pryor and Pileggi. Time will tell what their legacy is and so we must await the perspective and verdict of history. Yet in Christianity's recent history there have been giants of our faith who have done the same and to whom we can turn.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is one such person. When he was imprisoned towards the end of his life, his letters from prison reflected "his love and passion for the Old Testament."³⁷ He came to the realization that it is to the detriment of Christianity to want to take our thoughts too quickly and too directly from the New Testament. The message of the Hebrew Bible is that the encounter between God and humans is of such a nature that it occurs at the centre of life.³⁸ Paul's proclamation of Christ and the gospel of God are not primarily about an individual's redemption from cares, fears, sin and death in a

³⁴ Heschel, A. J. (1972) *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 174

³⁵ *Ibid*, 171

³⁶ *Ibid*, 171

³⁷ Vosloo, R. (2007) *Beyond Spirituality*, 84

³⁸ *Ibid*, 85

better world beyond the grave but about a Christian hope that sends a human back to his or her life on earth in a wholly new way.³⁹ Christians who see salvation exclusively as an “other-world” reality are often not challenged in their faith by injustice among people or the environment.⁴⁰ The preoccupation with personal salvation has a tendency to weaken our sensitivity to social issues.⁴¹ Thus Heschel also asserts:

“Do not sell salvation too cheaply. Let us disavow easy decisions and come to realize that religious existence is arduous and full of demands, that existence as such is at the brink of the abyss. Luther had to fight against the traffic in indulgences; today he would have to fight the epidemic of self-indulgence.”⁴²

The Hebrew Bible makes it clear that God redeemed a people from bondage in Egypt to live before God as God’s *people* on earth. In light of this our redemption by Jesus is even more clearly defined. Bonhoeffer discerns that the Christian, like Jesus himself, must drink the earthy cup to the *dregs*, and only in her doing so is the crucified and risen Lord with her and she crucified and risen with Jesus.⁴³ To bring these two threads together: Heschel speaks about our alienation from the Hebrew Bible and Bonhoeffer argues we must drink deeply the earthy cup to the dregs. Our alienation from the Jesus of the Hebrew Bible has allowed us to become alienated from drinking deeply from the earthy cup. It is worth quoting a long excerpt from Shane Claiborne’s book, *The Irresistible Revolution*, because it highlights this paradox:

“I did a little survey, probing Christians about their (mis)conceptions of Jesus...I asked participants who claimed to be ‘strong followers of Jesus’ whether Jesus spent time with the poor. Nearly 80 percent said yes. I asked this same group of strong followers whether they spent time with the poor, and less than 2 percent said they did. I learned a powerful lesson: We can admire and worship Jesus without doing what he did. We can applaud what he preached and stood for without caring about the same things. We can adore his cross without taking up ours.”⁴⁴

And I would add in light of the Eucharist, we can drink the Lord’s Cup without drinking

³⁹ Vosloo, R. (2007) *Beyond Spirituality*, 88

⁴⁰ McDonagh, S. (1986) *To care for the earth: a call to a new theology*, 18

⁴¹ Heschel, A. J. (1972) *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 174

⁴² *Ibid*, 175

⁴³ Vosloo, R. (2007) *Beyond Spirituality*, 89

⁴⁴ Claiborne, S. (2006) *The irresistible revolution: living as an ordinary radical*, 113

deeply the earthy cup to the dregs; we can remember the body of Christ (Jesus) without seeking to re-member the body of Christ (the church). The Christian hope of resurrection is not a redirection of the focus on this life to an after-life but an invitation into living a deeper life.⁴⁵

The result of a faith deeply rooted in the Hebrew Bible, and an emphasis defined by Jewish roots, is a commitment to a spirituality that takes this world and this earth seriously.⁴⁶ The implication is that a Eucharist reconnected to its Jewish roots will also take seriously the need to be a community prepared to drink to the dregs the earthy cup that is done in remembrance of the cup our Lord drank. The Christian hope of resurrection affirmed by those who partake of the Eucharist then too will not be a redirection of the focus on this life but an invitation into living a deeper life.

Living a deeper life is the invitation to be the visible community again that has as a goal the public re-membering of the body of Christ. Being the Body of Christ, according to McCormick, will mean “honouring all the members of Christ and showing special care for the wounded and broken limbs and organs of Christ’s body who are our sick, suffering, hungry, poor, and oppressed neighbours.”⁴⁷

An individual’s movement towards the Lord’s Table will have the dimension of personal redemption but must also have the dimension of social and economic redemption, of seeing families and friends reconciled, and justice done. Celebrating the Eucharist in a manner worthy of Jesus will mean seeking the dismantling of every structure of oppression, injustice, and marginalization.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the remembering of Jesus will be to engage with a God who intervenes in time, a God who sanctifies time. Yet to proclaim the mystery of our faith, that “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again,” is not to draw us from the dimension of community but to affirm the mystery of going deeper into life, that “we have died together, we will rise together, *we will live together.*”

5.3 In conversation with my thesis

Given all this, the history of my church, the freedom that is evident to change the

⁴⁵ Vosloo, R. (2007) *Beyond Spirituality*, 90

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 92

⁴⁷ McCormick, P. T. (2004) *A banqueter’s guide to the all night soup kitchen of the Kingdom of God*, 75

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 66

architecture of our church as well as the style of Sunday worship services to be “more contemporary” and “more welcoming”, how deep do these changes go? Has our awareness of our Jewish roots changed our understanding of the Eucharist, especially towards a renewed focus on living a deeper life in community with the dregs of humanity?

5.3.1 Are children welcome?

Children are not barred from partaking communion in our church. In fact families are actively encouraged to celebrate the Eucharist together. Once a quarter during term-time we have an All Age Service of Holy Communion. Every 10am Sunday morning service during the school holidays is an All Age Service and where that falls on a Communion Sunday, children have an opportunity to take part in the Eucharist. The mission statement of our All Age Service is:

We believe in the importance of ages worshipping together regularly. We believe that God uses our different experiences as children, teenagers and adults to draw us closer to Himself and that in worshipping together we are enriched, challenged and blessed. We do this to affirm that God has called us to be one.⁴⁹

Within this service the Eucharist is seen as a symbol of unity across people of different ages. In our church it is meant to be a service in which even the very young feel relaxed, but the expectation is that they move around quietly or else play outside in the garden. As the moving around quietly is unlikely to be sustainable, the latter option of the garden is likely to happen. So in principle, children are welcome but in practice there are barriers to their full participation.

The Eucharist liturgy is not always adapted to make it more accessible to children. The APB is formal and long-winded in its style or is through the eyes of a child. Sometimes the Kenyan liturgy is used which is far more interactive, which is better for children. However, the onus is primarily on the child to engage with the Eucharist rather than the older members of the Eucharistic community engaging with the children to ensure that the Jesus-story, like the Exodus story in Passover, is passed on and entered into by the next generation.

As previously discussed, a shift back to a focus on the home happened in the Passover

⁴⁹ Richardson, B. (Ed) *Mission Statement for All Age Services*, Christ Church

tradition once the Temple was destroyed. I believe that ironically, our churches have become temple-like to the extent that many people view the church as being the building one goes to on a Sunday, rather than the people one meets together with in fellowship as a living temple. The necessary constraints of a formal service to insure orderly worship for a large congregation does not allow for childlike interactions, joyful exuberance, curiosity, playfulness and questioning.

Reaffirming this root that can refresh – welcoming children – has implications for how we *do* church. The place for that is in the more intimate confines of a family home or on a smaller scale, in home-groups or in child specific contexts such as Children’s Church (formerly known as Sunday School). Taking my thesis to heart to make children welcome would entail radically rethinking how the Eucharist is celebrated in our midst. It could mean celebrating the Eucharist in the context of our Children’s Church and Youth Church, with an open invitation to adults and parents to participate, being conscious of their incarnational responsibility to be like Jesus to the children.

The Anglican Church limits who can preside at the Eucharist to an ordained minister. However, recognized (ie. licensed) lay ministers are permitted to distribute the “consecrated” elements in visits to those who are sick at home or in hospitals. It may be possible, while respecting the Anglican traditions, to broaden the role of lay ministers to include visits to home-groups that meet during the week. Thus in the context of a smaller body of believers, with children in their midst, the experience of a gathered relational-community will come again to the fore. Joyful celebration, curiosity, playfulness and questioning could be rediscovered, while not undermining the solemnity of what is being entered into; although that would be the responsibility of the adults.

5.3.2 Are all believers welcome and what about outsiders?

The insert in our ‘pew’ leaflet says:

We welcome all who know and love the Lord, including children, to share in Holy Communion. We have chalices of wine, and grape juice for children as well as for adults who choose this option.

Provision 4.2 of the *Descriptive Document* states that the Eucharist is an ‘open table’ to which communicant members from other churches are welcome. Every believer is welcome to partake of the Eucharist so long as they are in right standing in their own

church community.

The table is open to members of all denominations and independent churches. Thus confessional unity does not present a barrier, so long as each person is able to acknowledge Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. With the inclusion of both wine and grape juice at the Eucharist it also prevents the cup from being a barrier to participation, for those who hold to being teetotalers and for those who suffer from alcoholism. This is not far from the idea of Jesus sharing meal-fellowship with fellow Jews with a range of religious beliefs like Pharisees and Zealots. Similarly in the early days of the early church, diversity of beliefs or practice was not necessarily seen as a barrier to partaking of the Eucharist in one another's churches.

Through provision 4.4 of our *Descriptive Document* people can be made unwelcome at the Eucharist – members can be suspended from Holy Communion, following the procedures for pastoral discipline in Canon law 35: Canon 35 sections 8 – 13 are specifically used when "a Communicant [is] in a state of open and malicious contention with his neighbours or in open contravention of Canonical regulations of the Church or other grave and open sin without repentance..." Canon 35 is there to help deal with sin in the life of the church; suspending from Communion is a last resort.⁵⁰

In light of the potential to use Holy Communion to discipline an individual, one can only surmise then that truly discernable outsiders would technically not be welcome. Happily, given the size and profile of our congregation (outsiders can get lost in the crowd), this remains to be tested. I would imagine, however, given our philosophy of being welcoming that we would turn a blind eye and not bar them from communion, but I stand to be corrected.

Unfortunately, a very real barrier remains to outsiders and the unchurched in the form of our Eucharistic liturgy and service. An example of what outsiders may struggle engaging with is our Prayer of Humble Access, which includes the phrase:

“Grant us therefore, gracious Lord so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink his blood that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us.”⁵¹

The formal language may give the wrong impression. To a rational outsider this is

⁵⁰ From consulting Revd Andrew Hunter, newly appointed Dean to Grahamstown Cathedral, who has a specialist interest in canon law.

⁵¹ *An Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) Church of the Province of Southern Africa, 128

cannibalism. To someone unchurched, there are no cues that this is meant to be interpreted “spiritually”. The solemnity of the service is another barrier. I encountered a young woman, new to Christianity, who currently feels so intimidated by the service that she does not go up for communion. In light of who Jesus welcomed to his table and my church’s desire to be welcoming, we need to seriously consider the manner, style and language in which we celebrate the Eucharist.

5.3.3 Are celebratory responses welcome?

While the very formal liturgy of the 1662 Prayer Book has been replaced with the 1989 APB, the sentiment of the Eucharist emphasizes an individual, solemn response. So long as we use the 1989 APB, the language and theology prevents us from refreshing the celebration with Reformed and Jewish roots. It would seem the most obvious thing, given our desire to stand in the Reformed tradition and our experience of a Hebraic perspective, that we would use the Kenyan liturgy or experiment with our own. We should be seeking a community-based, eschatologically orientated liturgy that recounts God’s faithfulness to his people throughout history.

I think it is at this juncture that two significant issues are revealed. Firstly, our independence from the Anglican Church of Southern Africa is a delicate matter. It would not be politic to officially set aside the Eucharist of the 1989 APB. The Prayer Book – its history and different versions – carries a weight of symbolism with it. Given that the architecture and style of worship has been radically reordered to be more contemporary, the 1989 APB provides one of the most tangible signs that we are still in association with the province. Replacing the 1989 Eucharist with any other liturgical form would be to further emphasize our independence from the province.

Secondly, the reordering of the worship space has been driven by a desire to make *individuals* more welcome. Our society is characterized by informality. But it is also one of individualism, hence the corresponding need to network. The focus of our Eucharist is on the participation of individuals and not on the gathered community. This is conveyed in the liturgy of the 1989 Anglican Prayer Book, but also in our church’s specific understanding of spirituality, which is largely individualist: personal salvation, personal sin, personal relationship with God, etc.

Being rooted in the idea of community has been lower down the agenda and subsequently has lacked the force to bring about significant changes to the manner in

which we celebrate the Eucharist. An early attempt to rearrange the chairs – once the pews were gone - to create a more intimate, communal environment met with little success. The idea of expressing architecturally the corporate nature of the people of God was too radical and too uncomfortable. It was also logistically difficult to do, given the constraints of working within an architectural style that is naturally directed towards everybody facing the front where the minister performs his or her duties of preaching and dispensing communion. An attempt to have the worship band in the congregation and not elevated on the stage met with a similar fate. The introduction of the “Peace greeting” continues to be part of the Eucharist service but also remains in many peoples’ experience a terribly awkward affair of individuals interacting with each other.

Thus despite the influence of reconnecting with our Jewish roots and valuing our Reformation roots, we are more rooted in South African Anglicanism and a Western worldview than we realize. Consumer society wins the day. Jesus is dispensed at the rail, once the solemn performance is over, to individuals who consume him “by faith in their hearts and with thanksgiving.” The root has not yet grown deep enough to refresh our celebration of the Eucharist with the joy of a visible gathered community – body of Christ - meeting together to engage with the *corpus mysticum* of Jesus present in all time - past, present and future – welcoming to him all people who respond to his invitation to fellowship with him at the Table.

While the practical outworking of roots that refresh may not seem to be the domain of historical-theology, the fact is that if church services are *done* differently as a result of, for example, welcoming children to the Eucharist, then it may have the power to also challenge the prevailing Eucharistic theology. Past theology and practice can be brought into dialogue with the present Jewish roots thesis to create new theological emphases. The strangeness of seemingly foreign ideas, such as bringing children to the fore of the Eucharistic celebration, can be made familiar as they demonstrably become our present reality. Our attempt to refresh our faith through re-connecting with the Jewish roots of Christianity is after all not simply an abstract venture, but is one that, according to Vosloo, “requires concrete encounters and timeful embodiment.”⁵²

⁵² Vosloo, R (2007) *Beyond Spirituality*, 95

Chapter 6. Conclusion

In my thesis I have argued that by intentionally reconnecting with Christianity's Jewish roots, as much as we may from such a historical distance, we find roots that refresh, ones that profoundly challenge our understanding of the Eucharist. Historical theology has provided the framework to engage with these dynamic and complex Jewish roots, as well as allowing us to examine the historical trajectories of resistance to our Jewish roots, namely anti-Semitism, in the church and the situations within which these ideas developed or were specifically formulated. However, it has been necessary to keep in mind that these anti-Semitic theological perspectives have been shaped by the insights and limitations of people who were seeking to live the gospel in a particular context.

The historical theology approach has served to remind us that Christianity has inevitably absorbed ideas and values from its cultural backdrop. Historical theological investigation has helped us define our own identity but this same history that we study is like a foreign land to us with characters who are strangers. I drew extensively on Rowan William's argument that these historical figures are not modern people in fancy dress but have to be listened to as they are, and not judged or dismissed or claimed or enrolled too rapidly as supporters of our way of thinking. I therefore hope that my treatment of some of the giants of Christian history, like John Chrysostom and Martin Luther, while dwelling on their negative attitudes towards Judaism, has been sympathetic to them in their context. I nevertheless have felt compelled to highlight this darker side because of the historical silence of the church in regard to Christian anti-Semitism.

I believe this has achieved one aim of historical theological engagement, which is to bring a valuable accumulation of enduring insights as well as relevant warnings to today's church. It has demonstrated that certain ideas about Jews and Judaism came into being under very definite circumstances and that mistakes have been made. The recent move in Eucharistic theology to view the Eucharist against the backdrop of Jewish meal traditions, the meal parables and meals of Jesus serves to show that theological developments are not irreversible and that emphases of the past may be re-engaged with. Alister McGrath's argument that historical theology is not restricted to the past has been demonstrated throughout my thesis.

My thesis has dealt with several obstacles that hinder us from being refreshed by our

roots. The first obstacle examined was the problematic interpretative gap of history, between the strangeness of the past and the familiarity of the present. A second obstacle only briefly touched upon was that of the attitude of anti-intellectualism in some churches today and an ignorance of the history of Christianity and their place in it. Given the nature of my thesis, the primary focus has been on the obstacle of Christian anti-Semitism and the de-Judaizing of Christianity. To seek greater continuity with Judaism is to actually Christianize Christianity.

But historically this has been problematic. On the one hand, from the perspective of historical theology we saw that it was impossible for a religious movement coming out of Judaism to expound Christianity without reference to and comparison with Judaism. This is the argument of Rowan Williams, that there is an element of discontinuity that is essential to history, which means that a reinterpretation of history and revolution are always born together. On the other hand, the parting of ways between Jewish and Gentile Christians and the process of dejudaization within the church, argues Abraham Heschel, has resulted in the abandonment of Christian origins and alienation from the core message of the Hebrew Bible.

My discussion on Marcion served to illustrate the dilemma of the early church. The church could not condone his division between the God of the Old Testament and of the New and therefore declared him a heretic. Yet the church was forced to confront the problem and did so by emphasising it was because the Jews were particularly prone to sin that God dealt with them differently in history. Tertullian, Irenaeus and Justin argued for an unsatisfactory Jewish people. The early church theologians also used history - anti-Jewish triumphalism - as an argument. Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea and Augustine provide evidence of this 'argument from history'. Yet I also illustrated the more sinister move towards portraying Jews as paragons of evil and satanic adversaries, as Christ-killers. Unfortunately this is the sentiment that comes across in some of the writings of Gregory of Nyssa, Hilary of Poitiers, Tertullian, Jerome and Melito of Sardis. To illustrate the continuous theme of the church distancing itself from its Jewish roots, from the early church until the present, I focussed on the anti-Jewish polemics of John Chrysostom and Martin Luther as well as some more recent examples from within the Anglican church, to include my own tradition within the ambit of Christian anti-Semitism.

It was at this stage of my thesis that I turned to look at the peculiar history of the

Anglican church. Having been born out of the Reformation, it today encompasses those in both the Reformed and Anglo-Catholic folds. It has not been devoid of anti-Semitism. The re-introduction of the *Reproaches* into the South African liturgy may serve to confirm my argument that the church is not as sensitive to its anti-Jewish history as it needs to be.

It is in this context of Jesus' parable of the Great Banquet, in the company Jesus kept at meals with tax collectors and sinners, and not least, in Jesus' celebration of the Jewish Passover that my thesis reaches its apex. From this vantage point the richness of our Jewish roots and the potential to refresh our understanding of the Eucharist becomes evident. Being re-rooted in a Jewish context is to reaffirm the fullness of all that Jewish meals represent in the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth as well as the faithfulness of the God of Israel. It changes our emphasis from the body of Christ as the elements of bread and wine involved in a clerical ritual and discerned by individuals to the body of Christ as the gathered meal *community* living in the presence of the resurrected Christ with *eschatological hope* and discerned in a congregation. Engaging with the Jewish roots of the Eucharist, as transformed by Jesus teaching and praxis, therefore challenges us today to change the emphases of our celebration of the Eucharist to:

- *Ecclesial community*, instead of on individualistic participation. The re-rooting of Eucharistic thinking in Jewish meal culture provides a safeguard against the distorting or obscuring of the profound fact that the Eucharist is an act of worship of the *community* gathered in Jesus' name. The perspective of community matters to Eucharistic theology.
- *Time*, rather than simply sacred space. This is not to discount the importance of sacred space but rather to acknowledge that historically the emphasis has come to be on space in the time-space continuum. The re-rooting of Eucharistic thinking in Jewish meal culture, and in particular the Passover, affirms that the mystery of the Eucharist is about Christ being present in *time* and in space; that the Eucharist looks backwards towards the death of Christ but also by sharing table fellowship with Jesus we participate in the messianic banquet in anticipation of the completion of all things in the end time. The perspective of *eschatology* matters to Eucharistic theology.
- *Children*, rather than an act solely for the benefit of adult believers. The re-rooting of the Eucharist in Jewish meal culture, and in particular the Passover,

reminds us of our responsibility to communicate to the next generation what Christ has done. It even provokes us to ask, given Jesus teaching, how are children today able to teach adults what it means to enter God's reign and possibly, to celebrate the meal of the inbreaking kingdom of God? The perspective of children matters to Eucharistic theology.

- *Religious outcasts*, rather than it being the prime domain of the righteous, religious elite. The re-rooting of the Eucharist in Jewish meal culture, in light of who Jesus shared table-fellowship with, challenges us to examine who the “tax-collectors and sinners” are in our community today and how welcome they feel at the Lord's Table. The perspective of outcasts matters to Eucharistic theology.
- *Re-membling* the body of Christ as a counter-force to the *politics* of this world, rather than being limited to the narrow domain of a Sunday church service. The re-rooting of the Eucharist in Jewish meal culture, in light of the kingdom nature of Jesus meals, challenges the hierarchy of the world with the hierarchy of God's heavenly banquet. The perspective of Christian counter-politics matters to Eucharistic theology.
- *Unity*, rather than it being a sign of our disunity. In light of the various types of believers Jesus shared table-fellowship with and against the backdrop of the early church where people held diverse theological opinions but shared table-fellowship, we should be quick to build bridges and slow to erect walls that prevent believers from different strands of the church from coming together at the Lord's Table. The perspective of Christian fellowship matters to Eucharistic theology.
- *Celebration*, rather than an occasion only for solemnity. A re-emphasis on a Jewish celebratory response directs our worship towards a faithful God and beyond terminally me-focused introspection. This also resonates with Bonhoeffer's invitation to a deeper, fuller life. The perspective of celebration matters to Eucharistic theology.

To regain the richness of our Jewish roots in our celebration of the Eucharist will be as a result of the miracle of re-engagement. In this regards, Dietrich Bonhoeffer is still to be mined for all the valuable thoughts he has on the matter. We need to think through the implications of what it means live a deeper life; to be a Eucharistic community

prepared to drink to the dregs the earthy cup that is done in remembrance of the cup our Lord drank. What does it mean to respond to the very real challenge of being the visible community that has as a goal the public re-membering of the body of Christ? The voice of the Roman Catholic theologian, William Cavanaugh perhaps needs to be engaged with more fully by the Anglican church. How can we balance the dimension of personal redemption with the dimension of social and economic redemption as an individual comes to celebrate the Eucharist? How can we change the way we engage with Eucharistic theology to subsume the individualist debate of the mystery of our faith, that “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again,” into the mystery of the body of Christ, that “we have died together, we will rise together, *we will live together*”? How can we become a Eucharistic community conscious of the forward momentum of eschatological time? The academic contribution of Geoffrey Wainwright needs broader application, especially in light of the community dimension.

To conclude my thesis, I believe that my argument to reconnect with our Jewish roots and to value our Reformation roots is both valid and relevant. My own faith community is more rooted in South African Anglicanism and a Western worldview than I think we realize. Consumer society wins the day: Jesus is dispensed at the rail once the solemn performance is over to individuals who consume him secretly “by faith in their hearts and with thanksgiving.” This may be true of other churches.

Our engagement with Jewish roots has not refreshed our celebration of the Eucharist with the joy of a visible gathered community meeting together to engage with the mystery of Jesus being present in all time, past, present and future, and welcoming to him *all* people who respond to *his* invitation to fellowship with him at the Table.

There is therefore an urgency to re-engaging with our Jewish roots. It can be a powerful catalyst in shifting our western-dominated thinking to be open to the collective experience of the body of Christ in communion rather than remaining locked into the individualistic worldview of the western world. It can give a sense of rootedness to a rootless and dangerously adrift generation. It can provide a depth of rootedness that goes beyond the ecclesiastical factions and allows for a fresh take on entrenched historical Eucharistic perspectives and emphases. To use the language of Rowan Williams about ‘the foreign’ and ‘the familiar’: the familiar Eucharistic debates may then appear foreign, while the foreign may become more familiar with the emphases of Jewish meal traditions, Jesus’ meal parables and meal-fellowship. We discover roots

that refresh. And finally, may we find in our Jewish roots a Eucharistic theology that leads us as God's people to *Doxology* as theology of any worth surely must:

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!
For who hath known the mind of the Lord?
Or who hath been his counsellor?
Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?
For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things.
To him be the glory for ever.
Amen.¹

¹ Romans 11:33-36

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