

Apocalypse on the Mount

The Relationship Between Matthew 5:18 and 27:45, 51b

MATEUSZ KUSIO

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
e-mail: mateusz.kusio@hu-berlin.de
ORCID: 0000-0003-3915-7323

ABSTRACT: This article claims that the “passing away of heaven and earth” (Matt 5:18), until which the Torah is to be preserved whole according to Matthew, is proleptically realised during the crucifixion which is accompanied by the darkening of the sun (27:45) and earthquake (27:51b). Consequently, at that point the Torah ceases to be the central and unique legal code for Matthew and becomes mediated by Jesus’ own teaching. This claim is evidenced by Matthew’s subtle, yet sudden disinterest with the Law after the crucifixion.

KEYWORDS: Matthew 5:18; Matthew 27:45; Matthew 27:51; Torah; crucifixion

This article will argue that the passing away of the Law, spoken of in Matt 5:18 and which will be understood as the change in the status of the Torah for the Matthean community, is realised through the Matthean crucifixion scene. In both cases, the evangelist introduces vivid apocalyptic imagery and eschatological expectation which together set the limit to the binding force of the Torah. The temporal clause “until heaven and earth pass away” (5:18b) finds its symbolic fulfilment in the darkening of the sun and the earthquake that coincide with Jesus’ death (27:45, 51b).

This thesis does not represent a wholly novel approach and has its precedents in the history of Matthean scholarship. The link between 5:17-18 and the passion narrative was suggested by William D. Davies who resolved the apparent contradiction between the proclaimed fulfilment of the Law in 5:17 and its eternity espoused a verse later by seeing Jesus’ cross as the consummation beyond which the division between Jew and Gentile becomes secondary.¹ The current investigation rests also on the conclusions of John P. Meier who emphasises the eschatological import of Jesus’ death and resurrection in Matthew which constitute

¹ W.D. Davies, “Matthew, 5, 17-18,” *Mélanges bibliques rédigés en l’honneur de André Robert* (ed. [n.d.]) (Paris: Bloud & Gay 1957) 428–456. See also *idem*, *Christian Origins and Judaism* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster 1962) 31–66. This view is abandoned in the commentary on Matthew which William D. Davies co-authored with Dale C. Allison.

die Wende der Zeiten, the turning point of history.² This viewpoint is taken up by Crispin H.T. Fletcher-Louis who points to the resonance the words about heaven and earth passing away in Matt 5:18d would have in the context of the Temple-centred Jewish cosmology of this period. He distinguishes three possible events this clause could refer to: the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE; Jesus' death and resurrection; and his life and teaching.³ While Fletcher-Louis sees the interpretative strengths of all these options, he sides with the view that 5:18 points to the cosmic transformation already at work during Jesus' ministry. Although this particular identification will be criticised, the present argument shares its structure and some of its conclusions with those proposed by Fletcher-Louis. We both acknowledge that 5:18 is eschatological in tone and that it contains a real condition. Finally, Roland Deines' study of righteousness in Matthew concludes that the Matthean hermeneutic and legal reasoning in Matt 5:13-20 points to the Torah retaining its importance in the form it was taught by Jesus.⁴ While Deines does not connect this passage with the Matthean crucifixion scene, his conclusion is in essence the same as mine.

The core claim of this article is that the conditional clauses of Matt 5:18 are, in the author's mind, fulfilled during Jesus' crucifixion.⁵ The fulfilment here is not a literal one, as the world does not cease to exist at the moment of Jesus' death. Rather, the darkness and the earthquake in Matt 27:45, 51b constitute an evocation of the passing of the old aeon and the onset of a new one. At that moment, the Torah changes its status for Jesus' followers, as some parts of it – “the jots and tittles” – become less relevant than others and they all become subordinate to Jesus' own teachings. My article will offer an argument in favour of this position based on the narrative of the First Gospel.

My argumentation will be structured around three claims. Firstly, it will be posited that 5:18 envisages a future transformation of the Law rather than an unreal condition. Such a transformation was not completely inconceivable in the context of Second Temple Judaism. Furthermore, 5:18 speaks of an actual possibility, since the passing away of heaven and earth is also envisaged in

-
- 2 J.P. Meier, “Salvation-History in Matthew: In Search of a Starting Point,” *CBQ* 37 (1975) 203–215.
 - 3 C.H.T. Fletcher-Louis, “The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant: Mark 13:31 and Matthew 5:18,” *The Reader Must Understand. Eschatology in Bible and Theology* (eds. M.W. Elliott – K.E. Brower) (Leicester: Apollon 1997) 145–169, at 163–166.
 - 4 R. Deines, *Die Gerechtigkeit der Tora im Reich des Messias. Mt 5,13-20 als Schlüsseltext der matthäischen Theologie* (WUNT 177; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2005) 366. His views are summarised in *idem*, “Not the Law but the Messiah: Law and Righteousness in the Gospel of Matthew – An Ongoing Debate,” *Built upon the Rock. Studies in the Gospel of Matthew* (eds. D.M. Gurtner – J. Nolland) (Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge: Eerdmans 2008) 53–84.
 - 5 The relationship between this Matthean verse and Luke 16:17 will not be investigated as it would require a separate study. It is noteworthy, however, that Luke's approach to the Law appears similar to that which is here argued to be present in the First Gospel. Luke 16:16 envisages the binding force of the Law to endure until John the Baptist, after which the Kingdom of God is inaugurated.
-

the Matthean eschatological discourse (24:35). Secondly, it will be shown that this event does take place at the crucifixion during which the sun is darkened and the earth trembles. Matthew takes special care to depict Jesus' final moments as having paramount eschatological significance. Thirdly, it will be argued that Matthean narrative after the crucifixion becomes subtly, yet suddenly and noticeably disinterested in Jewish legal observance, as in the case of the meeting of the Pharisees and Pilate on the Passover Sabbath and not mentioning anointing of Jesus' body by the women. The status of the Torah changes from the exact moment of Jesus' death by making way for his own teaching.

It needs to be clarified that the change of the status of the Jewish Law is not be equated with its substantial abolishment. Indeed, it is plausible to think that Matthew argued for continued adherence to many precepts of the Torah in daily practice. It is claimed, however, that those precepts retained their status and force only because they were seen as being reaffirmed and/or reinterpreted by Jesus. This claim does not depart from the standard scholarly understanding of the Matthean Jesus as the teacher of the Torah. The intention is to offer an insight about how Jesus' didactic role is established by the grand scheme of the narrative of the First Gospel.

1. Matthew 5:18 and Eschatology

In the first part of the article 5:18 will be claimed to envisage a change to the status of the Law under a real, eschatological condition. The verse appears within the larger unit of 5:17-20 which is commonly understood as a set of hermeneutical principles that preface and modulate the six so-called antitheses in vv. 21-48. Any plausible exegesis of v. 18 must take account of the preceding sentence which also speaks directly about Jesus' attitude towards the Law. Matt 5:17-18 runs as follows:

Μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφῆτας· οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι. ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν· ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, ἰῶτα ἓν ἢ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου, ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται.

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law and the Prophets; I have not come to abolish [them] but rather to fulfil [them]. I truly tell you – until heaven and earth pass away, not one iota and not a stroke will ever pass from the Law until everything happens.⁶

⁶ All translation of ancient texts are by the present author.

It appears as if these two sentences showed Jesus' firm adherence to the Law and his belief in its eternal importance. Verse 19, which condemns those who transgress any of the commandments and teach others to do likewise, would seem to confirm this conclusion. It must be, however, confronted with the fact that the Matthean antitheses are not a straightforward reaffirmation of the legal provisions of the Torah. He almost entirely prohibits the divorce (5:31-32) which is allowed for in Deut 24:1-4; he also speaks out against swearing oaths (5:33-37; cf. Lev 19:12; Num 30:3; Deut 23:22) and retaliation (5:38-42; cf. Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21). It is clear that Jesus' attitude towards the Law goes beyond fulfilment understood as living according to its precepts; Fletcher-Louis is right in saying that "in this teaching—material there is *passing away* of many of the Torah's jots and tittles."⁷ These observations must make the reader rethink the sense of 5:17-18 and ask, what could Jesus, who was just about to introduce significant alterations to the Pentateuchal provisions, have meant by saying that he would fulfil the Law and that no commandment will ever pass away? To answer this problem, the discussion will firstly focus on the possible Matthean sense of the verb πληρώω used in 5:17.

This word appears seventeen times throughout the First Gospel. Once (13:48) it denotes being physically filled; this use is irrelevant to my point. Most often, Matthew uses πληρώω with the objects τὸ ῥηθὲν (eleven times) and αἱ γραφαὶ (two times), testifying to the theme of the Matthean Jesus being the fulfilment of prophecies. For Matthew, the scriptures of Israel continue to have value, but change their function. They are no longer expressions of expectation of a future Messiah, but rather testimonies to his status. The verb is used three more times, in 3:15; 5:17; and 23:22. In 3:15, Jesus requests baptism from John and says: οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην, "for so it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness." Meier plausibly notes that 3:15, too, carries the notion of the fulfilment of prophecies through the revelation of the Son of God rather than that of obedience to a legal precept which would be otherwise difficult to identify.⁸ Therefore, this Matthean use of πληρώω appears to be in line with its other occurrences and connotes a change of function of what is being fulfilled. Matt 23:32, on the other hand, mockingly commands the scribes and the Pharisees to fill the measure of their ancestors' sins. It is clear from the con-

⁷ Fletcher-Louis, "Destruction," 153; italics original.

⁸ J.P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel. A Redactional Study of Mt. 5:17-48* (AnBib 71; Rome: Biblical Institute Press 1971) 76-80. This view is supported by Roland Deines ("Not the Law," 74-75). See also H. Ljungman, *Das Gesetz erfüllen. Matth. 5,17ff. und 3,15 untersucht* (Lund: Gleerup 1954) for a careful study of the link between the two verses and their respective meanings. Henrik Ljungman (*ibidem*, 124) is ultimately correct in concluding that "[m]it Christus wird die Schrift (das Gesetz) in Gerechtigkeit „gefüllt.“ Durch Christus kommt Gerechtigkeit. Der Akt, der die Gerechtigkeit mit Christus verbindet, ist sein Opfertod." However, he does not discuss the possibility of Matt 5:18 introducing an eschatological perspective.

text that, once the scribes' and Pharisees' go too far in persecuting those sent to them, they will not escape the Gehenna. Again, the fulfilment leads to a fundamental change, since it is followed by condemnation. Therefore, Matthew's thinking behind the verb πληρώω is not that of repetitively completing what is prescribed. When something is being fulfilled, be it the scriptures, righteousness, the measure of sins, or the Law, for Matthew it stays the same no longer, but changes its status or leads to something new.⁹ This conclusion can be plausibly applied to 5:17 where Jesus' fulfilment of the Law would mean its modification and overall change of status.¹⁰

Moving now to 5:18 itself, it is useful to note the peculiar structure of the sentence. Its main clause, ἰῶτα ἐν ἡ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου (5:18c), is prefaced with the solemn introductory ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν (5:18a) and surrounded by two temporal clauses: ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ (5:18b) and ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται (5:18d). The compound subject of the main clause is to be interpreted as referring to the entirety of the written Torah, even the most minuscule elements of its text. The main verb of both the main and the first temporal clause, παρέρχομαι, points to a range of semantic fields. Across Greek literature of all periods, it often means "to pass by," "to arrive," "to come forward," etc. On the other hand, the temporal connotations of this verb, related with the passage of time, are also well-attested in the classical sources (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.8: ἐν μὲν τῷ παρελθόντι χρόνῳ, "in the time past"; see also e.g. Demosthenes, *Tim.* 90; Euripides, *Frag.* 69; etc.) and in the LXX (e.g. Gen 41:53; 50:4; Deut 26:13b; Ps 36:36a; 89:5b-6a; Song 2:4; Isa 26:20; 28:19; see also Dan 2:9; 7:14 in Theodotion's translation). Importantly, παρέρχομαι can carry eschatological overtones and refer to a cosmic "passing away." This meaning is found in Psalm 148:6b LXX: πρόσταγμα ἔθετο, καὶ οὐ παρελεύσεται, "I have laid down a decree and it shall not pass away." Here, God's decree is proclaimed to be eternally binding, but the context points to πρόσταγμα as God's creative act rather than the giving of the Torah. Similar meanings of παρέρχομαι can be found in Second Temple literature, e.g. Wis 5:9 and Sir 11:19c. The eschatological passing away is also attested in *T.Job* 33:4: ὁ κόσμος ὅλος παρελεύσεται, "the entire world will pass away."¹¹ As *Testament of Job* is dated between second century BCE and second century CE, this use of παρέρχομαι is roughly contemporaneous with that in Matt 5:18.¹² Most

9 See R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge: Eerdmans 2007) 182–184.

10 See G. Dellling, "πληρώω," *TDNT* VI, 286–298, at 293–294.

11 See also a very similar turn of phrase in *T.Jos.* 10:6: ἤδειν γὰρ ὅτι τὰ πάντα παρελεύσεται, "knowing that all will pass away." *Testament of Joseph* is most probably to be dated no earlier than the second century CE, and τὰ πάντα here means the favourable circumstances of Joseph's life rather than the entire cosmos.

12 For this dating, see M. Haralambakis, *The Testament of Job. Text, Narrative and Reception History* (LSTS 80; London: Bloomsbury 2012) 1; Lawrence M. Wills ("Testament of Job," *Ancient Jewish*

importantly, the eschatological overtone of *παρέρχομαι* becomes its basic semantic field in the NT (Matt 24:35//Luke 21:33; Mark 13:31//Luke 16:17; 2 Cor 5:17; James 1:10; 1 Peter 4:3). My interpretation of Matt 5:18 calls for a presence of an eschatological overtone to the “passing away” of the heaven and the earth which is to happen at the broadly construed end-time. This reading is certainly a possible one, since *παρέρχομαι* is repeatedly associated with the passage of time and, in the LXX and other Jewish sources, the transformation of the cosmos. This position will now receive further verification from the scrutiny of the possible meaning of the temporal clauses in 5:18b, d.

There are two major trends in the exegesis of *ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ* and *ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται*. Some scholars argue that both phrases represent a circumlocution for “never” which in turn means that there will never be any alteration to the substance or the status of the Law.¹³ On the other hand, others think that for Matthew the Torah remains in force as long as the world exists but not beyond that point.¹⁴ The strength of the first view relies primarily on the currency of the claim about the perennial immutability of the Torah, as it is confirmed by multiple biblical (e.g. Jer 31:36; 33:20-21), Second Temple (e.g. Bar 4:1; *I En.* 99:2), and rabbinic authorities.¹⁵ Secondly, Matthew is often understood to be sympathetic towards and conservative about the Jewish Law (5:21, 32; 19:9) and therefore less likely to envisage a change in its role.

The argument to the contrary will be advanced, as the certainty about eternity of the Law in Matthew’s cultural milieu was not without notable exceptions and he himself could very well affirm its validity only to a certain point of time. As noted by Michael O. Wise, the author of the *Temple Scroll* from Qumran envisages certain precepts of the Pentateuch, such as the regulations relating to the *gerim* (e.g. Deut 24:14-15, 17-23) or to borrowing and lending (e.g. Deut 15:1-7; 23:20-21; 24:10-13), to become obsolete in the Eschaton.¹⁶ The author of 11QTemple thought that the onset of the end of times will result in a transformation of the Torah. The Law in general fully preserves its status, yet

Novels. An Anthology [ed. L.M. Wills] [Oxford: Oxford University Press 2002] 242–268, at 242) narrows this scope to the first century BCE and the first century CE. William Gruen (“Seeking the Context for the *Testament of Job*,” *JSP* 18 [2009] 163–179) points to the second century CE.

13 C.S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge: Eerdmans 1999) 178; U. Luz, *Studies in Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge: Eerdmans 2005) 185–218, at 202–204; *idem*, *Matthew 1–7. A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 2007) 218.

14 H.D. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount. A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3–7:27 and Luke 6:20–49)* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 1995) 181–184; W.D. Davies – D.C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (ICC; Edinburgh: Clark 1988) I, 490.

15 See Str-B I, 44–47.

16 M.O. Wise, *A Critical Study of the Temple Scroll from Qumran Cave 11* (SAOC 49; Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago 1990) 168–175; see also Fletcher-Louis, “Destruction,” 155.

some of its provisions are irrelevant because of how different the present world is from the world to come; they therefore do not make into the eschatological recasting of the Torah. The *Temple Scroll* constitutes an important Second Temple witness to the reasoning imputed here to the First Gospel. There are several instances in the later rabbinic writings where clarifications and modifications of varying degrees occur to the Torah in the messianic age and/or the age to come.¹⁷ Cessation of festivals and prayers is foretold in *Vayikra R.* 9.7 while *Midrash Tehillim* on Ps 146:7 expects all animals to be declared clean. More substantial changes to the Law are also an option. *Bereshit R.* 34.11 on Gen 8:22 gives the opinion of Rabbi Judan in the name of Rabbi Shmuel ben Nahman (third century CE) that the Noachic covenant will be broken on the Last Day (referring to Isa 51:6 and Zech 11:11). *bNiddah* 61b transmits the teaching of Rabbi Joseph who comments on the permission to use of *sha'atnez* as a burial shroud: *זאת אומרת מצות בטלות לעתיד לבא*, “this means that the commandments will be abolished in the time to come.” *Qoheleth R.* on Eccl 2:1 and 11:8 invokes rabbinic statements that the present Torah is *הבל*, “vanity,” in comparison to the messianic Torah. This view is especially pertinent to my argument about Matthew since it does not foresee a simple update of the Pentateuchal regulations but rather a change in its overall status, as the present Torah will be superseded by the law of the messianic age.

Certainly, the sources cited here are far later than the First Gospel, they do not go unchallenged by other Rabbis (as Rabbi Joseph’s case shows), and are not advocating a total change or abolishment of the Torah in the messianic period. They do, however, testify to the persistence of the argument, first attested, as far as we can tell, in the *Temple Scroll*, that the Law will undergo transformation in substance or even in its overall status in the messianic future. Matthew can be participating in the discourse about the transformed shape which the Jewish Law was to assume at the Eschaton. Therefore, the interpretation of 5:18b as speaking about an actual temporal horizon is a viable hermeneutical option.

Until now, it has been argued that, based on Matthew’s use of *πληρώω* and *παρέρχομαι*, as well as on other ancient Jewish writings which ponder the future modifications to the Law, it is justified to think 5:18 expects an eschatological change to the status of the Torah. In other words, it is perfectly possible for this verse to look towards an apocalyptic future. The present argument will now move on to the claim that such an eschatological change is actually foreseen by Matthew in his end-time scenario. 5:18 displays a high degree of lexical overlap with two verses from Jesus’ eschatological speech, i.e. 24:34-35: ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη ἕως ἂν πάντα ταῦτα γένηται. ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ

¹⁷ See a full study of these sources in W.D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or in the Age to Come* (JBLMS 7; Philadelphia, PA: Society of Biblical Literature 1952) 50–83.

γῆ παρελεύσεται, οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρέλθωσιν, “I truly tell you that this generation will absolutely not pass away until all this happens. The heaven and the earth will pass away, but my words will absolutely not pass away.” While very similar logia appear in Mark 13:30-31 and Luke 21:32-33, it is only in Matthew that Jesus’ sayings about the Law and about the end of times are so closely knit, as evidenced by the juxtaposition below:

Matt 5:18	Matt 24:34-35
<p><u>ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ ἰῶτα ἐν ἡ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται</u></p>	<p><u>ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη ἕως ἂν πάντα ταῦτα γένηται ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσεται οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρέλθωσιν</u></p>

The degree of similarity can hardly be due to chance and it is much more reasonable to treat it as a result of Matthean redaction (the Lukan parallels of these verses, 16:17 and 21:32-33, are in no way as close to each other). Consequently, the two logia can be interpreted in light of each other. The most striking resemblance between them is in the way they construe the passing away of heaven and earth. Whereas 5:18 treats it as a temporal constraint on the validity of the entire Torah, 24:35 predicts such an event with prophetic certainty. What is even more, the fact that such a passing away will occur serves as a guarantee of οἱ λόγοι which here should be taken to signify the entire eschatological discourse and, more broadly, the whole of Jesus’ teaching. They are true and reliable if and only if heaven and earth actually pass away.¹⁸ Matthew envisages that they indeed will pass away and thus will fulfil the temporal condition of 5:18, changing the status of the Torah for Jesus’ followers.

Again, one could, as Ulrich Luz does, treat ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσεται in 24:35 as an expression of impossibility which would make the verse mean something to the effect of “the heaven and the earth will not pass away, and, much more so, neither will my words.”¹⁹ This interpretation goes against the grain of Matthew’s eschatology. Just a few verses above, in 24:29, a cosmic transformation, accompanying the coming of the Son of Man, is foretold. In Luz’s reading, these words are of no consequence, as the heaven and earth will never pass away, making Matthew’s end-time vision incomprehensible. A more fitting approach to 5:18 and 24:34-35 sees these verses as intricately connected and jointly expecting an actual passing away of the heaven and the earth. In view of 5:18, this passing would in turn mark the end of the current status of the Jewish Law.

¹⁸ D.A. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28* (WBC 33B; Dallas, TX: Word Books 1995) 715–716.

¹⁹ U. Luz, *Matthew 21–28. A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press 2005) 208.

2. Eschatology and the Matthean Crucifixion

Up to this point of my argument, it has been established that 5:18 envisages a transformation of the Torah in the Eschaton which the Matthean Jesus foretells in 24:34-35. The second part of the article will centre around the claim that Jesus' crucifixion in its Matthean recounting is meant to represent exactly this eschatological horizon beyond which the Torah becomes subordinate to Jesus' own teaching. The apocalyptic overtones in the way Matthew recounts Jesus' final hour are frequently noted by scholars.²⁰ There are two important elements in the Matthean crucifixion scene which link it directly with the passing away of the heaven and the earth mentioned in 5:18 and 24:35: the darkness enveloping the entire earth (27:45//Mark 15:33//Luke 23:44) and the earthquake (27:51b) which belongs to the Matthean *Sondergut*. There is a host of examples in the biblical and, more broadly, ancient religious literature of either phenomenon figuring as portent of the end of times.²¹ Most importantly for my present purpose, Matthew is by no means alone in combining day-time darkness and earthquake which are also brought together in two OT prophecies:

Joel 2:10 LXX

πρὸ προσώπου αὐτῶν συγχυθήσεται ἡ γῆ καὶ σεισθήσεται ὁ οὐρανός, ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ἡ σελήνη συσκοτάσουσιν, καὶ τὰ ἄστρα δύσουσιν τὸ φέγγος αὐτῶν.

The earth will be bewildered in front of them and the heaven will be shaken, the sun and the moon will be darkened, and the stars will put down their brightness.

Amos 8:8a-b, 9 LXX

καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις οὐ ταραχθήσεται ἡ γῆ, καὶ πενθήσει πᾶς ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν αὐτῇ ...; καὶ ἔσται ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ, λέγει κύριος ὁ θεός, καὶ δύσεται ὁ ἥλιος μεσημβρίας, καὶ συσκοτάσει ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τὸ φῶς.

And shall the earth not be troubled at these things and everyone who dwells upon it not lament ...? And it will happen that day, says the Lord God, and the sun will set at noon, and the light will darken over the earth on [that] day.

²⁰ E.g. D.C. Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come. An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress 1985) 49.

²¹ For eclipses and darkness, see Isa 5:30; 13:10; 24:23; Ezek 32:7-8; Joel 2:31; 3:15; 4 Ezra 5:4-5; T.Mos. 10:5; b. Sanh. 99a. For earthquakes, see Ezek 38:19-20; Ps 77:18c; Zech 14:5; 1 En. 1:6; 102:2b; 2 Bar. 70:8. For eclipses and earthquakes accompanying deaths of important figures in the Graeco-Roman literature; see Allison – Davies, *Commentary*, III, 632 and R.E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah. From Gethsemane to the Grave. A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (ABRL; London: Chapman 1994) II, 1043, 1114, 1118.

The influence of Joel 2:10a LXX is primarily present in Matt 24:29 (parallel with Mark 13:24), as they both foresee the darkening of celestial bodies. The link was sensed already by Origen in his commentary on Matt 24:29-30 (*Comm. ser.* 48, 49). The conjunction of the solar eclipse and the trembling of the earth (Joel 2:10-11) is carried forward into the Matthean crucifixion scene (Matt 27:45, 51b). Interestingly, Jesus' cry of dereliction and breathing his last in the midst of Roman soldiers awaiting his death may tacitly, even ironically, allude to the warrior imagery in Joel 2:11a LXX: καὶ κύριος δώσει φωνὴν αὐτοῦ πρὸ προσώπου δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, ὅτι πολλή ἐστιν σφόδρα ἡ παρεμβολὴ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἰσχυρὰ ἔργα λόγων αὐτοῦ, "and the Lord will give out his voice in front of his power, for his camp is very numerous, for the works of his words are strong." The conceptual similarity between the two verses might have been spotted by the author of the *Gospel of Peter*.²² *Gos. Pet.* 5:19 records a cry of agony different to any of the canonical Gospels: καὶ ὁ κ[ύριος] ἀνεβόησε λέγων· Ἡ δύναμις μου ἢ δύναμις κατέλειψάς με, "and the Lord shouted, saying, 'My power, the power, you have abandoned me'" (5:19). Both Joel 2:11a LXX and the Petrine verse note that it is the Lord who shouts and that he addresses his δύναμις.²³ Interestingly, just like in Joel 2:10 and Matt 27:45, 51b, the *Gospel of Peter* recounts a darkening of the sun (5:15b) and an earthquake (6:21b). Therefore, Matthew's eschatology appears to have been influenced by, and later read in light of, Joel 2:10.

With regard to the passage from Amos, its role in the Matthean narrative was sensed by many of its earliest recipients and interpreters. Already *Gos. Pet.* 5:15 brings the description of the crucifixion darkness closer to the LXX wording of Amos 8:9c: Ἦν δὲ μεσημβρία ... καὶ ἐθορυβοῦντο καὶ ἠγωνίων μήποτε ὁ ἥλιος ἔδω ἐπειδὴ ἔτι ἔζη, "but it was noon ... And they were afraid and distressed, lest the sun set while he is still alive." Amos' prophecy, especially 8:9, was linked with the Matthean scene of Jesus' execution by multiple Patristic authors.²⁴ Again, and even more so than in the case of Joel, Matthew not only picks up the apocalyptic stock images from the prophecy of Amos, but also appears to be mindful of the wider context of these images. In Amos, the natural disasters are

²² In what follows it is assumed that the *Gospel of Peter* sees the prophecies of Joel 2 and Amos 8 through the lens of the Matthean passion narrative. One could argue that the mediation of the First Gospel is superfluous and that the *Gospel of Peter* draws on Joel and Amos directly. This claim is improbable in the light of the almost certain dependence of the *Gospel of Peter* on Matthew on which see P. Foster, *The Gospel of Peter. Introduction, Critical Edition and Commentary* (TENTS 4; Leiden: Brill 2010) 131–138.

²³ Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, II, 1058, relates *Gos. Pet.* 5:19 to Aquila's translation of Ps 22:2, attested in Eusebius, *Dem. ev.* 10.9: ἰσχυρὸς μου, ἰσχυρὸς μου, ἵνατί ἐγκατέλιπές με; "my strong one, my strong one, why have you abandoned me?". This parallel is criticised by Paul Foster (*Gospel of Peter*, 329) as distant.

²⁴ E.g. Tertullian, *Adv. Iud.* 10.17 (see also *idem, Marc.* 4.42 which brings up the verse from Amos in relation to Luke 23:44); Commodianus, *Carm. apol.* 420–423; Cyprian, *Test.* 2.23; Lactantius, *Div. inst.* 4.19; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. lec.* 13.25; Eusebius, *Dem. ev.* 10.6.

a result of economic injustice (8:4-6) and sinfulness of the people (9:7-10) which ultimately lead to the withdrawal of God's word from the land (8:11-12), the destruction of the Temple (8:3; 9:1) and its final reconstruction and the restitution of Israel (9:8c, 11-15). This is not too alien to the Matthean narrative which, though focused on the rejection of the prophets and of Jesus, contains elements of economic critique (23:25b) and frequently refers to the opponents' hard-heartedness and sinfulness (17:17; 19:8; 23:1-7). Furthermore, in a fashion similar to Amos, the Matthean Jesus foretells the destruction of the Temple (24:1-2). It can be quite plausibly claimed that Matthew pays close attention to Amos 8-9 as he envisages the crucifixion as the crucial step in the eschatological development.

There are other apocalyptic overtones in the Matthean crucifixion narrative, among which stand out the opening of the tombs and the dead making an appearance in Jerusalem (27:52-53). This passage belongs to Matthew's special material and is an unmistakable sign of *die Wende der Zeiten* which further strengthens my case for a thoroughly eschatological reading of the entire scene. The darkening of the sun and the earthquake in Matt 27:45, 51b draw on the eschatological prophecies of Joel 2 and Amos 8 which combine these two natural events as portents of the end time. The eschatologically charged crucifixion scene in the Matthean passion narrative constitutes a proleptic fulfilment of the prophecy in Matt 24:35 and, most importantly, of the temporal clause in 5:18. As a result, the crucifixion for Matthew is the passing away of the heaven and the earth, after which the Torah becomes subordinate to Jesus' own teaching.

This view has been criticised in two different ways. Firstly, it has been argued that the change of status of the Jewish Law began during Jesus' ministry rather than at his death.²⁵ Secondly, 24:35 (and the eschatological discourse in general) cannot refer to the death of Jesus, as it is an end-time prophecy which is supposed to be fulfilled only after Jesus' earthly ministry is concluded, possibly beyond Matthew's own time.²⁶ The strength of the first argument is that the antitheses, referred to previously as examples of how the Torah is to become secondary *vis-à-vis* Jesus' teaching, do not include a temporal clause which would state that they come into force only after the crucifixion. They appear to be binding pronouncements right from the moment they are uttered; hence, they would modify the Torah before Jesus' death, contrary to my thesis. This is a problematic stance, however, since the antitheses do not play this role throughout the rest of Matthew's Gospel. The Matthean Jesus, when later confronted with legal disputes, does not reiterate the content of 5:21-48 or refer to it. Indeed, one could argue that Jesus' teaching during his ministry (but only during that time) does not aim to alter the substance or the status of the Jewish Law (see 9:17; 15:17 as opposed to

²⁵ Allison – Davies, *Commentary*, I, 494, n. 33; Fletcher-Louis, "Destruction," 158–159.

²⁶ Fletcher-Louis, "Destruction," 159.

Mark 7:19; 19:9). Therefore, 5:18 should be read as pointing towards the future within which the Law will undergo change. In that sense, it actually functions as a hermeneutical lens through which the antitheses ought to be read and which puts their coming into force into the future.

With reference to the second counterargument against my conclusion, it assumes that Matthean eschatology can either be realised or futuristic. Consequently, if Matt 24:35 speaks about the end-time destruction of the cosmos, this verse could not possibly have a second referent and speak about the darkness and the earthquake at the crucifixion. This assumption is not a necessary one. It is perfectly possible for Matthew to use a double entendre, having an actual eschatological cosmic change in mind, but at the same time imbuing the crucifixion narrative with eschatological overtones. It is difficult to deny that Matthew considered Jesus' death and the events that accompanied it as a fulfilment of prophecies and a crucial turning point in history. Fletcher-Louis himself accepts that the rending of the Temple veil, which according to both Philo (*Mos.* 2.88; *Quest. Exod.* 2.85) and Josephus (*J.A.* 3.7.7 §183; *B.J.* 5.5.4 §§212-214) represented the elements of the Universe, "itself signifies the passing away of heaven and earth."²⁷ While a full account of the eschatology of the First Gospel cannot be developed here,²⁸ such an account must make space for the end-time characteristics in the crucifixion scene. This would have to be the case even if the eschatological discourse were to be understood as pointing still further into the future. In sum, there is no immediately obvious reason to think that Matt 24:35 cannot, whilst envisaging a cosmic consummation, be relevant to the way Matthew recounts the scene of Jesus' death.

3. Matthew and the Law after the Crucifixion

The hypothesis that the temporal limit of 5:18 is realised in 27:45, 51b will now be tested. This will be achieved by pointing to two separate instances in the post-crucifixion narrative where, while the reader would expect Matthew to pay attention to the Pentateuchal regulations, no such concern is present. These omissions evidence that the Torah immediately after Jesus' death ceases to be the paramount legal and moral code for the author of the Gospel. Secondly, the discussion will touch upon two Matthean passages in which one could claim that the Torah does maintain its binding force beyond that point of time. It will

²⁷ Fletcher-Louis, "Destruction," 164.

²⁸ For a full treatment of the topic see D.C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew* (SNTSMS 88; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996).

be argued that they do not have to be read this way but should rather be seen as resulting from Matthew's other concerns.

The first time a legal consideration does not emerge when one would expect it to is in 27:62a which starts the story of the meeting of Pilate with the Jewish authorities, i.e. the Pharisees (the only time they are mentioned in any of the Synoptic passion narratives) and chief priests. This report is to be found only in Matthew. The temporal marker, τῇ δὲ ἐπαύριον, ἣτις ἐστὶν μετὰ τὴν παρασκευὴν, "on the next day, that which is after the [Day of] Preparation" is undoubtedly marking a Sabbath. It is a matter of division among the scholars whether such a meeting with the Roman authorities on a Sabbath during Passover would be considered illicit, and whether Matthew portrayed it as such. Some commentators see this scene as the continuation of Matthew's criticism of the Jewish authorities.²⁹ Indeed, holding such a meeting at that time would still be striking due to the rank of the day. According to the Synoptic chronology, the day of the meeting spoken of in Matt 27:62-66 would fall on 16 Nissan. This day would not only fall on a Sabbath but also be the second day of Passover when the wave offering was customarily made.³⁰ For Matthew to portray the Jewish religious authorities having a meeting with Pilate on a such day would strike most of his readers as highly offensive as breaking the prohibition on performing work on the Sabbath (Exod 20:8-11; see also Exod 16:29b; Jer 17:22).³¹ Other scholars, on the other hand, argue that the Matthean circumlocutory time marker proves he does not sense any such violation.³² It is not the Matthean practice to criticise Jesus' opponents implicitly, as he rather rebukes them overtly and unambiguously. Matthew mentions the Pharisees twenty-nine more times in his Gospel and he always casts them as Jesus' opponents and makes perfectly clear what the point of their contention is. 27:62-66 would curiously stand out from this pattern.

Both positions have strong arguments at their disposal and the conundrum persists. A violation of a custom has clearly taken place, but Matthew makes nothing of it. The purpose of the episode is only to prepare the ground for the story of the disciples' stealing of Jesus' body in 28:11-15. My argument offers a resolution to this problem. The evangelist, for whom the crucial change in the status of

²⁹ Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 587, n. 21.

³⁰ Str-B II, 582; the practice of the wave offering is known to Josephus, *J.A.* 3.10.5 §§250-251.

³¹ One can recall the curious detail in John 18:19b-20 where the Jews escorting Jesus to the praetorium do not enter so that they do not become impure right before Passover, and Pilate comes out to meet them. While Matt 27:62-66 does not specify the place of the meeting, the text states that συνήχθησαν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι πρὸς Πιλάτον, "the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate," so they probably met at the praetorium. Although Matthew does not express the concern about entering praetorium rendering one impure, some of his readers might have felt uneasy (as John evidently did) about the religious authorities going there, especially on a festival.

³² Allison – Davies, *Commentary*, III, 653, n. 54; Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, II, 1290; Hagner, *Matthew 14–28*, 862.

the Torah happened shortly before with Jesus' death, illustrates this fact with his disinterest in criticising the religious establishment on legalistic grounds. Such criticism would have been devoid of force, since the Torah no longer has the status of the sole and supreme moral code which passes to Jesus' own teaching.

Further traces of Matthew abandoning the perspective of the Torah are found in 28:1 which begins the resurrection narrative and differs quite significantly from Mark 16:2 and Luke 24:1. *σάββατον* figures twice in Matt 28:1 (once to denote the Sabbath and once referring to a week), but Matthew does not underscore its passing (as does Mark 16:1a: *καὶ διαγενομένου τοῦ σαββάτου*, "and the Sabbath having passed") or treat it as a commandment (unlike Luke 23:56b: *καὶ τὸ μὲν σάββατον ἠσύχασαν κατὰ τὴν ἐντολήν*, "and they had a rest on the Sabbath according to the commandment"). Matthew thus seems to deemphasise the observance of the Sabbath or even its duration, but rather treats it as a simple temporal index. More importantly, in 28:1b the women come to Jesus' tomb not to anoint his body but merely to see the place (cf. Mark 16:1; Luke 23:56-24:1). The First Gospel thus dispenses with a very important aspect of Jewish funerary rites, i.e. the *taharah* which is a corollary of Num 19:11-15.³³ Yet again, Matthew disregards a salient feature of Jewish religious practice based on the Torah, providing additional confirmation of my core claim that, in Matthew's post-crucifixion vision, the Torah stops being *the* source of moral guidance and custom.

The discussion will now move to two Matthean passages which could potentially falsify my argument by showing that the Law maintains its primacy beyond the crucifixion. The first difficulty arises from 24:20 which is a redaction of Mark 13:18:

Mark 13:18

προσεύχεσθε δὲ ἵνα μὴ γένηται χειμῶνος.

But pray that it may not happen in winter.

Matt 24:20

προσεύχεσθε δὲ ἵνα μὴ γένηται ἡ φυγὴ ὑμῶν χειμῶνος μηδὲ σαββάτω.

But pray that your flight may not happen in winter or on a Sabbath.

³³ See mShab 23,5; D.C. Kraemer, *The Meanings of Death in Rabbinic Judaism* (London – New York: Routledge 2000) 25–26; B.R. McCane, *Roll Back the Stone. Death and Burial in the World of Jesus* (Harrisburg, PA: TPI 2003) 94; R. Hachlili, *Jewish Funerary Customs, Practices and Rites in the Second Temple Period* (SJSJ 94; Boston, MA – Leiden: Brill 2005) 480. See also the scenes of lavish washing and anointing in John 19:39-40; Josephus, *B.J.* 1.33.9 §673; *T.Ab.* 20:11.

It is visible that Matthew, apart from making the subject of the subjunctive clause explicit, added μηδὲ σαββάτω as another indication of the time when such a flight would be somehow difficult. This redaction poses an obvious problem for my reasoning. What obstacle could Sabbath pose to the believers' eschatological escape, if they could disregard its observance after the crucifixion? It would be explicable, if one were to assume that Matthew and his audience continues to heed the Torah and the prohibition of travelling on the Sabbath. This problem needs to be resolved in reference to the two controversies in Matt 12:1-14 about Jesus' disciples plucking grains and about Jesus himself healing a man with a withered hand, both on a Sabbath. The Matthean retellings represent a careful appropriation of sabbatical observance into Jesus' own teaching. Dale C. Allison and W.D. Davies notice the double tendency in the Matthean redaction of the Markan original episodes (Mark 2:23–3:6) which combines the Jewish orientation on what is licit (12:3-5, 11-12a) with the desire to unearth the true meaning of the Sabbath (12:8, 12b).³⁴ At no point is Sabbath abolished; Jesus only re-establishes its significance and what is allowed during that day. Most probably, therefore, Matthew argued for keeping the Sabbath in some form. 12:1-14 speaks about the concerns for human need outweighing the sabbatical observance which are absent from 24:20. The latter verse is best understood as Sabbath being an obstacle to saving one's life rather than to displaying mercy. It might appear problematic that the concern for human life would be so patently disregarded for the sake of keeping the Sabbath. On the other hand, the dispute about whether to save oneself in the face of danger or rather to observe the weekly rest finds attestation in the sources of the Second Temple period, with *Jub* 50:12; 2 Macc 6:11; Josephus, *J.A.* 14.4.2 §63 testifying to some groups opting for the latter.³⁵ Matt 24:20 can express a very similar sentiment by arguing that the preservation of one's own life is inferior to the Sabbath observance. At the same time, in light of 12:1-14, Matthew seems to think that this observance must give way to the care for one's neighbour. In sum, the clause μηδὲ σαββάτω in 24:20 does testify to the continued importance of the Sabbath in Matthew's thought beyond Jesus' crucifixion, but not due to the precept of the Torah but rather as part of the dominical teaching. Jesus' pronouncements in 12:1-14 and 24:20 and not the Pentateuchal regulations are the guide to the proper celebration of the weekly rest. In this case, the Torah agrees in substance with Jesus' teaching, but it is the latter that after Jesus' death achieves primacy as *the* legal and moral code. This is a possibility allowed for earlier in the article.³⁶

³⁴ Allison – Davies, *Commentary*, II, 328. This appears to be a far more plausible reading than that offered by Graham N. Stanton (*A Gospel for a New People. Studies in Matthew* [Edinburgh: Clark 1992] 203–206) who reads Matt 12:1-14 as indicating full abandonment of the Sabbath.

³⁵ Hagner *Matthew 14–28*, 702.

³⁶ A question could reasonably be raised, how can Matthew maintain some form of Sabbath observance, but pass over it, as has been claimed above, in 27:62-66 with regard to the Pharisees and

Another possible criticism of my argument comes from the Matthean re-counting of the behaviour of Joseph of Arimathea in 27:59 which differs from Mark 15:46 in one crucial respect, namely in the excision of the phrase: *καὶ ἀγοράσας σινδῶνα*, “and having bought the shroud.” Isaac W. Oliver notes that this clause in Mark is perplexing, since it involves a purchase which would have been illicit since it was made during Passover to which Shabbat regulations were applicable (see *mBeitzah* 5,2; *mMeg* 1,5). Consequently, according to Oliver, the Matthean deletion (parallel to Luke 23:53) would portray “Joseph of Arimathea and the women from Galilee as pious Jews attentively caring for Jesus’ body while simultaneously seeking to honour the Sabbath.”³⁷ As far as Matthew is concerned, this opinion cannot be maintained. Firstly, the Jewish piety he ascribes the attendees of Jesus’ interment can hardly be reconciled with the lack of any mention of washing or anointing of his body.³⁸ Secondly, it is not necessarily the case that Matthew would perceive Joseph’s purchase of the shroud as illicit or problematic. *mShab* 23,5 explicitly allows *כל צורכי המה*, “everything required for the dead” to be performed on a Sabbath and also, by translation, on other festivals. Although Mishnah is a legal codification later than the First Gospel and it cannot be taken to represent the prevalent religious practices of Second Temple Judaism precisely, it is reasonable to assume that at least some of its opinions have their roots in those practices. Since the Mishna presents two different lenses through which the Matthean redaction of Mark 15:46 can be viewed, it does not present sufficient reason for considering that redaction to be due to Matthew’s continued adherence to the Torah. It is not the legality of such an action that led the evangelist to omitting it. More probably, Matthew finds this part of the sentence narratively and stylistically superfluous. Firstly, if Jesus’ remains are wrapped in a shroud, it is self-evident that the shroud must have been acquired one way or another. Secondly, Matthew is likely to correct the typically Markan double participle, with which Mark 15:46 opens, into a single participial clause.³⁹ Again, it is hardly likely that in this case Matthew pays attention to the legal aspect of the events after the crucifixion. Bearing all this in mind, the two test

the chief priests? The response to that is, again, that Matthew derives the continued importance of the Sabbath from Jesus’ own teaching which is obviously alien to the religious establishment in the conclusion of the passion narrative. Since it is alien, Matthew would have to criticise them only on the grounds of the Torah which is impossible due to its now secondary status.

37 I.W. Oliver, *Torah Praxis after 70 CE. Reading Matthew and Luke-Acts as Jewish Texts* (WUNT 2/355; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2013) 150.

38 Oliver (*Torah Praxis*, 160) notes, but fails to explain, why both practices are absent from the Matthean story. “The fast approach” of Sabbath is hardly a plausible explanation, as this factor is present in Mark, Matthew, and Luke, but both Mark and Luke note the customary practice of anointment after the Sabbath.

39 Similar Matthean redactions happen in 8:3//Mark 1:41; 15:32//Mark 8:1; 15:36//Mark 8:6b; 16:4b//Mark 8:13; 26:6-7//Mark 14:3; 26:49//Mark 14:45; 26:69//Mark 14:67; 27:1//Mark 15:1; 27:57-58//Mark 15:43, but cf. 14:19//Mark 6:41; 26:26-27//Mark 14:22-23.

cases just presented fail to falsify my core claims. Therefore, it is plausible to state that the First Gospel immediately after the crucifixion changes its tone with regard to the Jewish Law whose importance and force is transferred unto Jesus' own teaching.

4. Conclusion

This article presented and advanced three claims: firstly, that 5:18 envisages an eschatological change of the Law; secondly, that this eschatological condition is fulfilled at the crucifixion; and finally, that after the crucifixion Matthew becomes indifferent towards Jewish legal and customary regulations. Taken together, they support the view that for the first evangelist, Jesus' life and specifically his death constitute the fulfilment of "all righteousness" and the point of inflexion in the history of salvation. The Torah as the normative legal and moral dispensation yields to Jesus' own teaching when his own mission is completed. This fact is announced in the eschatological discourse in 24:35b, as Jesus states that his words, and not the Law, will absolutely not pass away. The same point of view is brought home by the very conclusion of the First Gospel when, in 28:19-20a, Jesus utters the Great Commission to his disciples: *πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ... διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν*, "therefore go away and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to keep all that I have commanded you." Although Jesus' teaching in the Matthean rendering did indeed overlap with some of the Pentateuchal precepts, it is only the former that remains forever and is to be the content of the disciples' missionary proclamation. To a discerning reader, the Matthean narrative arch offers a profoundly theological journey from the Old Covenant to the New one, with the transition from one to the other coinciding with the climax of the entire story, Jesus' death amidst the trembling of the cosmos.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express thanks to Professor Christopher Rowland, Mr Isaac Soon, and the anonymous reviewers for their learned and helpful criticisms on the drafts of this article.

Bibliography

- Allison, D.C., *The End of the Ages Has Come. An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress 1985).
- Betz, H.D., *The Sermon on the Mount. A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3–7:27 and Luke 6:20–49)* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 1995).
- Brown, R.E., *The Death of the Messiah. From Gethsemane to the Grave. A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (Anchor Bible Reference Library; London: Chapman 1994) I–II.
- Davies, W.D., *Christian Origins and Judaism* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster 1962).
- Davies, W.D., “Matthew, 5, 17–18,” *Mélanges bibliques rédigés en l’honneur de André Robert* (ed. [n.d.]) (Paris: Bloud & Gay 1957) 428–456.
- Davies, W.D., *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or in the Age to Come* (Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 7; Philadelphia, PA: Society of Biblical Literature 1952).
- Davies, W.D. – Allison, D.C., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: Clark 1988) I–III.
- Deines, R., *Die Gerechtigkeit der Tora im Reich des Messias. Mt 5,13–20 als Schlüsseltext der mathäischen Theologie* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 177; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2005).
- Deines, R., “Not the Law but the Messiah: Law and Righteousness in the Gospel of Matthew – An Ongoing Debate,” *Built upon the Rock. Studies in the Gospel of Matthew* (eds. D.M. Gurtner – J. Nolland) (Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge: Eerdmans 2008) 53–84.
- Delling, G., “πληρῶν,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (eds. G. Kittel – G. Friedrich; trans. G.W. Bromiley) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1968) VI, 286–298 (=TDNT).
- Fletcher-Louis, C.H.T., “The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant: Mark 13:31 and Matthew 5:18,” *‘The Reader Must Understand’. Eschatology in Bible and Theology* (eds. M.W. Elliott – K.E. Brower) (Leicester: Apollos 1997) 145–169.
- Foster, P., *The Gospel of Peter. Introduction, Critical Edition and Commentary* (Texts and Editions for New Testament Study 4; Leiden: Brill 2010).
- France, R.T., *The Gospel of Matthew* (New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge: Eerdmans 2007).
- Gruen, W., “Seeking the Context for the *Testament of Job*,” *Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha* 18 (2009) 163–179.
- Hachlili, R., *Jewish Funerary Customs, Practices and Rites in the Second Temple Period* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 94; Boston, MA – Leiden: Brill 2005).
- Hagner, D.A., *Matthew 14–28* (WBC 33B; Dallas, TX: Word Books 1995).
- Haralambakis, M., *The Testament of Job. Text, Narrative and Reception History* (The Library of Second Temple Studies 80; London: Bloomsbury 2012).
- Keener, C.S., *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge: Eerdmans 1999).
- Kraemer, D.C., *The Meanings of Death in Rabbinic Judaism* (London – New Yor: Routledge 2000).
- Ljungman, H., *Das Gesetz erfüllen. Matth. 5,17ff. und 3,15 untersucht* (Lund: Gleerup 1954).
- Luz, U., *Matthew 1–7. A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 2007).

- Luz, U., *Matthew 21–28. A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 2005).
- Luz, U., *Studies in Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge: Eerdmans 2005).
- McCane, B.R., *Roll Back the Stone. Death and Burial in the World of Jesus* (Harrisburg, PA: TPI 2003).
- Meier, J.P., *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel. A Redactional Study of Mt. 5:17–48* (Analecta Biblica 71; Rome: Biblical Institute Press 1971) 76–80.
- Meier, J.P., “Salvation-History in Matthew: In Search of a Starting Point,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 37 (1975) 203–215.
- Oliver, I.W., *Torah Praxis after 70 CE. Reading Matthew and Luke-Acts as Jewish Texts* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/355; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2013).
- Sim, D.C., *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew* (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 88; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996).
- Stanton, G.N., *A Gospel for a New People. Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: Clark 1992).
- Strack, H.L. – Billerbeck, P., *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (München: Beck 1922–1961) I–VI.
- Wills, L.M., “Testament of Job,” *Ancient Jewish Novels. An Anthology* (ed. L.M. Wills) (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2002) 242–268.
- Wise, M.O., *A Critical Study of the Temple Scroll from Qumran Cave 11* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 49; Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago 1990).

