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The Meaning of the Passion in the Light of the Word Pictures Used by Jesus

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THE MEANING OF THE PASSION IN THE LIGHT OF THE WORD PICTURES USED BY JESUS

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SHORT TITLE

JESUS PICTURES HIS PASSION

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CHAPTER I

THE STUDY OF THE PASSION ON THE BASIS OF THE WORD PICTURES USED BY JESUS TO PREDICT HIS PASSION

Before His final week in Jerusalem, Jesus often predicted that in the days ahead He would suffer and die. The purpose of these sayings was to instruct and prepare His disciples for this event. Often these predictions are clear and there is no question as to the meaning of His words. In other instances Jesus made use of "figures" or "word pictures" in describing this coming event.

Since these word pictures were taken from the heritage of the people of His day and therefore had a certain meaning before Jesus used them, it appears a fair inference that Jesus Himself had a definite purpose in using precisely the terms that He did. Undoubtedly He intended to convey a special meaning to His disciples through those terms. The discovery of that meaning should help illuminate Jesus' passion for us. This thesis, then, will attempt to answer two questions. First, what was there in the meaning of those expressions that caused Jesus to use them in predicting and describing His passion; second, what do these expressions contribute to an understanding of this passion for the man living in the twentieth century?

Eight figures which Jesus used are to be considered in this thesis. These eight are the following: "bridegroom," "cup," "baptism," "ransom," "stone," "temple," "serpent," and "shepherd." It is to be noted that the first five sayings are taken from the Synoptic Gospels. Since both

"cup" and "baptism" are used by Jesus in the same passage, and since they are complementary to each other, they will be considered together. The sayings in the Synoptic Gospels will be considered in the order in which they appear in the Gospel of St. Mark. The last three sayings are found only in the Fourth Gospel.

Since each expression could of itself provide the basis for a separate study, this thesis will be limited in several ways. All the figures have their background in the Old Testament. Yet not all those passages in the Old Testament which mention these words will be considered. Only those passages which have some implication for the meaning of the Passion will be considered. This also holds true for the Rabbinic Literature. The study of the Old Testament is based principally on the primary sources. For the Rabbinic Literature I have been dependent on secondary sources.

As far as the New Testament is concerned, I have restricted myself primarily to the Four Gospels. This has been done not because the other writings of the New Testament are unimportant, but because it was felt that the thesis had to be limited. As far as the sayings are concerned, both primary and secondary sources have been consulted.

This thesis is prepared under the assumption that in these sayings we have authentic words of Jesus and that as far as the Synoptic sayings are concerned, Mark represents an accurate chronology. This assumption is verified by certain scholars today.[1] The question of authenticity is basic to this study. The matter of chronology would not essentially

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[1]Cf. Vincent Taylor in Life and Ministry of Jesus (New York: Abingdon Press, c. 1955), pp. 150-1.

affect the interpretation of the sayings since the very fact that Jesus used these sayings at all would indicate the meaning which he wished to convey about his imminent death.

On the basis of the study of these expressions five main elements are found in the passion of Jesus. These elements are indicated by the fact that Jesus uses just these expressions in speaking of His mission and passion. In the first place, Jesus presents His passion as a part of His Messianic mission and, therefore, God is seen in His passion. Secondly, Jesus shows that His passion is an act of love and mercy displayed by God toward men. Thirdly, this passion of Jesus involves a judgment upon man and man's sin. Fourthly, this passion is a representative act for man on the part of Jesus. Fifthly, this passion is an act of victory for men.

CHAPTER II

THE BRIDEGROOM

The first time Jesus predicted His Passion, according to the Marcan chronology, was early in the Galilean ministry. In answer to a question about fasting Jesus said, "The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day" (Mk. 2:20; cf. Matt. 9:15; Lk. 5:35). The meaning of this saying is found primarily in the Old Testament and the Rabbinic Literature.

A. Old Testament Background

In considering the Old Testament usage of the word "bridegroom" perhaps the most striking thing is that this word is used of God Himself. It is through this figure that God shows Himself to be a God of love and mercy. We see this meaning in such passages as: Is. 62:5; Is. 61:10; Ez. 16. The book of Hosea provides a parallel showing through the life of the prophet the relationship between God, the husband, and Israel, the adulterous wife (Hos. 2:20).

In these passages and in others we have the picture of God betrothing Himself to Israel, the bride (cf. Ex. 34:15; Deaut. 31:16). This is also the main theme of the prophet Hosea. This relationship between God and his bride is one of the greatest pictures of grace and mercy in the Old Testament. In Ezekiel chapter 16 God is pictured as going past Jerusalem who is abandoned in the desert. He revives her and takes her to Himself. In Hosea God is the husband who married

Israel and still remains her husband in spite of the fact that Israel is unfaithful. The mutual knowledge between Israel and God is like that union which exists between husband and wife. This God is a God of love for no matter what Israel does, God does not divorce her.[1]

Yet in this great figure of love there is also a warning. This can be seen especially in Hosea. Since God has been merciful, the judgment against Israel will be all the greater. However even in this case there is still hope for her.

Perhaps in the background of our passage is the fact that at the time of judgment all marriage festivities would cease (Jer. 7:34; 16:9). Since there could be no joy in judgment, the happiness and the laughter of the bride and groom would also be silenced.

B. Rabbinic Literature

In Rabbinic Literature the figure of the bride and groom is also a common one. There also, Israel is pictured as the bride of God. God and Israel were already married and the wedding feast which took place after the wedding was the Messianic Age. The period before the wedding was the time of grace. The years before the marriage feast itself were also said to be a time of grace. It was felt that since Israel was still waiting for the Messiah, she was to prepare for Him.[2]

At other times the wedding feast was thought to be the ressurection

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[1]Alan Richardson, editor, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952), p. 140.

[2]H. L. Strack, and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oskar Beck, 1922), I, pp. 500-17.

from the dead when all Israel would eat together with the Messiah.[3] In this case the time when the Messiah appeared would be a period of grace still remaining to Israel when she would have to repent.

In the saying of Jesus the expression "sons of the bridal chamber" is used. These were the invited guests and friends of the groom. They were chosen to lead the bride to the groom. They were especially chosen by the groom on the basis of their trustworthiness and the gift they would give him.[4] The Rabbis felt that the institution of the "sons of the bridal chamber" went all the way back to Genesis when God Himself performed this function for Adam. It is said that God led Eve to Adam under a Sycamore tree.[5]

The importance of the various feasts connected with the wedding is discussed by the Rabbis. There was a feast before the wedding, and all those invited to that feast were guaranteed a place at the wedding feast itself.[6]

These are some of the thoughts connected with the picture of the bridegroom in the Old Testament and in the thinking current at the time of Jesus.

C. Usage in the Gospels

The earliest reference to the figure of "the bridegroom" in the

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

Gospels is found in the ministry of John the Baptist. John points to the Christ as the bridegroom and calls himself the "friend of the bridegroom" (Jn. 3:29). John spoke these words primarily for the benefit of his own disciples when they were concerned that this new prophet Jesus was usurping John's position. When it is kept in mind that the word "bridegroom" was a common one in Judaism and that it had many overtones connected with the Messiah, this identification of Christ as the bridegroom by John is significant. In those words John is as much as telling his disciples that this is the Messiah and that the Messianic Age has come. Even John, however, did not have a clear conception of what was involved. When he sent messengers to Jesus to question Him, he was also reflecting the current ideas about the Messiah. John thought that the Messianic Age would be a time of victory, and yet John was languishing in prison. Jesus had to show John as well as his disciples that they did not really understand what was to happen in that Age.[7]

Another significant passage is the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matt. 25:1ff.). Here Jesus definitely refers to the marriage feast which was in the minds of His contemporaries. He identifies the bridegroom with the Son of God. He is the one who will lead men into the marriage feast. He is telling people that He is the Messiah for whom they are looking. He is the one who will lead them into the Messianic feast.

The saying in which Jesus uses the figure of the bridegroom to

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[7]Alfred Edersheim, Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1953), I, p. 664.

predict His passion will now be considered (Mk. 2:20; Matt. 9:15; Lk. 5:35). There are some scholars who deny either the historicity of this statement or else deny that Mark and the other Evangelists have placed it in its proper place. The reason for this position is that only after the Caesarea-Philippi incident did Jesus fully reveal the fact that he must suffer.[8] However there are others who maintain that this saying is both historical and also that the Evangelists have placed it in its proper setting.[9] For this study the latter position will be taken.

Jesus used the "bridegroom" figure in answer to a question put to Him by the disciples of John. In spite of the fact that John had identified Jesus with the bridegroom, in the presence of these disciples, there still remained some doubt in their minds as to who Jesus was. Their question was concerned with the reason for the fact that Jesus did not require His followers to fast. It was at this point that Jesus' attitude toward the Law and the traditions of the Jews was evident. Jesus answers their question in a strange way, and yet in that answer one may see His Messianic claims. For one of the characteristics of the Messianic days was joyfulness.[10] There would be no fasting in that time. In saying that since He was present with them, it was no

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[8]John Cecil Cadoux, The Historic Mission of Jesus, (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.), p. 254.

[9]A. M. Hunter, The Gospel According to St. Mark (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1948), p. 41.

[10]Edersheim, op. cit., I, p. 664.

time to fast, He showed indirectly that He was indeed the Messiah.[11]

It is important to note that Jesus used the word apartheei to describe what will happen in the future. This indicates that Jesus did know of His death already in the early Galilean period. He knew that as the Messianic Bridegroom He would have to suffer and die.[12] As yet the time of His death is uncertain since He uses hotan to describe that time.[13] However since He uses "taken away" rather than "going away" to describe His departure, He indicates that He knew His death would be a violent one.[14] It appears, then, that we have here at the beginning of His ministry a definite reference to His death.[15]

In this "bridegroom" saying two contradictory elements seem to be in evidence. The very fact that Jesus describes Himself as the bridegroom indicates that mercy is an important part of His activity. This would be indicated by the associations the expression has in the Old Testament and Rabbinic Literature. It is a description of God in a covenant relationship with His people.[16] However coupled with this element of mercy is also the idea of judgment. This seems to be

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[11]V. Taylor, Names of Jesus (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1953), p. 87.

[12]Hunter, op. cit., p. 41.

[13]Henry Barclay Sweete, The Gospel According to St. Mark (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1952), p. 44.

[14]Alfred Plummer, The Gospel According to St. Matthew (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1956), p. 140.

[15]V. Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1951), p. 83.

[16]Sweete, op. cit., p. 44.

indicated by the fact that the bridegroom would be taken away. Exclusion from the Messianic feast would mean bitter and utter punishment to the disciple who heard those words. This is probably what would be indicated to them since Jesus implied that "days are coming" when the joyful and personal intercourse would be ended.[17]

D. Meaning for the Passion

This saying of Jesus contributes several things to an understanding of Jesus' passion. Jesus indicates that He is the Messiah. In Him the Messianic Age had come. Therefore He connects His life and death with God's covenant with His people.

Very prominent in this saying are the two ideas of love and mercy. "Bridegroom" would remind the Jew of God's merciful dealings with His wayward people. But also the idea of judgment is present. This is only alluded to in this saying and is not further explained. It is only from a person's position after the crucifixion has taken place that this can be understood. It shows God's judgment upon sin. Yet as He shows this judgment, by the very same act He shows His love and mercy. This seems to be the main idea contained in the figure of the bridegroom in this saying.

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[17] Ibid., p. 44.

CHAPTER III

CUP AND BAPTISM

The second passage in which Jesus uses a word picture in describing for His disciples His coming suffering and death, is written in Mark 10:38,39 (cf. Matt. 20:22; Lk. 12:49). The passage reads as follows:

> "Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to Him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized. . . ."

Since Mark has coupled the figure of both the "cup" and the "baptism" together in one passage, one may conclude that they complement each other. Both expressions are used to describe Jesus' coming death. Both figures will be considered together.

A. Old Testament Background

In the Old Testament the word "cup" has many different usages. Very often the word is used to describe some form of suffering given as a punishment by God. It is then a mark of God's wrath (Ps. 76:8; Jer. 49:12; Is. 51:17; Lam. 4:21; Ez. 23:31). In seventeen out of twenty cases in the Old Testament where the word is used figuratively, it signifies suffering ordained by God and especially penal suffering and judgment.[1]

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[1]Martin Franzmann, "A Ransom For Many: Satisfactio Vicaria," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXV (July, 1954), 506.

There are many instances in which "cup" is used in a different sense. Often the word gives the idea of a blessing that is being given to a person. It is called a "cup of salvation" (Ps. 116:13). It implies the idea of consolation (Jer. 16:17). This figure is also used in the twenty-third Psalm (verse five). In this Psalm it is perhaps the cup of medicine which the shepherd gives to the sheep in order to heal them.[2]

Not so prominent and yet very significant for the understanding of the words of Jesus is the idea that the cup is a symbol of what the future holds in store for the individual (Ps. 16:5). The future is in the hands of God. It is to be noted that the "cup" in this instance, as well as in the previous passages cited, is given by God. Whether the cup signifies blessing, wrath, or simply the future, it is God who is the giver. God is behind whatever happens to the individual.

The word "baptism" which Jesus couples with "cup" in the passage from Mark does not present such a varied picture in the Old Testament. The noun baptisma is not found in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament although the verb bapto is used. It is used in the sense of dipping with the idea of cleansing also indicated (e.g., II Kings 5:14). More prominent is the idea that the sufferer is regarded as being plunged or half drowned in his grief or loss (e.g., Ps. 18:16; 42:7; 69:1ff.; 124:4).[3] Water is often the symbol of calamity which befalls

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[2]Cf. Samuel Terrien, The Psalms and Their Meaning For Today (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., c. 1952), p. 233.

[3]Henry Barclay Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1952), p. 237.

a person.[4] Therefore on the basis of the Old Testament, it appears that "baptism" is related to "cup" through the meaning of suffering or some other calamity which a person must endure.

B. Rabbinic Literature

In Rabbinic Literature the word "cup" can be indicative of either a good or evil future. This cup is in the hands of Yahweh who gives it to all men. It is said that this cup is a "mixed drink" on the basis of Psalm 75:9. Often this cup included both wrath and kindness, but in most instances it consisted of wrath. It was said that since Yahweh is the "God of Hosts," all people will have to drink this cup. Such a cup given by God must be drunk to the dregs. As men drink this cup of wrath, God is supposed to laugh at them.[5]

The feast of the Passover should also be mentioned. In the passover four different cups were taken. The Rabbis said that these four cups were the four cups of punishment which God provides for the Gentiles.[6]

It seems that very often a fatalistic idea was apparent in the writings of the Rabbis. There was not much a person could do about the future. God was the one who gave the cup to men. This cup was intended for both Jew and Gentile.[7] But it was also said that what a man drinks

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[4]Vincent Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1951), p. 98.

[5]H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oskar Beck, 1922), I, pp. 994-5.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

in this life is only a drop when compared to the life hereafter. It is in the hereafter that his cup will be filled to the brim.[8]

The word "baptism" does not seem to have been used by the rabbis to indicate either the idea of wrath or the future as was the expression, "cup."

C. Usage in the Gospels

The word "cup" is used in several different ways in the Gospels. In several instances it is connected with an act of love that is deserving of a reward (cf. Matt. 10:42). But of more interest in determining the meaning of this expression in this passage is the account of Jesus' suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane. There the Evangelists describe the intense suffering Jesus endured. The suffering is a "cup" which the Father can give or remove from Jesus (Matt. 26; Mk. 14). In the Fourth Gospel this idea is also carried out. Jesus speaks of His Father giving Him a cup to drink and there is no question but that He will drink it (Jn. 18:11).

It would seem that the best understanding of "cup," in the sense that Jesus uses the word, is found in light of the Old Testament. Prominent then in the mind of Jesus would be the conception that this cup which He is to drink is connected with suffering. Since in the Old Testament this suffering is a punishment for sin, one might conclude that here also some punishment is involved. Jesus thought of His suffering as part of His vocation, and that this suffering would be

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[8] Ibid., pp. 836-8.

brought to a climax in His death.[9] Yet this wrath of God which Jesus felt was not directed to Him for His sin, but it was God's wrath directed against Him for the sin of the human race. Christ had to drink the cup of God's naked wrath against the sin of all men.[10]

Just as in the Old Testament the cup which men receive is always given to them from God, so this cup which Jesus drinks must also be connected with the will and purpose of God. This expression would be a poetic term for the destiny that awaits Jesus. This destiny is part of a plan of God.[11] This "cup" embraces His whole life, but it is especially concerned with His passion.[12]

Of special importance is the expression "baptism" which Jesus uses. The English word "baptism" is a translation of the Greek word baptisma in contrast to baptismos. The latter was simply a washing of some kind usually of purification. The former is defined as a "rite" or a "figure of martyrdom."[13] This term is used of John's baptism and also in the passage under consideration.

To find the meaning of Jesus when He speaks of His death as a "baptism," many scholars look to His baptism in the River Jordon by John. The relationship between these two must be considered. At His baptism

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[9]Taylor, op. cit., p. 97.

[10]A. M. Hunter, The Works and Words of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1950), pp. 96-7.

[11]James Denney, Jesus and the Gospels (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Co., 1909), p. 37.

[12]Sweete, op. cit., p. 236.

[13]James Hastings, editor, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York: Chas. Scribner, 1917), I, pp. 168-9.

by John, Jesus was identified with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah. This was the beginning of His vocation as the Servant.[14] After Jesus received this baptism from John and thereby identified Himself with the people, He proceeded to undergo and complete the general baptism for all men. The meaning of the voice from heaven was that now Jesus is declared to be the one who will suffer as the representative of the people. Therefore by going to the cross, Jesus effects the general baptism for the people independent of the decision of faith and the understanding of those who will benefit from that baptism. It is therefore concluded:

> The baptism of Jesus points forward to the end, to the climax of His life, the cross, in which alone all baptism will find its fulfillment. There Jesus will achieve a general baptism. In His own baptism in Jordon He received a commission to do this.[15]

It seems that this view has much to recommend it. It would explain why Jesus used the figure of "baptism" in describing His coming death.

Apart from the question of the relationship to Christ's baptism by John, this expression as used by Jesus definitely means that suffering will be involved in His mission. By using the term "baptism," Jesus implies that He will be overwhelmed and oppressed. Such suffering is a part of His mission and destiny. This suffering is a decisive act which has significance in itself.[16] This would necessarily be implied by

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[14]Reginald Horace Fuller, Mission and Achievement of Jesus (London: SCM Press, 1954), pp. 59-61.

[15]Oscar Cullman, Baptism in the New Testament, translated by J. K. S. Reid (London: SCM Press, 1950), p. 19.

[16]T. W. Manson, "Sayings of Jesus," in The Mission and Message of Jesus (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Ind., 1938), p. 412.

Jesus' words in view of the fact that in the Old Testament "baptism" is most often indicative of a suffering which overwhelms a person.[17]

There is another aspect of the meaning of these expressions of Jesus in this passage. Jesus speaks in terms which give the impression that His suffering must also be shared by His disciples in some way. This passage does not seem to indicate exactly how this is to be done. It is, however, an element in His suffering and death. Vincent Taylor says:

> Although His vocation of Messianic suffering is unique, He none the less interprets it as an activity which, in some measure, men are to reproduce.[18]

To discuss this fully seems to be beyond the scope of this study. The Pauline Epistles would also have to be consulted.

D. Implications for the Passion

What then do the two expressions "cup" and "baptism" contribute to one's understanding of the passion of Jesus and its meaning for today? The Old Testament seems to point the way.

First it must be said that the vocation of Jesus in which He must suffer and die is no accident. God sent this suffering to Jesus. It is connected with His vocation as the Suffering Servant. Therefore in all that He does God's activity is also seen.

This suffering which comes to Jesus is due to God's wrath toward sin. All of this wrath is poured out upon Jesus as He drinks His cup and undergoes His baptism. But in receiving this wrath upon Himself,

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[17]Alan Richardson, editor, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952), p. 30.

[18]Taylor, op. cit., p. 268.

He is acting as the representative of man.

As part of His vocation this suffering and reception of God's wrath is inevitable. Yet it is taken by Jesus willingly for it is only through that means that His mission will be accomplished.

Although this suffering and death is the outpouring of God's wrath, the idea of salvation is also present. The "cup of wrath" which God has for the sinner has been drunk by Christ. Now there is a "cup of salvation" for that same sinner. This is shown by the fact that "cup" is also a figure for the blessings which God gives to His people in the Old Testament.

CHAPTER IV

THE RANSOM SAYING

On that same occasion when Jesus spoke of His passion as being both a "cup" and a "baptism," He also told His disciples more about the meaning of His coming death in the figure of the "ransom." This significant saying was used in connection with a lesson in humility for the disciples. These disciples were not to seek honor and glory, but they were to pattern their life after the life of their Lord. Jesus said, "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." This passage is extremely significant because it is one of the few passages in which Jesus gives a definite reason for His sufferings and death and its relationship to men.

Formerly there were scholars who doubted the authenticity of this saying of Jesus.[1] The question of its authenticity is beyond the scope of this study. Let it only be said that there are many scholars who accept its authenticity with little or no reservation.[2] This study will proceed under the assumption that it is an authentic statement of Jesus describing His passion.

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[1]Thus Rudolf Bultman as cited by Reginald Horace Fuller, Mission and Achievement of Jesus (London: SCM Press, 1954), p. 54.

[2]Cf. Vincent Taylor, Gospel According to St. Mark (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1955), p. 446.

A. Old Testament Background

Formerly it was held by scholars that the meaning of lutron must be found in the contemporary Greek literature of Jesus' day. Thus Adolf Deismann finds the meaning of this word in the practice of manumission of slaves. The lutron was the price paid either by the slave or by someone else for the release of the slave.[3]

However, scholars today claim that the meaning for this word is to be found primarily in the Old Testament itself.[4] In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament lutron is given as the equivalent for several different Hebrew words. Sometimes these words mean the price for which a thing is sold (מְחִיר). Another word indicates the liberation achieved through paying a certain price, or else the whole process of redemption (כֹּפֶר; פִּדְיוֹן). Very often the word is used as the payment of an equivalent for what is released, or the price paid in compensation for the life that was forfeited (I Sam. 14:24ff.). The emphasis is on the result rather than the price. This redemption is often for some physical suffering or political menace.[5] The idea is expressed (Ps. 49:7-10) that the sinner's soul is forfeited and neither he nor anyone else is able to ransom it.[6] The Hebrew word kopher,

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[3]Adolf Deismann, Light From the Ancient East (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1927), pp. 318ff.

[4]William Manson, Jesus the Messiah (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., Sixth Impression, 1952), pp. 132-8.

[5]Alan Richardson, editor, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952), p. 186.

[6]Manson, op. cit., p. 133.

which lutron translates, is also used to indicate a gift offered to an "avenger of blood"; it is the satisfaction offered for one's life.[7]

It is especially significant that Jesus in describing His death in the tenth chapter of Mark seems to have in mind the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. In this chapter the Suffering Servant offers His soul as a trespass offering for the guilt of the whole nation.[8] Therefore it seems that in the Old Testament both the legal and the sacrificial, substitutionary sense is found. Both of these ideas would be combined in the word lutron as used by Jesus.[9]

B. Rabbinic Literature

In later Judaism the term "ransom money" can be used to apply to faith in the atonement that a righteous person makes for someone else.[10]

In most cases the meaning of lutron remains the same as in the Old Testament.[11] A significant passage is written in the Second Book of Maccabees.

> But I, as my brethern, offer up my body and life for the laws of our fathers, beseeching God that He would speedily be merciful unto our nation; and that thou by torments and plagues mayest confess that He alone is God (7:37).

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[7]James Denney, The Death of Christ, Its Place and Interpretation in the New Testament (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1907), p. 43.

[8]Manson, op. cit., p. 132.

[9]James Hastings, editor, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York: Chas. Scribner, 1917), II, p. 468.

[10]Gerhard Kittel, Theologisches Woerterbuch Zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Verlag Von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), III, p. 343.

[11]Leon Morris, Apostolic Preaching of the Cross (London: Tyndale Press, 1955), pp. 11-26.

Therefore in this period redemptive value is given to the suffering of the righteous martyr.[12]

C. The Meaning of the "Ransom" Saying

When the words of Jesus in this passage are viewed in the light of the Old Testament, several different concepts seem to be united in this one statement of Jesus. It is apparent that Jesus is speaking these words with a sense of His mission here on earth. "He has come" and this coming has a specific purpose. This would indicate that Jesus is speaking these words out of a full sense of His mission as the Messiah, the one who had been promised from old. Therefore this saying could also be connected with the Kingdom which the Messiah came to establish.[13]

By using the term "ransom," Jesus also implies something about the state of man. "The many," which is a reference either to the nation or the whole human race, are in need of a ransom. The very expression "ransom" must presuppose the wrath of God toward sinful man. Man is guilty of sin, and a guilt offering (asham) needs to be rendered for him. All of God's judgment is resting upon man for this sin.[14] Jesus thought of His death as the price or payment that needed to be made so that man could be freed from this wrath of God.[15] Since Jesus has paid this

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[12]Manson, op. cit., p. 133.

[13]Martin Franzmann, "A Ransom For Many: Satisfactio Vicaria," Concordia Theological Monthly XXV (June, 1954), 501-2.

[14]Ibid., p. 506.

[15]A. M. Hunter, The Works and Words of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1950), pp. 97-8.

supreme price, this saying also implies that He was successful. He won a victory for mankind by suffering and dying.[16]

If this passage is taken at its face value, then it must also be conceded that this passage points to a substitutionary idea in Jesus' thought. This is indicated by the fact that Jesus used the preposition anti to show the relationship between His death and the "many." This substitution was necessary because the "many" were not able to make the payment for themselves. His death is to actually take the place of the "many."[17] This would be especially true if the asham idea is connected with lutron. Thus one scholar defines the meaning of this passage as:

> The Messianic Servant offers Himself as an asham in compensation for the sins of the people, interposing for them as their substitute.[18]

Important in this passage is the statement that Jesus comes "to minister." This would find its meaning again in the Old Testament. Often God is pictured as ministering to His people. This ministering began in the Garden of Eden and is continued throughout the Old Testament in such figures as the father, spouse, etc. Jesus then is the culmination of this ministry.[19] This ministry of Christ is ministry to the full. In His ministry Jesus gives His life for men. Therefore God's agape is also seen in this passage. God is behind the activities

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[16]Vincent Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1951), pp. 260-1.

[17]A. M. Hunter, The Gospel According to St. Mark (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1948), p. 106.

[18]Fuller, op. cit., p. 57.

[19]Franzmann, op. cit., pp. 504-7.

of Jesus. Jesus is not doing this on His own.[20] In this passage then, both God's love and His justice "touch each other." For it shows that although the wrath of God is upon man because of man's sin, yet God is still the God of love who offers a lutron for men.[21]

There is a very definite relationship between these words of Jesus and the Suffering Servant (Is. 53).[22] Fuller finds in these words of Jesus a partial reproduction of this chapter in Isaiah. He renders it this way:

> (The Son of Man) must suffer many things and be rejected and set at naught, and delivered up into the hands of men and they shall kill Him. (For he came) not to be ministered to but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.[23]

William Manson shows the relationship by pointing out that as Jesus came to "minister," so also Isaiah speaks about "the Servant." Jesus speaks of "giving His life" and the Isaianic Servant "surrenders his life unto death." Jesus offered His life as a "ransom for many" and in Isaiah the righteous Servant "justifies many."[24] In view of this chapter in Isaiah, Jesus indicates that He thought of His own life as one of

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[20]Ibid., p. 505.

[21]Ibid., p. 508.

[22]For a contrary view cf. Buechsel in Kittel, op. cit., IV p. 344.

[23]Fuller, op. cit., p. 56.

[24]William Manson, Christ's View of the Kingdom of God (New York: George H. Doran Co., n.d.), p. 143.

vicarious service and suffering for the "many."[25] Therefore the full implication of this saying of Jesus can only be understood by considering the Suffering Servant poem. Cecil John Cadoux says that this identification of Himself with the Servant in Isaiah indicates that Jesus thought of His work as God's activity.[26]

The question has been raised about the recipient of this ransom. Since a ransom is indicated someone must receive that ransom so that man can be released. The early Church often thought that this ransom was paid to Satan.[27] Others today have said that this ransom is paid to God since it is the righteous God who visits and punishes sin.[28] However the point of comparison should not be pressed. Jesus is using this expression about the "ransom" to serve as an example for the disciples as to how they are to live and minister to one another. Jesus says nothing directly about God or Satan. It seems better for one to restrict himself to the meaning of the "ransom" for men rather than to carry the word to its farthest conclusion and inquire to whom the ransom was paid.[29]

Since Jesus spoke these words to His disciples to illustrate for

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[25]H. D. A. Major, "Incidents in the Life of Jesus," in The Mission and Message of Jesus (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1938), p. 135.

[26]Cecil John Cadoux, The Historic Mission of Jesus (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.), pp. 37-8.

[27]Hastings, op. cit., II, p. 469.

[28]Franzmann, op. cit., p. 509.

[29]For a good discussion of this question cf. Gustaf Aulen, Christus Victor (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1956), pp. 47ff.

them their proper attitude toward service, the question of the relationship of this passage to the life of the Church should also be considered. Since this passage is dealing with the effects of Jesus' work toward men, it has been said that this "ransom" brings the Church into being.[30] Without this "ransom" the Church could not exist. This saying is also to be the basis for the life of the Church.[31] The life in this Church is to be characterized by ministry. This saying is also a call to repentence.[32] For it is a reminder of the fact that the Church often has not followed the example which Jesus gave her.

In summary, it must be said that Jesus spoke this word out of a full messianic consciousness. He is not acting by Himself but God's activity is also to be seen. This activity of God was needed since man had sinned and the judgment of God rested upon Him. In view of man's guilt, Jesus came and gave His life as a guilt offering in substitution for man. By this very act the Church is brought into existence and this same act is to be the example that the Church must follow. F. J. Taylor summarized this saying very well. He says that it signifies:

> (1) The voluntariness of the act as a deliberate sacrifice of self; (2) the costliness of it using the word employed to describe the price paid for the release of prisoners or the manumission of slaves; (3) something done for "the many" which they could not do for themselves but must have done if they were to have hope. . . .; (4) the scope of redemption which is for "many."[33]

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[30]Franzmann, op. cit., p. 513.

[31]Ibid., pp. 513-4.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Richardson, op. cit., p. 187.

CHAPTER V

THE STONE

The third expression Jesus used in describing His Passion is that of the "stone." Unlike the other figures which Jesus employed, this expression is connected with a parable. The word is used in a quotation from Psalm 118 which reads:

> The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes (Mark 12:10,11; Matt. 21:43,44).

This saying is bound up closely with the purpose for which Jesus came into the world. He used this quotation to conclude a description in parable form of the history of God's dealings with His people. Jesus describes how God continually sent His prophets to His people so that they would return to Him. The parable itself indicates that Jesus was speaking of Himself in this passage and points forward to the events that were to take place at the end of His life. One may also find an indication of the meaning of the passion in these words.

A. Old Testament Background

The word "stone" is a very common one in the Old Testament. It was used in many different ways. Jesus must have been very familar with this expression since it was such a common term in both the Old Testament and in the teaching of His day.

The prophet Isaiah uses "stone" in one passage as a term for the "Lord of Hosts" (Is. 8:14). Since the people do not fear God and regard

Him as holy, He will be to both houses of Israel a "stone of offence and a rock of stumbling." In the same book of Isaiah God speaks to the people and says that He is laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation (Is. 28:16). It is God who is placing this stone, and this stone is to be believed in.

Of special significance is a passage in the book of Daniel. In this passage Daniel relates the King's dream in which a stone "cut out by no human hand" destroyed the image representing all the kingdoms of the world. This stone is identified as the Kingdom which God shall establish and which will never be destroyed (Dan. 2:34ff.). This seems to be a messianic use of "stone" indicating the prediction of a coming Kingdom to be established by God.

In several passages the word "stone" is used to indicate the leader of the people. So princes of Memphis are called the "cornerstones of her tribes" (Is. 19:13). In the prophet Zechariah there is a passage which is either a reference to the Messiah who shall come out of the house of Judah, or else it is a reference to a leader of the people who will lead them in battle (Zech. 10:4).

The passage from which the quotation in the Gospels is taken uses "stone" to describe Israel rather than Israel's Messiah. The passage in Mark is a direct quotation from Psalm 118:22 in the Septuagint. It is said that this is probably an actual event that took place during the building of the Temple. Then a stone which the builders were supposed to have rejected was used for the cornerstone or the cap stone. However, for the poet who wrote the Psalm, the stone is a reference to the nation of Israel which was considered as despised and lowly by its

neighbors and yet that nation is destined for great things under the blessing of God.[1] The builders, then, are the rulers of foreign nations who cannot see a place for Israel in their plans.

Very often in the Old Testament a stone was used as a memorial to mark a significant event in the life of an individual or the life of the nation. So Jacob slept on a stone and dreamed and later he set up the same stone as a memorial of that dream (Gen. 28:11). A stone was used to commemorate a covenant made between Jacob and Laban (Gen. 31:5). Again a stone was used as a marker at the River Jordon to show where the people crossed that River to enter the Promised Land (Deut. 27:2). Twelve stones were set up to remind the people that they are one nation and not twelve tribes (Jos. 4:2). The Law of God was also written on a stone to remind the people of the will of God (Jos. 24:2,6-7).

The Old Testament, therefore, provides several ways in which the word "stone" was used. To summarize, it is used of God Himself or of something that He does against man or for man. It sometimes has messianic overtones. "Stone" can also be used of the leaders of the people upon whom the fortune of the people depends. Israel also is called a stone. Stones were markers to commemorate special happenings in the lives of the people indicating a certain agreement between men, or a special mark of God's favor to them.

B. Rabbinic Literature

The testimony as to the meaning of "stone" in Rabbinic Literature

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[1]H. D. A. Major, "Incidents in the Life of Jesus," in The Mission and Message of Jesus (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1938), p. 147.

remains constant. It has a great many messianic associations.[2] In fact it is said that the Rabbis made all the Old Testament references to "stone" messianic.[3] A parallel to the passage from Psalm 118, which is quoted by Jesus, is found in Rabbinic Literature. A legend was told that at the building of Solomon's Temple there was a stone which had been discarded by the builders. Although a cornerstone had been cut, when the time came to install that specially cut stone, it could not be found. The rejected stone was fitted into the building without needing any additional cutting.[4] Perhaps this is why Jesus used this passage in the parable.

C. Usage in the Gospels

While the word lithos is a very common one in the Four Gospels, it does not seem to have any significance in a religious sense except in the passage which is the concern for this chapter. Every other case seems to be used in the same sense that a person today would use the term. A stone is mentioned simply because it is close at hand.

In studying this parable of the vineyard that was rented out to the wicked husbandmen, the first thing that it seems to indicate is that Jesus definitely thought of Himself as the Messiah. He is one sent

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[2]Vincent Taylor, Names of Jesus (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1953), p. 93.

[3]H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oskar Beck, 1922), I, pp. 869-70.

[4]A. M. Hunter, The Gospel According to St. Mark (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1948), p. 115.

from God. He is distinguished from all the servants who went before Him for He is the beloved Son. Therefore it can be seen from this passage that Jesus did consider Himself to be the Messiah, the Son of God.[5]

The passage shows that the work Jesus came to perform is the work of God. If it is accepted that Jesus has in mind the Old Testement references, and especially Daniel, then this mission which He has come to perform is inevitable. Nothing that men do will affect the outcome of His work. Jesus is certain to conquer.[6] Although men reject the Christ, that very rejection is part of the nature of His task. In spite of their rejection, the builders are not rid of Him. For those who fall on that stone will themselves be broken in pieces (Lk. 20:18).[7] Jesus is certain that His rejection is only temporary and that it will be followed by triumph.[8] This must happen since this is "the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes" (Mk. 12:11). Jesus then intimately connects His person and His mission with God.

In the background of this passage seems to be the idea that the work of Jesus is to establish a new spiritual temple. This would be indicated by the use in both the Old Testement and in the Rabbinic legend quoted above. This picture of a building would be indicated by the phrase, "the head of the corner." That this new temple was implied

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[5]Cecil John Cadoux, The Historic Mission of Jesus (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.), p. 59.

[6]Major, op. cit., p. 147.

[7]James Hastings, editor, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York: Chas. Scribners, 1917), II, p. 679.

[8]Vincent Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1951), pp. 144-5.

in this saying would also be indicated by the very common occurrence in other New Testament writings. Such a figure is used by Luke in Acts (4:11), by Peter (I Pet. 2:4,7), and by Paul (I Cor. 3:11). Vincent Taylor well summarized this idea as follows:

> As the "head of the corner" He (Jesus) gives stability to the new spiritual temple of believers. As "the rock of offence" He separated men and judges between them.[9]

Therefore one may conclude that as Israel was the stone rejected by the nations and yet used by God, so Jesus is the New Israel and is establishing His New Israel. This must be brought about by death for the Christ.[10]

D. Meaning for the Passion

In using the figure of the "stone" to describe His passion, it appears that Jesus indicated several things. His coming is not an accident, but God Himself sent Him and in whatever Jesus does the hand of God is also to be seen. Jesus therefore identifies Himself as the promised Messiah. His whole mission is connected with the very fact that He will be rejected by men. In this very rejection God's plan is being carried out, for by means of this rejection the New Israel or Temple of God is coming into existence. This saying indicates the certainty of Jesus that His task will result in a great victory. Eventually men will recognize it as a marvelous thing.

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[9]Vincent Taylor, Names of Jesus (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1953), pp. 98-9.

[10]Henry Barclay Sweete, The Gospel According to St. Mark (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1952), pp. 271-2.

CHAPTER VI

TEMPLE

This study will now turn from the figures used by Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels to those recorded by John in the Fourth Gospel. The earliest figure which Jesus used in this Gospel in reference to His death is the saying, "Destroy this temple (naos) and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn. 2:19). Of immediate concern for an understanding of this passage is the comparison of the use of the words hieron and naos. It is generally said that the former word is used to describe the whole temple area, while the latter is used only for the sanctuary of the temple, that is the Holy of Holies or the place where the statue of the god or goddess was placed.[1] This distinction is generally maintained in both the Old Testament and the Gospels.

A. Old Testement Background

It seems that in the Septuagint the word hieron is used fairly consistently to indicate the whole temple complex including the Holy of Holies, the Holy Place, and the various buildings which make up the temple area. Various passages could be cited to show this usage (e.g., I Chron. 9:27; I Es. 1:49; Ez. 28:18; Bel. 22). The use of naos, however, is not quite so consistent. Whenever the sanctuary is meant, this is the word that was used. Very often it is used to indicate either the

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[1]James Hastings, editor, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York: Chas. Scribners, 1917), II, p. 708.

dwelling place of God or at least a place that is closely connected with God (e.g., Is. 66:6; Hab. 2:20; II Sam. 22:7). Since naos is used in the passage in John and also because a greater variety of meaning is found in this word, this study will confine itself to naos.

This word is used to indicate the place where God dwells. This dwelling place is often synonymous for "the heavens" (Ps. 11:4). In other passages it is probably best to interpret it as referring to the Holy of Holies where the Shekinah of God dwells (II Chron. 26:16; Ps. 27:4; II Sam. 22:7; Ps. 5:7; Hab. 2:20). It is the place to which the believers' prayers go (Jonah 2:7). It is from that place that prayers are heard (II Sam. 22:7). This word is also used to indicate the future temple which will be established in the age to come (Ez. 40ff.).

There is no question that in the Old Testament naos often referred to a special building as several of the passages cited above would indicate. However, it should also be said that the dwelling place of God is not restricted to a special building in Jerusalem. For example, at the dedication of the Temple it is explicitly stated that this building cannot contain God (I Kings 8:27). The prophets and others are not limited to the conception of the Holy of Holies as being the place where God is to be found (cf. Ps. 11:4; Mic. 1:3). On the other hand, the Temple did have special significance for the people as the enclosure of the presence of God.

B. Rabbinic Literature

In Rabbinic literature a new element is added which is significant

for the meaning of Jesus words. The word for temple is often equal to body (soma).[2] Such usage has other parallels in their writings. For example, the body of a man is called a city and the people in that city are the arms and legs of the body.[3]

In summarizing the use of naos in pre-New Testament writings, it may be said that it is often used of the dwelling place of God. This is not necessarily a building or the Holy of Holies, but it is wherever God dwells. The presence of God is connected with the word. The rabbis added the idea that naos may be equal to soma.[4]

C. Usage in the Gospels

Edwyn Hoskyns in his book The Fourth Gospel has what is perhaps the best explanation of this passage.[5] He bases this explanation on the meaning of the words "destroy," "raise," and "sanctuary" in this saying. He finds that the word "destroy" can be used in relation to both a building (cf. I Esdras 1:55) or life.[6] The word "raise" is used of various things including a building, city, house, or image (Deut. 16:22;

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[2]H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oskar Beck, 1922), II, p. 412.

[3]Ibid.

[4]It should be noted that Zahn indicates that Josephus uses the terms naos, hieron, to hagia, and ho oikos tou theou interchangeably although Josephus is aware of the distinctions. Cf. Gerhard Kittel, Theologisches Woerterbuch Zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Verlag Von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), IV, p. 889, note 19.

[5]Edwyn Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, edited by Francis Noel Davey (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1947).

[6]Ibid., p. 195. Cf. Euripides, Iph. Taur. 629 [sic 692].

I Esdras 5:43). The word "sanctuary" is used of a sacred edifice containing the image of a god, the Holy of Holies, and also of the human body as the sanctuary of the soul or the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19; II Cor. 6:1). Therefore he maintains that these words can be translated in any one of three ways. He gives the following as three possible translations:

1. Destroy this temple, and in three days I will rebuild it.
2. Kill this body, and in three days I will raise it from the dead.
3. Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise this body from the dead, i.e., to take its place.[7]

The answer of John himself is that this saying of Jesus is a sign pointing forward to the resurrection from the dead (2:21).

To determine the correct translation of this passage, other testimony in the Gospels must be taken into account. There is only one passage in the four Gospels in which naos might indicate anything but the Holy of Holies. This is the passage which describes Judas throwing the thirty pieces of silver into the naos (Matt. 27:5). While this could indicate the Holy of Holies, such a meaning appears unlikely. On the other hand, it should be said that whenever the parts of the temple other than the sanctuary are indicated, or when the whole temple complex is meant, hieron rather than naos is used. Therefore it must be concluded that the first translation mentioned above is not correct since Jesus does not refer to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem which Herod had built.

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[7] Ibid., pp. 194-5.

In considering the second translation which is proposed by Hoskyns, it should be noted that John specifically indicates that Jesus is speaking of the resurrection of His body from the dead (Jn. 2:21). This was also the interpretation given by His disciples after the resurrection had taken place.[8] But the words suggest that more is implied than merely a reference to His death and resurrection. Jesus undoubtedly did refer to His body, but He significantly calls it naos. From the Old Testament this word has the meaning of the place where the presence of God is dwelling. By calling His own body naos, Jesus is claiming for Himself at least a very close relationship with God if not indeed the ultimate claim of divinity. The fact that He says, "I will raise it from the dead," would indicate that He did claim to be God Himself. Such an interpretation is consistent with the Fourth Gospel. As Hoskyns says:

> The body of Jesus, His flesh, was the tabernacle of the Word, the abiding place of the Spirit (1:33; 8:38; 9:30), the shrine of the presence of God. "The Father is in me, and I in the Father" (10:38); offered as a sacrifice for the purification of the world.[9]

Jesus then is indicating that in times past the presence of God was to be found in the Temple before them but now this is changed. He claims that God is now to be found in Him. This will be proved by the fact that He raises His body from the dead. That this interpretation is

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[8]Scholars are not agreed on the interpretation of this passage. C. J. Wright maintains that the resurrection was simply an interpretation read into these words by the disciples. Cf. "Jesus the Revelation of God," in The Mission and Message of Jesus (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1938), p. 730. There are others who say that the resurrection is definitely implied in this saying of Jesus. E.g. Hastings, op. cit., II, p. 711.

[9]Hoskyns, op. cit., p. 196.

correct seems to be shown by the fact that the curtain before the naos was torn in two on Good Friday. This showed that in Jesus' death a new pattern of worshipping God is to be used (Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:38; Lk. 23:45).

A variation in this interpretation is proposed by some scholars. They maintain that Jesus was speaking of the presence of God which He would raise up in the hearts of men. They would say that Jesus is thinking of the Church which will later be established. The purpose for Christ's coming was to show men the true worship of God and to establish such worship in their lives.[10] Vincent Taylor interprets this passage in a similar way. He says that in this saying Jesus was referring to the fact that His death was the seed of the Church.[11] It should be granted that Jesus did think of His death as being connected with the establishment of the Church (cf. Matt. 16). His death is the seed of the Church in the sense that it was only through His death and resurrection that the Church could be established. But to say that this is the full explanation of Jesus words, means to emphasize the effect of His death to the near exclusion of the cause. The text and context do not warrant such a procedure.

D. Meaning for the Passion

To summarize the meaning of this saying of Jesus for the passion it seems that several points are made. The word "temple" which Jesus

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[10]Wright, op. cit., p. 729.

[11]Vincent Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1951), p. 235.

uses indicates primarily the place where God's presence dwells. In the act of cleansing the Temple, Jesus was showing that the worship of the Jews was no longer valid. They had perverted it. He was now there to take the place of that Temple with its system of worship. Worship was to be centered in Him. He predicted that although they would destroy His body, where the presence of God was to be found, yet it would not be destroyed. He would raise Himself from the dead. This would be the act that proved to all that God was to be found in a new sanctuary. He was to be found in Jesus. This is shown by the fact that the uniqueness of the Holy of Holies was destroyed as Jesus died. From that point on men are to seek God not behind a veil in a Temple, but in the body of Jesus, where the presence of God is now dwelling among men.

CHAPTER VII

THE SERPENT

In the third chapter of John the story of Jesus and Nicodemus is recorded. This learned Jew came to Jesus in the dead of night to inquire who Jesus really was. In explaining Himself and His mission, it is significant for this study, that Jesus ends His conversation with Nicodemus by comparing Himself and what will happen to Him with the serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness. Jesus said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life" (Jn. 3:14). This passage has its roots deep in Old Testament history and casts light upon the meaning of Jesus' death.

A. Old Testament Background

To understand the meaning of Jesus' words in this saying, it is important to consider the part serpents play in the Old Testament. They are a very common figure not only in the Old Testament, but also among all primitive peoples.

Jesus' words are an obvious reference to the incident that happened during the time of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt (Num. 21:4-9). In view of the events in the history of man as portrayed in the Old Testament, this incident in Numbers is a miniature account of that history of man and his relationship with His God.

In the story of the Exodus, God had been merciful to Israel over and over again, yet Israel returns that mercy with revolution against God. Due to Israel's rebellion God punishes His people by using serpents. This catastrophe causes Israel to repent and seek God's mercy. God gives that mercy through the very instrument of His judgment. Moses erects a bronze serpent upon a pole so that the people may look upon it and live. The look that is required is one of faith.[1]

The earliest reference to the serpent in the Old Testament is in the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The first woman is tempted by a serpent (Gen. 3:1-4). In the account in Genesis no definite reference is made to the power or person behind the serpent. As a result of this deed, God curses the serpent and yet indicates that man shall yet triumph over this creature through the "woman's seed" (Gen. 3:13-15). The Christian Church in the past has interpreted this serpent in Genesis as a reference to Satan, and the "woman's seed" as a reference to the coming Messiah. In recent times this interpretation has been questioned.[2] It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the question whether this is a messianic prophecy or not. But the account does demonstrate that in the earliest history of man in the Old Testament the serpent and man are closely related and this relationship

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[1]John McClintock and James Strong, Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1894), IX, p. 585.

[2]Eamonn O'Doherty maintains that the meaning of this passage must be left open until further evidence regarding its translation and interpretation is forthcoming. Cf. "The Organic Development of Messianic Revelation," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly XIX (January, 1957), 17.

is one of antagonism.

Throughout the Old Testament the serpent is always a creature of contempt. He is the lowest of all creatures (cf. Prov. 23:32; Ps. 140:3; Ps. 58:4). Disrespect for enemies is often shown by comparing them to serpents (e.g., Jer. 46:22).

In addition to this low regard for serpents, there is the theme of fear and judgment which runs through the references to serpents. Again and again they are used as special instruments of God's wrath. The, incident in the wilderness, referred to above, was one such case. Such a use of serpents is found in almost every period of Jewish history. They are used not only against Israel but also against all nations. Often it is the serpents who will be executors of God's wrath upon the people (e.g., Is. 14:29; Jer. 8:17; Ecc. 10:8; Amos 5:19; Mic. 7:17; Wis. 16:5).

It is very important to note that one of the marks of the messianic age, or the period of peace, that is coming in the future will be the harmony that is restored between man and beasts.[3] It is noteworthy that there will also be harmony between man and serpents. No longer will the serpent "hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain" (Is. 65:25). In brief, there was hope that the antagonism would be removed in the coming ages.

B. Rabbinic Literature

The picture of serpents in the Rabbinic Literature follows the

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[3]Wilhelm August Schulze discusses this point in commenting on Mark 1:13b. Cf. "Der Heilige und die wilden Tiere," Zeitschrift fuer Die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, XLVI (1955), 280-3.

pattern indicated already in the Old Testament. Regarding the bronze serpent erected by Moses, it is said that not only snake bites will be healed, but also any bite from an animal would be healed if only the person looks at the bronze serpent.[4] The reason this miraculous healing took place was due to the fact that in the very act of looking one was submitting his heart to the Father in heaven and thus he was saved through that look.[5] It is further urged that all men should make their own brazen serpent so that they might look and live.[6]

The serpents are still regarded as creatures of contempt. Even if a serpent were to eat all the sweets in the world, he would not become sweet. Israel is said to be in the same condition. Even if Israel eats all the milk and honey in the world, it is of no value unless Israel obeys Yahweh.[7]

Of interest is it to note that the marvel of Jerusalem was that no one had ever been bitten by a serpent in that city. This is true in spite of the fact that serpents are very common throughout the land of Palestine.[8]

According to the Rabbis apparently only one man was able to be reconciled with serpents, and that man was Moses. He is supposed to

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[4]H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oskar Beck, 1922), II, p. 425.

[5]Ibid., II, p. 426.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]James Hastings, editor, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York: Chas. Scribner, 1917), II, p. 612.

have asked for mercy upon them and therefore he was reconciled to them.[9]

Rabbinic Literature, then, seems to bear out the ideas of the Old Testament, but with some interesting variations.

C. Usage in the Gospels

Several meanings are given to the words of Jesus spoken to Nicodemus as He compared Himself and His work to the brazen serpent in Numbers. The question is whether the words "lifted up" refer to the death of Christ on the cross or to His exaltation in heaven. However, since Jesus uses the same expression in another part of the Gospel in direct reference to His death, it would seem that this also refers primarily to His death on the cross (8:28).[10] It is important that this "lifting up" is a necessity. John uses the word dei to indicate this. Therefore it must be concluded that a Divine purpose is to be found in the activity of Jesus as He endures His suffering and death.[11]

The story of the Brazen Serpent in Numbers shows both the judgment of God and His love for men. In spite of Israel's sin, God still provides the means of deliverance. This deliverance is accomplished through the very instrument which God had used to punish His people. One may conclude with Hoskyns that just as the serpent, an instrument of judgment, shows the love of God by being lifted up, so also the cross

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[9]Strack and Billerbeck, op. cit., II, p. 425.

[10]C. J. Wright, "Jesus, the Revelation of God," in The Mission and Message of Jesus (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1938), p. 734.

[11]Vincent Taylor, The Atonement in New Testament Teaching (London: Epworth Press, 1940), p. 136.

upon which Jesus was lifted up is an instrument of judgment which also shows the love of God.[12] Therefore what is happening to Jesus is happening because of God's love. The following verses would indicate that this is a true interpretation (3:16).

In coupling His crucifixion with the story in Numbers, Jesus indicates the purpose for His coming into the world. It is said that the point of comparison between the two is the "look of faith."[13] Just as that serpent in the wilderness brought healing and life to people who looked upon that serpent, so Jesus by being lifted up on the cross brings healing and life to all nations.[14]

In the Synoptic Gospels there are two passages which while not contributing directly to the meaning of the saying in John, yet are interesting in that they indicate a completion of the thinking shown in the Old Testament. Perhaps they will also show why Jesus made a close connection between His work and the serpent in the wilderness. In Luke Jesus tells His disciples that they now have power to "tread upon serpents" and that they will not be hurt (10:19). The second passage is from a disputed text and yet it is of interest. The author relates how the disciples will be able to pick up serpents and yet remain unharmed (Mark 16:18). Both of these passages show that the words spoken in the Old Testament describing the coming time of peace when the hostility between serpents and man shall be destroyed, are

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[12]Edwyn Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, edited by Francis Noel Devey (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1947), p. 207.

[13]McClintock and Strong, op. cit., IX, p. 585.

[14]Wright, op. cit., p. 735.

fulfilled for the disciples of Jesus. This would seem to indicate that Jesus conceived of His work as a complete victory over all enemies confronting man. By linking the cross to the lifting up of the serpent, He shows that this victory is accomplished through His death.

D. The Meaning for the Passion

The Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature has a good summary of the relationship between the story of the brazen serpent and the death of Jesus.[15] Both the serpent and Christ are lifted up, the one on a pole, the other on a cross. As that brass serpent was without the sting of death, so Christ is without sin. Both a brass serpent and a crucified Christ were apparently improbable means for any kind of cure, yet both accomplished a cure. Both that serpent and Christ were lifted up high so all men could behold them. In this lifting up Jesus is passive. He does not lift up Himself but He is "lifted up." Therefore God's purpose is seen in this saying. It is God who gave both the brass serpent and Jesus (Jn. 3:16). The healing which the brass serpent performed was done when a person looked at the serpent with the physical eye. Christ also heals, but His cure is for spiritual wounds. This healing occurs when a person looks to this Christ with the "eyes of faith."[16] It might be added that in this saying there is also a note of victory. It is through the cross that victory is gained over all of man's enemies.

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[15]McClintock and Strong, op. cit., IX, p. 585.

[16]Ibid.

CHAPTER VIII

SHEPHERD

A significant, but often misunderstood figure which Jesus uses is that of the Good Shepherd. This name for Jesus is often connected with a great deal of sentimentalism which is foreign to the original meaning of the word "shepherd." The expression is very common in both the New and the Old Testaments. In the Fourth Gospel Jesus uses it in connection with His coming death. Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn. 10:14,15). This passage is taken from a longer section in which Jesus describes Himself and His task in terms of the shepherd figure.

A. Old Testament Background

When Jesus spoke about Himself in terms of the shepherd, the disciples must have been reminded of many sections in the Old Testament in which this figure is used. It is very significant that often the word "shepherd" was used of God Himself and described His relationship with His people (Ps. 48:14; Ps. 80:1; Ps. 23). In these passages not only God's tenderness and love is stressed, but also His Lordship over the sheep.

Another indication of the meaning of this word is shown by the fact that "shepherd" was often used of leaders or princes of the people. Cyrus is called a shepherd (Is. 44:28). David is also identified as a

shepherd in connection with his office as king (Ez. 37:24). There are other passages which make this same type of identification (e.g., Jer. 50:6; Zech. 10:3; Num. 27:17; Jer. 3:15). These passages show that "shepherd" was a figure of power and authority.

Although this figure emphasizes authority, such authority is often tempered with mercy. So Amos mentions the shepherd who rescues the sheep from the mouth of a lion (Amos 3:12). The "mercy of the Lord" is closely connected with the fact that the Lord is a shepherd (Sir. 18:13). The twenty-third Psalm is also a picture of a merciful shepherd who leads his flock and provides them with all that they need. Therefore in this expression is found a strong element of the love of God.

In contrast to this idea of mercy, there is also the idea of judgment which is found not only with the noun but also in the verb. So death is said to shepherd the sheep into Sheol (Ps. 49:14). A person is also designated as a shepherd, but a shepherd of judgment in the prophet Zechariah (Zech. 11:6,7). Therefore this word was not only connected with blessing and mercy but it also had attached to it the idea of judgment or sorrow.

It is very important to note that this word, whether in the form of the verb or noun, had what might be called messianic overtones. It seems to have been a common designation for a bringer of salvation in the East. In the Old Testament it is used of the coming Messiah (Mic. 5:4; Ez. 34:23ff.; Ez. 37:29).[1] Taylor describes the shepherd as "one who leads and rules his people in mercy and love, and who saves

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[1]Vincent Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1951), pp. 146-7.

them at the cost of his life."[2]

B. Rabbinic Literature

With respect to the use of this term by the Rabbis, it seems that it was a very familiar one to them. It is said that the Rabbis called their spiritual leaders "feeders." This term is used in the Targum in reference to the shepherds in Ezekiel (Ez. 34) and Zechariah (Zech. 11). This term comprised both the idea of leading and feeding.[3]

The implications in Jesus' words when He speaks of the Shepherd "laying down his life for the sheep" is clarified by rabbinic law. According to the Rabbis, the shepherd was not required to expose his own life for the safety of the sheep, nor was he held responsible if a wild animal did kill a sheep.[4] However, the idea of giving up one's life for something is a common one. So Joseph is said to give up his life for his brothers in his suffering. If a person would refuse to give up his life for another, the rest of his days would be spent in constant fear of death. If ever a person did give up his life for another, that person must also be doing it for the sake of Isreel and in such a case these words had to be said, "As I give my life for you so I give my life for your brothers also." Such a giving of one's life was also for the

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[2]Vincent Taylor, Names of Jesus (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1953), pp. 89-90.

[3]Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1953), p. 188.

[4]Ibid., p. 191.

glory of God.[5]

C. Usage in the Gospels

Many of the ideas expressed in the picture of the shepherd before the writing of the Gospels are also carried over into the New Testament. In the passage under consideration, Jesus identifies Himself with the Father. It is in accordance with His Father's will that He does the task set before Him. This passage shows Jesus' complete dedication to the will of the Father. It is just this dedication which leads him to the cross.[6] Therefore He shows that this death in which He "lays down His life for the sheep" is the aim of His life. For in this death the divine purpose of His life is revealed.[7] Some indication of this must have been manifest to the disciples by the very fact that God Himself is called the shepherd in the Old Testament. By calling Himself the "Good Shepherd" and identifying His work so closely with the Father, Jesus must have intended that such a connection be drawn.

In the Gospels the verb poimainein is used in the sense of govern or rule (Matt. 2:6). Also in this tenth chapter of John the authority or power of the shepherd is shown. The shepherd is the one who calls to the sheep and they hear His voice (10:3,16). In view of the fact that

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[5]H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oskar Beck, 1922), II, p. 537.

[6]C. J. Wright, "Jesus, the Revelation of God," in The Mission and Message of Jesus (E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1938), p. 823.

[7]James Denney, Jesus and the Gospels (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Co., 1909), p. 258.

in the Old Testament this word is used of rulers and governors, it seems correct to conclude that Jesus is calling attention to His authority as the Lord of the disciples. It has been said that the Church is brought into existence through obedience to its shepherd.[8] This thought was later developed more fully in the New Testament Epistles, where the Lordship of Christ is stressed.

While the idea of Jesus as a shepherd who acts in judgment is not found in this passage, it is found in other places in the Gospels (e.g., Matt. 25:32). In this passage in John the figure is primarily one of mercy and love.

Jesus is called the "good shepherd" (10:14). He is "good" for the reason that He is willing to lay down His life for the sheep.[9] This is more than was ordinarily required by a shepherd. This act of love was not a compulsory thing but it was completely a voluntary act on the part of Jesus (cf. 10:18). He did it because He is good. Therefore by this action the love of Jesus is evident and through Him the love of God is also seen.

This passage also gives the purpose for Jesus' coming into the world. He dies "for the sheep" (i.e., <u>huper</u>). Therefore the representative aspect of Jesus' work is seen.[10] There is a close connection between this passage and that in which John the Baptist identifies

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[8]Edwyn Hoskyns, <u>The Fourth Gospel</u>, edited by Francis Noel Davey (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1947), p. 379.

[9]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 376.

[10]Vincent Taylor, <u>The Atonement in New Testement Teaching</u> (London: Epworth Press, 1940), p. 136.

Jesus as the "Lamb of God" (Jn. 1:29). Thus the sacrificial aspect of His death is alluded to in these words.[11] In the sense that both the representative and the substitutionary aspects of Jesus work are evident in this passage, it is parallel to the "ransom" saying in the Synoptic Gospels.[12]

By identifying Himself as the shepherd Jesus is also making messianic claims for Himself. He has received His "charge" from the Father (10:18). It is a part of His vocation that He lay down His life.[13] In view of the fact that the term "shepherd" does have messianic connotations in the Old Testament, in calling Himself the Shepherd Jesus claims to be the promised Messiah sent from God.

D. Meaning for the Passion

In this passage in which Jesus describes Himself as the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep, several things are indicated about the death of Jesus. This death is the very purpose of his life. He came to die on the cross. His death was not an accident but rather it was a part of God's activity. It could even be said that in this passage there is a veiled claim to Deity itself. Jesus also indicates that this dying is for others. He is the substitute for the sheep. By dying He proves that He is indeed the "good shepherd." His death indicates the love and mercy of God which are bound up closely

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[11]James Hastings, editor, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York: Chas. Scribner, 1917), II, p. 620.

[12]Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice, p. 235.

[13]Denney, op. cit., p. 259.

with the shepherd figure in the Old Testament. Yet even in death Jesus still remains the Shepherd of the sheep. He is still the ruler and guide of the sheep. He remains Lord even in death.

CHAPTER IX

TOWARD AN INTERPRETATION OF THE PASSION FROM THE FIGURES USED BY JESUS

In describing His passion by means of the expressions discussed above, Jesus undoubtedly intended to convey to His hearers the purpose and meaning of His imminent death. The people who heard Him use these words undoubtedly read into them certain meanings due to their previous associations with them. For people today it is difficult, if not impossible, to find the exact meaning Jesus intended to convey, for it is not possible to place oneself into a different era in the history of the world. It is possible, however, to draw from these expressions certain interpretations and implications for the meaning of the passion. Five principal ideas appear to suggest themselves. They are as follows:

1. Jesus considered His passion as part of His Messianic vocation. Therefore in His passion the activity of God is evident.

2. Jesus' passion was an act of love and mercy performed for the sake of men.

3. Jesus' passion makes plain to men God's wrath toward sin.

4. Jesus' passion is a substitutionary and representative act. Jesus is taking the place of men as He suffers and dies.

5. Jesus' passion means a victory for Jesus and also for those whom He represents.

Each idea will be discussed separately in order to summarize the preceding chapters.

A. The Passion is a Part of Jesus' Messianic Vocation and Shows the Activity of God

Cecil John Cadoux has said that there are two possible interpretations of Jesus' death. The first is that Jesus became only gradually aware of His coming death as He became conscious of the hostility of His enemies. He went to that death complying with the will of God. The second interpretation is that Jesus had a clear conception that He was going to die right at the start of His ministry. The initiative was not with His enemies but He was responsible, at least in part, for bringing it about. This He did because He knew Himself to be the Messiah and as the Messiah He would have to suffer. This He learned from the Messianic expectation in the Old Testament.[1] With some variations this study indicates that the second alternative is the correct one.

In all of the figures discussed in the preceding chapters there is some indication that Jesus either thought of Himself as the Messiah or at least recognized that His death was part of a plan of God.

The "bridegroom" saying is an indication that Jesus did think of Himself as the Messiah. In using this expression Jesus must have been thinking of the current Jewish ideas that regarded the Messianic Age as the marriage feast. In describing His stay on earth in terms of the marriage feast, Jesus was saying that in Him the Messianic Age had come.

The messianic claim is not prominent in the "cup" and "baptism"

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[1]Cecil John Cadoux, The Historical Mission of Jesus (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.), p. 249.

saying. However, Jesus does give the impression that His death is not an accident, but rather it is part of the plan of God which had been going on since the world began. Therefore this saying does connect Jesus' work with God.

In the "ransom" saying the messianic element is present by virtue of the fact that Jesus calls Himself the "Son of Man." This title is said to be a Messianic name by many scholars.[2] More prominent, however, is the idea of God's activity in Jesus' work. He has come with a definite purpose in mind. He is to give His life as a "ransom." Thus again God is connected with the work of Jesus.

Both the activity of God and Jesus' messianic mission are bound up in the saying regarding the "stone." It is God who makes and fashions the stone. It is also God who sees to it that the stone will conquer. This is evident when the Old Testament and Rabbinic Literature is considered.

The "temple" saying is a claim to Deity itself. Since He is the temple, the place where God dwells, it could be concluded that He is God. Jesus is the place where God is to be found.

The "serpent" saying indicates the activity of God. He was responsible for the healing through the first brass serpent, and He is also responsible for the healing through the second "serpent." It is God who orders the means through which the cure is to be achieved. Once again God and the activity of Jesus are intimately connected.

By identifying Himself as the "Good Shepherd," Jesus is claiming

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[2]E.g., Martin Franzmann, "A Ransom for Many: Satisfactio Vicaria," Concordia Theological Monthly XXV (June, 1954), p. 50.

to be the Messiah. Also prominent in this saying is His claim to Lordship. He has authority over men and lays claim to man's obedience.

In all of these sayings then, the messianic element is present, at least indirectly. It is God who is working in the life of Jesus including His suffering and death. As Vincent Taylor says:

> Jesus interpreted His suffering, death, and resurrection positively, as active elements in His Messianic vocation. He did not speak of His task as a revelation . . . but rather as a task laid upon Him which it was His mission to accomplish for men.[3]

B. Jesus' Passion Was an Act of Mercy Performed For the Sake of Men

The love of God is not explicitly stated in the words of Jesus about His coming suffering and death, but in several of these figures the love and mercy of God must have been implied. Of course the whole passion occurred because of God's love for men yet this is not always indicated directly by Jesus' words.

One of the most outstanding pictures of God's love was expressed in terms of the marriage relationship. This must have been indicated in the "bridegroom" saying. The very fact that the bridegroom is with them would indicate this love that God had for His people. Such an implication must have occurred to the disciples as they heard the words of Jesus.

The "serpent" saying would also indicate God's love because of its connection with the Old Testament incident in the wilderness. No other

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[3]Vincent Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1951), p. 257.

motive could have prompted God to provide a means of escape for His rebellious people except His love. In using this same figure for Himself Jesus must have been referring to this idea. This seems to have been John's interpretation since in commenting upon these words of Jesus, he connects them with the love of God (3:16).

The "shepherd" saying is another picture of the love of God. Jesus is the "good" shepherd because He is willing to die for the sheep. It is His concern for the sheep which prompts this action. From the Old Testament this would be implied in Jesus' words.

Although there is not a direct reference to it, God's love seems to be implied in the "ransom" saying. The purpose of Jesus' work is to minister. This ministering is carried out through His death. If one were to look for a motive for His ministry it could be nothing but love.

Vincent Taylor, however, contrasts the words of Jesus in the Synoptics with the statements in the Fourth Gospel. He finds that one of the distinguishing marks between the two is that this love is not present in the Synoptics while it is in John.[4] While there is something to be said in favor of this position, it seems that this love must at least be implied in several of the Synoptic sayings. Such a general statement does not seem to fit the facts, especially in the "bridegroom" saying and also the "ransom" saying.

C. The Passion Shows the Wrath of God

Often it is a problem to reconcile God's love with His wrath. Yet

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[4]Ibid., p. 237.

these two aspects seem to be evident in a great deal of God's dealings with men. These passion predictions also seem to combine these two aspects.

The wrath of God seems to be implied in the "bridegroom" saying. While it is predominantly an indication of the love of God, an element of judgment also seems to be present. This was perhaps more evident to the disciples than to people today. The very fact that Jesus says the bridegroom would be "taken away" would have implied a judgment of some kind to the person in that day. To contemplate the Messiah being taken away from Israel would have been the severest kind of judgment.

The figures of the "cup" and "baptism" were both used to picture God's wrath in the Old Testament. In using these two figures Jesus implied that His death would be a manifestation of the wrath of God. However, He does not indicate explicitly why this wrath was to be given.

In the "ransom" saying again the wrath of God is not specifically mentioned. Yet the very fact that a ransom is needed in order to achieve the release of many presupposes a captivity. Such captivity was inherent in the nature of man. It was due to nothing else but the wrath of God upon man.

In the "serpent" saying the judgment of God must have been very prominent. Serpents were one of the principal executors of the judgment of God in the Old Testament. The incident in the wilderness which Jesus mentions was also a time of judgment. Therefore it seems that also in this saying Jesus is alluding to the wrath of God which is manifest in His death.

There is still the question to consider of the relationship of

judgment to the cross of Jesus. Cecil John Cadoux maintains that the purpose of the cross was to cause men to repent of their sins. He says that since the death of Jesus is a manifestation in human terms of the reaction of Divine love to human sin, this death effects our salvation by first effecting our repentence.[5] Vincent Taylor indicates the proper relationship by saying that in the Gospel of John the cross is both a judgment of the world and the defeat of the Prince of Evil.[6]

These sayings of Jesus indicate that man is under God's wrath. He is this way because of sin. The cross is the place where God executed the judgment upon sin. Thus in Jesus' passion one is able to see the extent of God's wrath upon sinful man. This seems to be consistent with the meaning of the expressions "cup," "baptism," and "serpent" as used in the Old Testament.

D. The Passion as a Substitutionary and Representative Act of Jesus

The idea that Jesus thinks of Himself as representing man is often said to be contrary to the Gospel record.[7] However this idea is a part of Jesus' thought especially in two of the sayings under consideration.

In the "ransom" saying Jesus definitely states that His suffering is "for many." This saying has its background in the Old Testament legal and sacrificial system. It definitely refers to the substitutionary

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[5]Cadoux, op. cit., pp. 262, 266.

[6]Vincent Taylor, The Atonement in New Testament Preaching (London: Epworth Press, 1940), p. 147.

[7]Cadoux, op. cit., p. 97.

aspect of Jesus' work.

Parallel to the "ransom" saying is that of Jesus in the "shepherd" saying in John. Here again Jesus says that He is giving His life "for the sheep." He is taking the place of the sheep. Here the representative aspect is definitely stated.

Vincent Taylor in speaking of these two statements maintains they show that Jesus did think of His messianic suffering as representative and vicarious. This suffering is borne for men and it is effective for them.[8]

E. The Passion Means a Victory for Jesus and for Those Whom He Represents

It was the common expectation of the Jews that the Messianic Age would be a time of victory. All the great evils of the world were to be abolished and the power of Satan would be brought to an end.[9] This victory concept is indicated in these sayings of Jesus.

In the "ransom" saying Jesus implies that man is in bondage and needs to be released. Jesus thought of His death as being the means to bring about this release. Jesus' death means a victory in the sense that through His death man is freed from a captivity.

In the figure of the "stone" the idea of victory is more explicit. Jesus recognizes that He will be rejected and killed. But in spite of this rejection He will still overcome those who oppose Him. This

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[8]Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice, p. 261.

[9]Cadoux, op. cit., p. 68.

victory will be a marvelous thing. The nature of Jesus' victory is not stated in this passage.

In the "temple" saying again the victory idea is evident. Although the temple of His body is destroyed, yet He will raise it again. This again indicates the futility of those who oppose Him. He will triumph over His enemies.

The "serpent" passage gives a more direct reference to the nature of this victory. This can only be derived from the way "serpent" is used in the Old Testament. Serpents are representatives of the evils and enemies which face man. Through the cross Jesus accomplishes the victory over all these enemies. This is also referred to in other passages in the Gospels which speak of the disciples now conquering serpents. This victory is theirs because Jesus died on the cross.

The above conclusions are probably not all the implications in these words of Jesus. Perhaps others find still more or less in those words. It seems to this writer that they are there and that in this way the passion becomes clearer to men living hundreds of years after the words were spoken. The words of Vincent Taylor in his book, The Life and Ministry of Jesus, might serve as a suitable idea in this connection. He says:

> We acquiese too lightly to the assumption that He (Jesus) went to the cross with no clear idea of what He meant to accomplish. . . . We are too sophisticated to attempt to read back into the thought of Jesus the "classical theory" of the Atonement, the "ransom theory" of the early Church, the "satisfaction theory" of Anselm, the "moral influence" teaching of Abelard, the "forensic theory" of the Reformers, although on reflection, it might occur to us that all these doctrines are not without inner connection with the ideas rooted in the Gospel tradition. . . . We must cease to cherish the delusion that Jesus faced His cross without the

shadow of an idea why He must die and what ends His death would serve. . . . He is sure that His mission reaches its climax in death and resurrection.[10]

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[10]Vincent Taylor, Life and Ministry of Jesus (New York: Abingdon Press, c.1955), p. 184.

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