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**Hope in the
Social Context of the
Epistle to the Romans**

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Hope in the Social Context of the Epistle to the Romans

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CHAPTER 1

1 Introduction

The topic of this thesis, *Hope in the Social Context of the Epistle to the Romans*, asks the question as to “why” and “how” the theme of “hope” has been so prominent in Romans, especially in Romans 5:1-11, but also in the main context of this text, Romans 5 - 8 and ultimately in Romans 1 - 8.

Implicit in this topic is part of the answer - that this can be gleaned from the *social context* of not only Christians but also Jews living in Rome at the time of Paul’s writing. (Before the fall of the temple and Jerusalem in 70/71 CE, non-Jews mostly perceived Christianity as a sect within Judaism if the Christians themselves have not done so too, or, rather, if not as a sect in the latter case, then as the ultimate fulfillment of Judaism or Israelite religion generally speaking across time and space.)

The social context - which can be gleaned from the text itself but which is also available from extratextual sources and the theorising of the kind of society we address - is the context which cognitively provides the environment in which the text was supposed to have contextual effects. This is the context in terms of which Paul’s argumentation strategies as to the “what” he communicated in Romans, were supposed to have (cognitively transformative) effects. This issue is addressed in the third chapter of the thesis.

However, to ask the question as to why and how, has not yet shown what the hope consisted of - the question as to “what”. In order to address this question, a thorough

exegesis of the relevant pericopes and texts need to be made. This the thesis addresses in chapter 4.

The fifth chapter uses Freytag's (1863) pyramid as heuristic device to discover the developing argument of Romans 1-8 and the function that Romans 5 executes in this structure.

Chapter 6, the conclusion, overviews and summarises the research, providing a contextualisation of the research in terms of the significance of "hope" in Romans 1-8.

In order, however, to explicate the technicalities of the research underlying the main gist of the thesis, chapter 2 provides a brief overview of some of the theoretical perspectives which have developed during the twentieth century globally and which have informed the thinking and analytical practices behind the thesis.

This forms the main outline and development of the argument. In this 'Introduction', however, I provide a cursory reading of Romans 1 - 8, pointing to the areas of problematisation by facilitating a "readerly" overview.

Romans 1-4 highlights the fact that God has fulfilled his saving promises through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, those who put their faith in Jesus are in the right relationship before God. In Romans 5-8, Paul combines righteousness by faith with future "hope". This concept of future "hope" and future salvation is highlighted repeatedly in the Old Testament. According to Paul (cf. Rom. 5-8) only those who are right with god will inherit the future promises which were made to Israel, thus

the new people of God have a certain and unshakable “hope” for the future. Thus, Romans 5-8 highlights the “hope” that belongs to those who are, through faith in Jesus Christ, in a right relationship with God.

There is then a deliberate shift in the theme between Romans 1-4 and Romans 5-8. Paul’s aim in Romans 1:18-4:25 is to show that God’s saving promises made in the Old Testament have been fulfilled and are available for all people through faith. It is impossible for anyone to obtain righteousness through the law since all fall short of what the law demands. Thus, God has manifested his saving and judging righteousness in the death of his son, Jesus Christ. Consequently, all those who believe in Jesus become right with God. But, in Romans 5-8 this necessity for righteousness recedes into the background. “Faith” and “believing” are only combined 3 times in Romans 5-8 whereas they are used 33 times in Romans 1-4. Also, Paul uses the term “righteousness” only 21 times in Romans 5-8 and 31 times in Romans 1-4. This indicates that there is a significant shift in both the thematic contexts in which Paul in Romans 1-4 and 5-8 uses the terms “righteousness”. In Romans 5-8, righteousness not only promises future “hope” but also present transformation (Rom.6:1-8:17) in the lives of believers.

But, the major theme that distinguishes Romans 5-8 and Romans 1-4 is the concept of “hope”. Dahl (1977:88-90) notices a significant parallel between Romans 5:1-11 and Romans 8:14-39 since they both stress the work of Christ, the ministry of the Spirit and the certainty of future glory in the midst of suffering. But, this theme of “hope” is not confined exclusively to Romans 5:1-11 and Romans 8:14-39. The theme, “hope”, actually permeates the whole of Romans 5-8. It is important to emphasize that Paul mentions the Adam-Christ parallel in Romans 5:12-19 in order to buttress the

“hope” of his Roman readers. For Paul, the grace that is imparted by Christ reverses and even conquers the results of sin caused by Adam. This means that the Gentiles are also recipients of this “hope” which belonged to the Jews because of their incorporation into Christ. Thus, in Romans 5-8, Paul emphasizes that the “hope” of Israel belongs to the people of God (or Body of Christ), that comprise mainly Gentiles. Now, believers have a powerful “hope” since Christ reversed the consequences of Adam’s sin. Paul’s main thesis here is to announce that the triumph of sin, which was the yearning since the institution of the Law, is now a reality through the second Adam, Jesus Christ. This means that Israel’s triumph over sin was not realized through Torah but through baptism into Christ. It is this victory which strengthens the “hope” of the believers. For Paul, all those who live in the realm of grace are victors not only in the domain of sin and death but also law. Romans 8:1-4 states that who has died with Christ and live by the Spirit fulfills the requirements of law. This means that by the power of the Holy Spirit, believers actually fulfill the law. This is something which Israel were unable to accomplish under Torah. Also, Paul mentions in Romans 7 that the future inheritance of God’s people will not be realized through the law, since the law is not able to effect transformation. It is only through the Holy Spirit that believers can receive this transformation and experience a new quality of life in Christ. Paul proclaims very vehemently that this promised “hope” belongs to both the Jews and the Gentiles who are incorporated in Christ and sustained by the Holy Spirit. Now the determining hallmark of the believer is no longer the Torah or law but the Holy Spirit.

“Hope” is the central theme of Romans 5:1-11 (cf. Fryer 1981:40; Watson 1986:144; Dunn 1988a:246; Byrne 1988:22-23; Moo 1991:305). In Romans 5:1-2 Paul uses the words “peace, access to grace” and the eschatological “hope” of believers as

consequences of justification. This means that all the blessings which were exclusively for Israel as God's people, is now available to all those who belong to Christ. In Romans 5:3-4, Paul mentions that through the difficult realities of everyday life believers are still able to maintain their godly and Christ-like character. This perseverance by believers actually end up producing "hope" for the future since they have experienced the love of God which is grounded in the historical work of Christ. This love of God is a unique love and differs radically from human love. Paul argues that "hope" is strengthened even in afflictions since a chain of effects occurs when the believer is faced with troubles. This "hope" cannot be compared to anything found in the world. Those who undergo troubles are toughened by it and are equipped to withstand any oncoming storms. This adaptation constitutes a transformation in the character of the believer. In Romans 8, Paul assures the believer that God will strengthen them when they endure suffering since the prospect of suffering usually dampens "hope". But, Paul intentionally explains in Romans 8:17-37 why suffering furthers "hope" instead of suppressing it. Thus, Paul encourages the believers to suffer with Christ in order to be glorified with him (Rom.8:17), because present sufferings are minimal compared to future glory (Rom.8:18).

The "hope" which believers have in Christ will not bring them shame on the day of judgement since believers are assured of receiving God's love and not his wrath in the last day. The gifts of righteousness and justification which were promised to the Jews, are now offered in abundance to all believers, the whole Body of Christ, the eschatological community of God. Now, peace is available for Jews and Gentiles who believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Thus, believers are certain that the glory, which Adam lost, will be restored to them. Even more, the glory that the believers will

receive will be more than the glory which was attributed to Adam since believers are now conformed to the image of the second Adam, Jesus Christ himself.

In Romans 5:6-11, Paul introduces the object ground of God's love which is the death of Christ for sinners. This love of God is grounded in the objective work of Christ on the cross. It is this "hope" and the depth of God's love, which causes the believer to rejoice because the death of Christ is a demonstration of this supreme love of God. Paul underscores that this is a very distinctive love and that the experience of God's love actually increases "hope" in the believer. Paul mentions that the death of Christ was free but not cheap since it meant the shedding of his blood. The believer's justification and reconciliation was accomplished only through the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Both the life and the death of Christ constitute the believer's justification. But, Paul emphasizes in Romans 5:11 that "hope" itself is not more important than the one in whom we "hope", in God himself. This "hope" is secure because of the work of Christ on the cross.

In Romans 5:12-21, Paul celebrates the contrast between Adam and Christ. Paul speaks about the powers and enemies (sin and death) that threaten and diminish the "hope" of believers. The powers of sin and death were introduced into the world through the sin of Adam. But, Jesus has conquered these enemies. Therefore, believers will experience the "hope" of the glory of God since they are now in Christ rather than in Adam (cf. Fitzmyer 1993c:406). Paul exhorts the church at Rome to be confident in "hope" since Christ defeated both death and sin on the cross. The work of Christ conquered and reversed the consequences of Adam's sin. Now, God's grace and gift abounds for all (Rom.5:15).

In Romans 8, Paul reiterates once again the means by which the power of sin is broken. The solution for sin is in the work of Christ on the cross and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Paul mentions that while Christ's work on the cross is the foundation for the deliverance of believers from the condemnation of sin, the Holy Spirit supplies the power for overpowering sin, through Christ (Rom.8:1-4). Thus, the bondage to sin has ceased (Romans 8:1-17).

In Romans 8:18-39, Paul assures the church at Rome that all blessings promised to Israel now belongs to the church of God. In the light of these promises the church should be very confident of receiving all the promises God made to Israel. There is nothing in the future that should cause the believer to be fearful. God has given the church his best gift, his son, Jesus Christ who became the true Israel since he took on himself God's condemnation and became the public symbol of all humanity's vindication by his resurrection from the dead. Christ now intercedes on behalf of his people, the Body of Christ. The believers are encouraged that no amount of misery in this life, nor death, can overwhelm them since they are assured of the love of Christ, which will sustain them in all situations. This "hope" reigns supremely in the hearts of the children of God.

In Romans 8:18-25, the "hope" of future glory which belonged to Israel (cf. Isa.65:17; 66:22) is now pledged to the church of Christ. However, this "hope" is secured in suffering. Thus, to endure present sufferings is worthwhile because the believer's pain will be a distant memory in the light of the glory that is to come (cf. 2Cor.4:17 also). Paul does not intend to convey to his readers that they must suffer in order to inherit glory, nor does he highlight endurance or implications of this future glory. Instead, Paul deliberately intends to underscore the attractiveness and beauty of the future glory

(cf. Alford 1976:393). Paul achieves this end by utilizing personification: “creation longs for the revelation of God’s children” (Rom.8:19). Paul encourages believers to endure temporary sufferings by giving them a glimpse of the beauty that awaits the children of God. This redemption will be stupendous - it will include all of creation. Just as creation fell when Adam sinned, so too it will be transformed when the children of God experience the completion of their redemption. Thus, believers should be full of “hope” because the sufferings of this age are part and parcel of this fallen creation.

In Romans 8:23-25, Paul says that the glory of the *eschaton* must be stupendous since even the believers are groaning while they await this glory and long to experience the fulfillment of their “hope”, the redemption of their bodies. Paul says that because believers have the Holy Spirit they groan. Why are believers groaning? For Paul, they are awaiting their adoption. This adoption is eschatological since it involves the redemption of the body (Rom.8:11). For Paul, “hope” is not something that is now seen. In Romans 8:25, Paul says that if believers “hope” for what they do not see, then they “wait eagerly” for that hope “with endurance” (cf. Käsemann 1980:239).

In Romans 8:26-27, Paul stresses the Spirit’s aid in the believer’s weakness. According to Murray (1959:310-11 and Moo 1991:559-600) the Spirit sustains the believer’s “hope” while they await redemption. O’Brien (1987:69) detects a chiasm in Romans 8:26 in which the second part defines the first element:

- A The Spirit helps
- B in our weakness.
- C For we do not know what to pray for as we ought,
- D but the Spirit intercedes with unspeakable groaning.

Paul emphasizes the believers' weakness in prayer and the Spirit's help in prayer is the answer to their weakness. In Romans 8:27, Paul says that the Spirit intercedes for believers according to the will of God. Because of the finiteness and fallibility of humanity, we cannot perceive fully what the will of God is. Believers are weak in that they do not know what to pray for, since the totality of God's will be hidden from them. Paul says that the Holy Spirit fills this lack by interceding on behalf of the believers. The Spirit's "groaning" must be understood metaphorically, since the groaning may not be heard audibly. This could mean that the longings of creation - but also that of believers - are so deep that they are inexpressible.

Believers are fortified with "hope" because they know that the Spirit intercedes for them (O' Brien 1987:70-73). God searches the hearts of the believers and finds unutterable longings to conform their lives to the will of God. The Holy Spirit takes these groanings and present them before God in an articulate way.

The Spirit's prayers are always answered in the affirmative since he always prays in accordance with God's will (O' Brien 1987:71-72).

The confidence and "hope" that belongs to believers is also the theme of Romans 8:28-

30. In Romans 8:28 and the subsequent verses, “God” rather than the Holy Spirit is the subject.

Romans 8:31-39 functions as an *inclusio* with Romans 5:1-11 since both the texts reflect the confidence that comes from the “hope” of believers.

The Holy Spirit has given believers a new heart so that they desire to keep God’s commandments. This renewal fortifies the “hope” of believers, for it is a foretaste of the redemption that will be consummated on the day of resurrection. Therefore, the “hope” of believers is not dashed by sufferings of the present era (Rom.8:18-30). The “hope” of believers is unshakable because the Spirit prays for them in and through their groaning. The question Paul asks in Romans 8:31 harks back to Romans 5-8:30.

One of the striking themes in Romans 8 is that the blessings originally promised to the Jews have become available to the church (Dunn 1988a:499-500). Israel was promised the Holy Spirit (cf. Ezek.36:26-27) so that they could keep the ordinances of the law, but this promise has come to fruition in the church through the gift of the Holy Spirit (Rom.8:4). Israel had the pledge of a future resurrection (cf. Ezek.37) and yet Paul speaks of the resurrection of believers in Romans 8:10-11. Israel was God’s son (cf. Exod.4:22), but now believers in Christ are sons and daughters of God and adopted as his own (Rom.8:14-17). The future inheritance was promised to Israel (cf. Isa.60), but now it is pledged to the church (Rom.8:17). Israel was God’s chosen people and the only one foreknown among the nations (cf. Amos 3:2), and yet now the church is said to be foreknown and chosen by God (Rom.8:29-30). Yahweh had promised never to forsake

Israel (cf. Deut.31:6), yet now this promise is extended to the church (Rom.8:38-39; Heb.13:5).

The next chapter introduces some of the theoretical perspectives which underly the thinking and methodological procedures of the thesis and derives from twentieth century scholarship into literature.

CHAPTER 2

2 *Survey of Critical Theorising in Literature Research*

2.1 *Introduction*

There are a number of different literary and related theories of literature being employed in current biblical scholarship. These include Structuralism (1928), Formalism (1915-1930) the so-called New Criticism, Reader-Related Criticism (1965), various ideological criticisms (such as Feminist Criticism and Liberation Criticism) and Deconstruction (1972; 1981), the Social theory of literature, Socio-Scientific Criticism and Symbolic language analysis, to name only a few.

These theories of analysis and interpretation challenge one another and yet remain debatable as human constructs. The current post-modern atmosphere in scholarship add the understanding of complexity and recognition of multiplicity. Maartens (1991:63) maintains that there is an inclination among exegetes following the “code theory” of communication theory, for example, to decrease the meaning of a text “to a one-dimensional consciousness of the significance of the text”. This consciousness - which has been prevalent in much Biblical scholarship - does not recognise the constructedness of theory nor multiplicity in interpretation. As such, however, it is not only endemic to communication theory but also to other approaches in New Testament research and interpretation.

Whereas Source critical analysis reduces the meaning of a text to often hypothesised sources prior to the writing or at worst integrated editing of the text, Form critical analyses does so by reducing the meaning of a text to an interpretation of the historical Sitz im Leben, formalised in terms of literary forms. Redaction critical analysis again, reduces

textual meaning to the 'editorial hand', i.e. to either reconstruct the text in terms of possibly earlier configurations or by identifying that in the text which could not possibly have been 'original' and must therefore come from editorial activity or intention. These three discourses mainly developed in Biblical scholarship since the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. Since then, Biblical scholarship - which has always been a leader in the field of textual studies since the Renaissance if not from the earliest centuries - has consciously turned to other theorisings within the human sciences, not without different kinds of meaning reductions as these pertain to textual analysis (exegesis) and interpretation (the making relevant of textual meaning).

Formalism and Structuralism decreases the meaning of a text to the sum-total of literary devices, which are used in a text (for example in Russian Formalism). On the other hand, sociological investigations decrease the meaning of a text to an awareness of the social interaction of the key role players in the early Christian communities. What all these approaches do have in common, according to Maartens (1991:63), is that they show that "our knowledge of texts is always perspectival". Consequently, our exegesis of texts always remain confined to the perimeters of the historical contingencies intrinsic to the theories within which they are created. It is this variability which brings Maartens (1991:63) to assert that our knowledge of a text "never exhausts the meaning of the text". Even so, according to Maartens (1991:63), the various interpretations provide truth-perspectives on the text. These truth perspectives, enhance the "polymorphous character of the meaning" of a text. Of course, this view also holds that, in exegesis, findings are either authenticated or denied through theoretically constituted methods. This also fits with Post-modernist interpretations, where there is a sense of pluralism which means that a text does not only have one fixed meaning. According to Tracy (1975:3), this pluralism allows

different theologians to learn “incomparably more about reality by disclosing really different ways of viewing both our common humanity and Christianity”.

I shall proceed in this chapter to overview mainly twentieth century theorisings of literature research. The rationale is that no competent research into literature - Biblical or otherwise - can afford not to consider the critical and methodological procedures which have developed throughout the twentieth century. Secondly, some of the critical perspectives and concepts derived from these theorisings will be implied in this thesis, and for this reason, the adequate understanding of such concepts and perspectives are required. (The “Conclusion” return to this and gives an indication of where the theoretical insights covered, are used in the thesis.) I focus on Structuralism, Semiotic Theory, Reader-related and Deconstructive theories, Relevance Theory, Socio-semiotic Theory, Social Scientific Criticism, Metaphor Theory and Freytag’s five-part theory of the ‘Tragic Pyramid’.

2.2 *Structuralism*

Structuralism evolved primarily in Prague and in France during the 1950’s and 1960’s. Structuralism examines literature from the viewpoint of modern linguistics. Historically, structuralism has its roots in Russian Formalism. The proponents of Formalism concentrated exclusively on the significance of the formal literary devices of a text and denounced the pertinence of any sociological or ideological significance in literature. Eagleton (1983:2) dates the advent of Formalism back to the years of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. Later, Jakobson developed the Formalist understanding further in Prague. Both these disciplines are preoccupied with “de-automised” (see Garvin 1966:141) language usage. Fundamental to structuralism is the assertion that language has to be understood within a **communication** framework. Language as **communication** implies a

sender giving a *message* to a *receiver*. Thus, the written word as communication means that an author, through the text, communicates with a reader. Whereas New Testament Source and Form Criticism focused attention on sources in the pre-history of a text or on the common literary forms present in the environment in terms of which the text has been modelled, Redaction criticism started to move into the communication theory of texts. This came about especially with the recognition that the author had at least an editorial influence on the text. As such, Redaction, with its focus on the author, moved into the communication theory of textual understanding. It can then be said that this focus on the author, was also a focus on the *sender* in the communication process.

The Reader Response critics of the 1970's to 1990's, concentrated again on the *receiver* or *reader*. Central, however, remained the theoretical developments of Structuralism, which, like Literary critics, concentrated on the *text*. Even though still limited, then, Structuralist critics working within a communication theory of literature, already recognised that with and within a text, a "*sender*" gives an "*object*" to a "*receiver*". This paradigm of language as communication has been worked out by the French structuralist, A.J. Greimas (1977:23-40).

Another important perspective which arose within Structuralism, is that language is a system of **signs**. No **sign** has a meaning on its own. **Signs** only have meaning in reference to other **signs**. This variable difference among signs, however, does not mean that signs are never limited in their meaning. Structuralist understandings of language as a system of signs, understood such limitations in terms of seeing language as a cultural code. In 1929 the Prague Linguistic Circle argued on the basis of Saussure's work that linguistics should not begin with atomistic "facts" of language, but with the language-system (*langue*) on the

assumption of which selected speech-utterances (*parole*) achieved their meaning. Thus, Structuralism already had the seeds of what would later develop more fully into semiotic and post-Structuralist theories. According to Culler (1981:206) these theories are all theories of reading. He explains that “**Semiotics**” involves codes on the basis of which **signs** become functional. This focus means that Semiotics takes into consideration how readers understand texts. Thus, Semiotic enquiries in literary theory constitute “theories of reading” (Culler 1981:206).

2.3 *Semiotic Theory*

According to Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) language is essentially social. Semiotics is an important aspect of Literary theory in which codes become important. Semiotics is the study of the function, meaning and structure of **signs**. Thus the context of the reader is largely extended to that of the whole world that may be used as semiotic apparatus.

Saussure (1915) contributed significantly to our understanding of Semiotics in the twentieth century. Hawkes (1977:123) quotes Saussure’s definition of “Semiology” as “a science that studies the life of signs within society...”. This understanding of Semiotics is derived from the concept of the **sign** which has its origin in the terms **semainon**, **semainomenon** (“*signifier, signified*”) used in ancient Greek linguistics by the Stoic philosophers. The Stoics were the first to develop the theory of the **sign**. The concept they had of the linguistic **sign** was well advanced along the lines in which it developed two thousand years later in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure. The contribution of Saussure resolutely implanted Semiotics in Structuralism. In Saussurean terms, “**semiology**” analyses the psychological and social conventions which constitute “**signs**”. Saussure (1959:67) postulated the conception of a **sign** as follows:

I propose to retain the sign [signe] to designate the whole and to replace the concept and sound image respectively by signified [signifie] and signifier [significant]; the last two terms have the advantage of indicating the opposition that separates them from each other and from the whole of which they are parts.

Saussure (1959:67) considered the relationship between **signifier** and **signified** as “arbitrary”. The main altercation on Saussure’s work is that it limits literary communication to the correlation of **signifier** and **signified** on a single linear plane. One-dimensional consciousness rules out what Kristeva (1980:66) terms as “ambivalence” or the plurality of interpretations. Kristeva’s (1980) conception of the plurality of texts is derived from her concept of **intertextuality**. According to Kristeva (1980:66), the “horizontal axis (*subject-addressee*)” and the “vertical axis (*text-context*)” concur in literary communication. In other words, whilst a text is the recipient of a system of structural codes it concurrently engages in interaction with other texts.

The term “**semiotics**” as the familiar label for the discipline it champions, was unanimously agreed upon in 1974 at the first international conference for Semiotics. This was derived from the term “**semiotics**” initially used by Charles Sanders Pierce (1834-1914), whose inaugural contributions were posthumously published. Pierce (1974:123) designated the **sign**, or **representamen**, as follows:

something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign.

Hawkes (1977:127) demonstrates further that Pierce called the object to which the **representamen** leads the **interpretant**. Pierce reserved the term **representation** for the signifying event proper. The **interpretant** is the image or representation which corroborates itself as “*aesthetic object*” in the mind of the person interpreting or decoding

the **sign**. Pierce (1974:23) reserved the term **denotatum** for the result of the Semiotic action. Consequently, Pierce (1974:142) distinguished three types of **signs**: *qualisigns*, *sinsigns* and *legisigns*. A *qualisign* may be distinguished on the ground of some characteristic. It is in essence a feature which functions as a **sign**. Van Zoest (1978:26) selects *red* as a potential **qualisign**. In order to execute the function of a **sign**, the **qualisign** must be embodied or displayed in a definite contextual symbol. For example, the colour *red* may be used as a **qualisign** to display socialism if depicted in a suitable flag. *Red* may also personify love if pictured in roses or *red* may announce danger when it is illuminated in a traffic light.

A *sinsign* is a linguistic combination of a singular **sign**. Sinsigns are discernible in odd expressions, exclamations signifying anguish, astonishment or joy and even idiosyncratic mannerisms (for example in laughing or coughing).

A *legisign* derives from the linguistic composite of **lex** and **sign**. It represents a generally accepted principle, rule or a general agreement. Traffic rules depict **legisigns**. **Legisigns** are also depicted in common gestures or punctuation rules in written language.

Culler (1981:23) explains that Pierce devoted much effort to a very intricate and speculative investigation of Semiotics. His most notable contribution emerged in his so-called “second triad”. In the second triad Pierce (1974:143) introduced his celebrated trichotomy: **icon**, **index** and **symbol**.

The **icon** exhibits an association of likeness between the **sign** and its object. Hawkes (1977:128) demonstrates that the **icon** executes as a **sign** because in Pierce’s terminology it

exhibits “community in some quality or a correspondence with the object to which it refers”. Consequently maps, diagrams, drawings, paintings and photographs are **icons** since their association to the objects they indicate or represent constitutes an analogy of reciprocity.

According to Hawkes (1977:129), the **index** displays a relationship between the **sign** and its object which is tangible. Thus, a knock on the door is an **index** of someone being present at the door.

According to Hawkes (1977:129) the **symbol** confirms an association between the **signifier** and the **signified** that is arbitrary or subjective. **Symbols** are determined by socio-cultural behaviours. Thus, waving, greetings and other forms of motion gestures are all modes of symbolic communication. Peirce’s understanding of signs, then already captured what Segers (1978:14) intimates - that Semiotics encircles “all forms of communication insofar as this takes place by means of **signs**, based upon **sign** systems of codes”.

Paul employs symbols or signs which he draws from daily life. From human life, he takes symbols of justification and reconciliation, transformation, life, death, and union. He carries these symbols or images over to the event of salvation. Chapters 4 and 5 illustrate this point.

Saussure’s differentiation between *langue* and *parole* parallels or corresponds with Eco’s (1976:4,9) distinction between *signification* and *communication*. Consequently, Eco (1976:4) describes **signification** as “a theory of codes” and **communication** as “a theory of sign production”. Eco (1976) confers **signification** precedence over **communication**. He characterises his theory of codes by his distinction between denotative and connotative

types of signification. He subsequently analysed the **sign** in terms of encyclopaedic knowledge rather than dictionary expression. Thus, Eco (1976:9) asserts that “every act of communication to or between human beings ... presupposes a signification system as its necessary condition”. Both the procedures of **signification** and the interpretative rebuttal in the addressee are advanced by the tangibility of a **code**. The **code** is one of six ingredients which embraces the theory of communication. For Eco (1976:8) all cultural processes are examined in the theory of Semiotics as processes of communication. Semiotics illustrates the interplay between **sign** and **significance** in the framework of the communication paradigm.

Jakobson (1970:353) proposed the following language functions which constitutes verbal communication:

The ADDRESSER sends a MESSAGE to the ADDRESSEE. To be operative the message requires a CONTEXT referred to (“referent” in another, somewhat ambiguous, nomenclature), or at least partially, common to the addresser and addressee (or in other words, to the encoder and decoder of the message); finally, a CONTACT, a physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and the addressee, enabling both of them to enter and stay in communication.

The above communication paradigm was theorised by Jakobson on a linear base. The message which is transmitted from an addresser to an addressee is aimed at an object other than itself. Fiske (1982:37) shows that Jakobson terms this “third point of the triangle” the **context** of the message. Jakobson identifies two further elements. These two elements are called the **contact** and the **code**. According to Fiske (1982:37) the **contact** is “the physical channel and psychological connections between the **addresser** and the **addressee**”. The **code** is summarised as “a shared meaning system by which the message is structured”.

Subsequently, Jakobson (1960:357) characterises six functions of communication on the

same linear base. Only the following three functions of communication, namely, the **emotive**, the **conative** and the **referential** functions will be relevant for the purpose of this study. The **emotive** function of communication indicates the association of the **addresser** to his/her **message**. According to Fiske (1982:37), it is “the function of the message to communicate the addresser’s emotions, attitudes, status, class; ... that make the message uniquely his”.

The **conative** function of communication indicates the association of the **message** to the **addressee**. This according to Fiske (1982:37) “refers to the effect of the message on the addressee”. Thus, the objective of communication is to provoke some rebuttal from the reader or the audience.

The **referential** function is the “basis of all communication” (Guirand 1975:6). It indicates the association of the **message** and the **object** to which it refers. The **referential** function strives to avert any disarray between **signifier** and **signified** or between **message** and **encoded** reality (Guirand 1975:6). Thus, it is relevant to know in which language or **code** a text is being **encoded**. According to Segers (1978:25) such an alertness empowers the reader of a text to **decode** or unravel the textual **signs** and to give purpose to language and the essence of the message. But this also raises the question concerning the text itself.

Fundamentally, there are two distinct categories of texts for Eco (1979:49). He differentiates between “**closed**” texts and “**open**” texts. A “**closed**” text is a text which is written in a **code** that endeavours to construct a predictable reaction from the ordinary reader or the audience. Simultaneously, these **closed text** are paradoxically, “**open**” texts since the author believes that they are able to communicate with any reader or audience.

Such a text, then, is an “**open text**” since it challenges the reader with multiple probabilities of interpretation.

According to Eco (1984:49-50) “**open**” texts are best defined as:

... literally “unfinished”: the author seems to hand them on to the performer more or less like the components of a construction kit. He seems unconcerned about the manner of their eventual deployment At this point one could object ... that any work of art, even if it is not passed on to the addressee in an unfinished state, demands a free, inventive response, if only because it cannot really be appreciated unless the performer somehow re-invents it in psychological collaboration with the author himself.

Even so, the model reader Eco identified for texts, is, even in the case of the “**open**” text, limited in interpretation not only by the readers’ variable capacity but also by the style of the text. Whether for open or closed texts, a certain degree of ‘identity’ is reached in interpretation. Lotman (1977:290) characterises an “**aesthetics of identity**” when the text conforms to a **code** that is presupposed or known by the reader. Thus, Lotman (1977:290) says:

here the rules of the author and of the audience are not one, but two phenomena in a state of mutual identity Artistic system of this type is based on a sum of principles which may be defined as the aesthetics of identity. It is based on the total identification of depicted phenomena of life with model-clichés that are known beforehand to the audience and operate according to a system of “rules”.

These types of texts which are established on the **aesthetics of identity** have common qualities with Eco’s “**closed**” texts which were mentioned earlier. When **codes** of the **sender** and the **recipient** contradict, this, according to Lotman (1977:292) is an “**aesthetics of opposition**”. It is these types of texts which deliberately thwart the reader’s expectations because the text does not conform to a **code** known to the reader. These kinds of texts are similar to Eco’s “**open texts**”.

The literary critical discourse overviewed thus far has developed, in Eco's terms, from a focus on **signification** to **communication**, and particularly to the turn towards the study of the **code** of communication. This latter focus further raised the question as to the 'what' of the text and also distinctions between different kinds of texts, within the communication process. Mukarovsky and Barthes made important contributions on this level.

For an **aesthetics** of reception, Mukarovsky (1978:88) distinguished between readers of different generations as "**perceivers**" of the text. He also differentiated between "the literary work as an **artefact** and the concretisation of the literary work as **aesthetic object**" by the reader or the audience. This distinction of the "**aesthetic object**" is equated to Roland Barthes' classification of "**reader roles**" which supports the exposition of a text. However, in some texts the reader is not only a recipient but also a participant with the responsibility to either embrace or discard a given text. Sometimes the text may demand no response from the reader. Thus Barthes (1974:5) distinguishes two reader roles which respectively indicates two types of texts, namely, "**writerly texts**" and "**readerly texts**". Barthes (1974:5) alleges that "**writerly texts**" are:

perpetually present ... [that] no consequent language ... can be superimposed; ... is ourselves writing, before the infinite play of the world

"**Readerly texts**" according to Hawkes (1977:112) prescribe no response from the readers and the correlation between the **signifier** and the **signified** is "clear". According to Hawkes (1977:114), in "**writerly texts**", the connection between **signifier** and **signified** is such that the "signifiers have free play; no automatic reference to the signifieds is required ... are open to the 'play' of the codes that we use to determine them". The New Testament conforms to this classification of "**writerly**" texts. Subsequently, New Testament exegetes

and readers value both the aesthetic importance of the text being read while generating meaning in the process of expounding the text. It is then, obvious that Eco's "**closed texts**" share common characteristics with Barthes' "**readerly texts**" and Eco's "**open texts**" common characteristics with Barthes' "**writerly texts**".

Chapter 4 of this thesis draws on some of the insights derived from Semiotics and overviewed above. This approach will show that intellectual habit rooted in the cultural influences of Paul's time importantly impacted on his text revealing and understanding of the 'dislocated' and 'dissimilar' character of Paul's argument.

2.4 *Reader-related and Deconstructive theories*

A very distinct development *en route* to post-modernist understandings of the 'human condition', was the switch from the hermeneutical paradigm of understanding to the literary paradigm of reading. Thiselton (1992:471) indicates that this turn towards literary theory is one of the most significant developments for biblical hermeneutics. This implies a merger between the text and the reader. The reader is thus seen as actively constructing the meaning of the text from the perspective of the social context of readers. Meaning ought to be qualified as not one particular meaning, but perspectival, since the text discloses and at the same time transforms its audience.

It was the transforming historical environment in Germany (1965 onwards) that inspired the theory and application of literary explications to discover a significant switch in the reading event. Literary critical inquiry switched from textual approaches and textual tools to what Mukarovsky (1978:88) termed the "**aesthetic object**" of the text. Jauss (1982:20,29 and 34ff) identified the scholarly focus on the fulfilment of textual structure in

the “readers role” as the “**aesthetic of reception**”. In Iser’s (1978:112) focus, the “**aesthetic object**” is consecutively structured and restructured in the reader’s response. The readers’ role which is structured by the text, is fulfilled by the readers’ response. According to Iser (1978:34) the reader’s role is structured by the text into the implied reader. The Reader-Response critics assert that whatever meaning is and wherever it is found, the reader is conclusively accountable for deciding meaning. Meaning, then, is not something fastened to a text, just waiting to be unveiled. Rather, it is something manufactured in the act of reading. Instead of asking: “What determines the meaning of a text?”, Reader-Response critics fancy the question: “Who determines the meaning?”. The instantaneous reply is “the reader”, which in turn hints to additional questions. When, where, why, and how does the reader read? Reader-Response criticism is only one among many approaches in criticism today which encourages critical focus on the transformation in human comprehension of meaning or how the cognitive environment of the recipient or reader is influenced. A switch is occurring, away from a passive, unbiased meaning fastened to the text to a more individual meaning experienced by the reader in the temporary flow of the reading event.

This focus also did away with the dichotomy between what is explained and what is understood. The two aspects of explanation and understanding belong together in a dialectical relationship. There is no need for the reader to search for meaning “behind” the text and ask questions like, “Who was the author?” or what the “intention” of the author, etc. The critic now asks questions like, “What is the author’s way of being in this world?”. The main trend, then, has been a shift from the author to the text as an auto-semantic unit and more recently, to the Reader who chiefly ascribes meaning to a particular text.

In this thesis, I demonstrate how Paul, throughout Romans, engages in a concerted struggle to arouse, deepen and enhance the Christian “hope” of his readers. It is this “way of being in the world”, that of a determined hopefulness, that serves as consolidating factor in Romans. In my analysis of specific texts from Romans (see chapters 4 and 5), I illustrate how the aesthetic object is consecutively structured in the argumentative and reading process. This is closely tied to the rhetorical moves in the text (see below), and how this “hope” is progressively generated. As a literary communication utilising rhetorical devices and means of argumentation intended to persuade its recipients to feel, think or act in certain ways the research will also reveal on what mental moves or responses the aesthetic object depends. Thus, it will become clear as to how the text of Romans as a literary, rhetorical communication “works” and what persuasive effects it is intended to have upon, its implied readers.

Some Reader-Response critics have emphasised the reader’s dominance over a text. Since textual meaning is largely independent of meaning attached to signs finally and once and for all, the multiplicity and play of the sign and its effects of have been highlighted in came to be known as **Deconstruction**, especially due to the work by Jacques Derrida. Derrida developed his philosophising from semiotics. Deconstruction is regarded as the strongest philosophical context out of which post-modern understandings derived. It differs from Structuralism in the sense that it does not view the text as an independent unit that influences the subject, but views both the subject and the text as part of an intertextual world. Intertextuality is a network that constitutes a new “text” with a transformed meaning. Intertextuality treats “discourse as the product of various sorts of combinations or insertions ... [It explores] the iterability of language, its ability to function in new contexts with new force” (see Culler 1982:135). This approach is favoured by scholars who became

sceptical as to whether the sort of linguistic-based analysis of texts offered by Structuralism could ever reveal a work's meaning. Under the influence of Jacques Derrida (1981) they discovered that ultimately, texts "deconstruct" themselves into endless labyrinths of possible meaning. Deconstruction, then, invites readers to approach texts creatively and to appreciate their ability to generate an unlimited plurality of meaningful effects. A Deconstructive reading tries to bring out the logic of the text's language as opposed to the logic of its author's claims. It demonstrates how the text simultaneously affirms and undermines itself. Pauline argumentation seems to offer much scope for this kind of treatment. While, Deconstruction is a prime generator of Reader-Response Criticism, it impacted decisively on the generation of a New Hermeneutic, a new understanding of being in a plural and complex world.

Post-Structuralism is critical of the view that one could get outside and above a domain one is describing. The term post-Structuralism would thus most accurately be used to designate the claim that Structuralism [and other sorts of] analyses are caught up in the processes and mechanisms they are analysing. This, however, also generated two main charges.

Firstly, Deconstruction is utterly inimical (antagonist) to theological concerns. Here, evidence is shown from Derrida's philosophical project that he has always been in a muted dialogue with theology - specifically with that marginalized strand of it known as negative theology.

Secondly, Deconstruction is apolitical - unable or unwilling to engage with such issues as social inequality (issues of gender, race, class and so forth). The simple answer to this charge is that Deconstruction is as political as one wants it to be.

Derrida maintains that Western thought has always based itself on binary oppositions. He hazards a brief list of some of the more important oppositions: spirit (body/soul) and body; presence and absence, masculine and feminine; conscious and unconscious, objective and subjective; literal and metaphorical, signified and signifier; speech and writing, text and interpretation; text and context; primary text and secondary text, etc.,.

For Derrida, binary thinking is necessarily oppressive. It is a violent hierarchy. The first term governs the second. Derrida is not alone in his suspicion. Ever-increasing numbers across the spectrum of academia, scholars seem intent on subverting hierarchical oppositions: male and female, masculine and feminine, white and non-white etc. Deconstruction has been a catalyst in this development.

However, Derrida developed Saussure's concept of language. For Saussure, language is a system of differences "without positive terms". For Derrida (1982), what this play of differences prevents, is any single element in language simply being present in and of itself. Each element is able to signify only through a relationship to something that it is not, and which itself cannot be present, but whose meaning is in turn an effect of the traces within it of all the other elements in language. In consequence, for Derrida, nothing is ever simply present or absent (Derrida 1982).

Derrida (1979; 1981) has further problematised the modern notion of the text. His Deconstructive reflection argues for an overrunning of the traditional "borders" separating **text** from **context** and refuses to treat the text as a "finished corpus of writing, some content enclosed in a book or its margins" (see Derrida 1979:85). Rather, text is a "differential network, a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than *itself*, to

other differential traces”.

Derrida (1981:43) claims that:

There is nothing but text, there is nothing but extratext, in sum an “unceasing preface”... that undoes the philosophical representation of the text, the received oppositions between the text and what exceeds it. The space of dissemination does not merely place the *plural* in effervescence; it shakes up an endless contradiction, marked out by the undecidable syntax of more.

One of the modern presumptions hereby forced into light is that the text is somehow “naturally” bound by the limits of the intentions of the voice of its “author” or the responses of its original hearers or readers, or the history of the text’s development. For Derrida (1979:76) the text is a dynamic **sign** with the capability of functioning differentially within countless contexts. Thus, to see the text as *writing* is to recognise that the text aggressively overruns any and all contextual limits imposed upon it because it rewrites the meaning of context. For Derrida (1979:76ff), texts are dispersed over, under and through numerous contexts. Whenever we choose to read a text within one context or another, something is revealed and something is concealed or suppressed. According to Derrida (1981:4-5) contemporary voice and ear must stand in line along with other claimants to any framing of a text.

According to Phillips (1985:113) this does not permit us to conclude that the text is therefore a “free floating signifier”. By virtue of its character as a “**sign**”, the text, on the one hand, demands contextualization and, on the other, ever transgresses its framework, including the structures, themes, methods, interpretive strategies and original purposes associated with it. Thus Derrida rewrites the notions of autonomous text and context.

For Derrida (1981:33ff), then, Deconstructive efforts reflect the post-modern pressure to

undermine totalizing attitudes towards meaning, texts and frameworks. Thus, by exposing those empowering metaphysical and epistemic interests operating in and through all texts and readers alike, forms of discourse are relativised.

2.5 *Relevance Theory*

Relevance theory, as illustrated by Sperber and Wilson (1968:8), summons the “**code** theory” undergirding Semiotics into protest. Although, Relevance theory is analytical of the “**code**” theory it does not resist the **code** theories in **semiotics** (Sperber and Wilson 1968). A “**code**” is interpreted as a “system which pairs messages with signals, enabling two information - processing devices (organisms or machines) to communicate” (Sperber and Wilson 1968:3). The concept of “message” is interpreted as a “representation internal to the communicating devices” (Sperber and Wilson 1994:4). Thus, a “signal” is a variation of the external environment which can be manifested by one device and identified by the other.

According to Sperber and Wilson (1968) the “**code**” theory does not give attention to the non-linguistic aspects of time and place of expression; character of the speaker and the **speaker’s intentions**. These non-linguistic aspects influence the cognition or understanding of the utterance. For, Sperber and Wilson (1968:9) “an utterance can generally be perceived as a realisation of the phonetic representation of a single sentence”. Consequently, Sperber and Wilson (1986:10) complement the explication of utterances by investigating rules established in the **field of pragmatics**, principally the pragmatics of Grice (1975 and 1978) and Searle (1980). Relevance theory is critical of the “Code” theory since the “Code” theory is unable to fill the fissures in communication between the **semantic representation** of the sentences and the **intention** of the utterances (see Sperber

and Wilson 1968:9). Thus, Relevance theory attaches an extra pragmatic level of decoding to the linguistic level supplied by the **context**. This level of decoding may be recognised by an **inferential** process. This inferential process reinforces and selects the encyclopaedic or detailed knowledge of the text. Thus, relevance results through inference where the aims of the communicator are recognised.

Relevance theory exhibits itself in **ostensive-inferential** communication. Sperber and Wilson (1986:49) assert that Relevance theory summons the exegete to reflect on his/her text afresh within “**ostension-inferential communication**”. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986:49) “**Ostension**” is conduct “which makes manifest an intention to make something manifest”. Consequently, illustrating to someone an object is an illustration of “**ostension**”. Furthermore, the “communicator” in Relevance theory is the author of the written text. Sperber and Wilson (1986:54) argues that **ostensive** and **inferential communication** are the same processes, but are viewed from two discrete or distinct perspectives. These distinct perspectives are that of the **communicator** who is assimilated in the **ostensions** and that of the **audience** who is assimilated in the **inference**. Only when the communicator’s intentions are accomplished is relevance to the individual achieved. This **ostensive** assessment of the new information which expands the accumulation result, is called “relevant information” (see Sperber and Wilson 1986:48). Correspondingly, Relevance theory outlines the communicator’s intention and the recognition of that intention by the recipient.

The “fulfilment of the communicative intentions alter the “cognitive environment” of the recipient” (Sperber and Wilson 1968:103). Sperber and Wilson (1986:46) define “cognitive environment” as a “set of assumptions which the individual is capable of mentally

representing and accepting as true". Thus, **ostensive communication** is pertinent to an audience when it compliments their representation of the world as a whole and thus modifies their cognitive environment (see Sperber and Wilson 1986:48,71).

Chapter 4 of the thesis shows from Romans 5-8, how the intentional strategy of the text modifies the cognitive environment of the implied recipients. This transformation moves from suffering to rejoicing and joy with the aid of rhetorical diatribe. By deliberately creating contextual effects within a particular experience and understanding of the world, the reader's cognitive environment is transformed.

1.6 *Socio-semiotic theory*

The term "social" could be used in the sense of the social system, which could be synonymous with culture. Thus, generally speaking, "social-semiotics" would mean a reference to a social system or a culture, as a system of meaning. The term "social" could also indicate a particular concern with relationships between language and social structure, considering the social structure as one perspective on the social system. In other words, language in terms of being theorised as comprising of signs, is understood in its relationship to social structure. The text is an instance of a particular arrangement of signs, but also a product and a process of social meaning in a particular "**context of situation**". The situation is the environment in which the text comes to life.

The anthropologist Malinowski (1923) needed a term that expressed the total environment, including the verbal environment and the situation in which a text is uttered. Thus he coined the term 'context of situation' to illustrate the environment of the text. The context in which the text unfolds, is encapsulated in the text, not in piecemeal fashion or in a

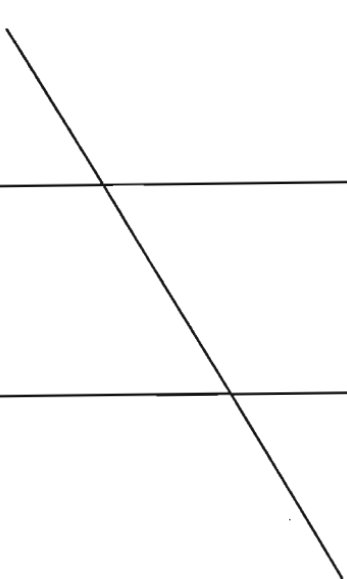
mechanical way, but through a systematic relationship between the social environment and the functional organisation of language. If text and context are treated as semiotic phenomena, as “modes of meaning”, we can get from one to another in a revealing way.

So, how can we characterise a text in its relationship to its “**context of situation**”? How do we get from the situation to the text? There are three features of the “**context of situation**” as enumerated by Malinowski (1923). Firstly, the “**field of discourse**” which refers to “What is happening?” or to the nature of the social action that is taking place.

Secondly, the “**tenor of discourse**” refers to “Who is taking part?” or to the nature of the participants, their statuses and roles, the types of speech roles they are taking on in the interaction and the whole cluster of socially significant relationships in which they are involved.

Thirdly, the “**mode of discourse**” which refers to “What part is the language playing?” or what it is that the participants are expecting the language to do for them in that situation: the symbolic organisation of the text, the status that it has, and its function in the context including the rhetorical mode.

Figure 1: Relation of the text to the context of situation

SITUATION: Feature of the context	(realised by)	TEXT: Functional component of Semantic system
Field of discourse (what is going on)		Experiential meanings (transitivity, naming, etc.)
Tenor of discourse (who are taking part)		Interpersonal meanings (mood, modality, person, etc.)
Mode of discourse (role assigned to language)		Textual meanings (theme, information, cohe- sive relations)

The environment, or social context of language is structured as a *field* of significant social action, a *tenor* of role relationships, and a *mode* of symbolic organisation. All three (field, tenor, mode) taken together, constitute the situation or the “context of situation” of a particular text.

The “**context of situation**” is only the immediate environment. There is also a broader background against which the text has to be interpreted: its “**context of culture**”. In any actual “**context of situation**” there is a particular configuration of **field**, **tenor** and **mode** that brings a text into being or a package of things that typically go together in a particular culture.

The **Field** is the social action in which the text is embedded. It includes the subject-matter, as one special manifestation. The **Tenor** is the set of role relationships among the relevant

participants. The **Mode** is the channel or wavelength selected which is essentially the function that is assigned to language in the total structure of the situation. It includes the medium (spoken/written) which is explained as a functional variable. Thus, **Field, Tenor, Mode** together captures the conceptual framework for representing the social context as the semiotic environment in which people exchange meaning. People do things on these occasions and attach these meanings and values to them. This is what culture is.

Concerned to explain culture, Malinowski (1923), as ethnographer, indicated that specific contexts of a culture are different. The activities in which people engage differ from place to place or from time to time, but, the general principle that all language must be understood in its “context of situation” is valid for every community in every stage of its development.

Firth (1935), a colleague of Malinowski’s, was also interested in the cultural background of language. He took over Malinowski’s notion of the “context of situation” and built it into his own linguistic theory. Subsequently, Firth (1935) proposed that all linguistics was the study of meaning and all meaning functions in a context. Firth (1950) set up a framework for the description of the “context of situation” that could be used for the study of texts as part of a general linguistic theory.

A text is an instance of social meaning in a particular “context of situation”. Therefore, we find the situation embodied or enshrined in the text, not piecemeal, but in a manner which reflects the systematic relation between the semantic structure and the social environment. According to Hymes (1971), the “situation” appears as constitutive of the text; provided that we take cognisance of the ecological properties of language and the features which

relate it to its environment in the social system.

The “**context of situation**” and the wider “**context of culture**” make up the non-verbal environment of a text. These determine the text and stress the predictability of the text from the context. The relationship between the text and context is a dialectical one: the text creates the context as much as the context creates the text. “Meanings” arise from the friction between the two. This means that part of the environment for any text is a set of “previous texts” or text that are taken for granted as shared among those taking part. In post-structural semiotics, the network of references established by interacting texts may be designated as a text’s “**intertextuality**” (Kristeva 1984:59-60). Reflecting on the Bible, we may say that the Bible itself is seen as a network of intertextuality. Each part of the Bible is caught up in this networked whole and is therefore an expression of the whole in a particular way. This indicates that no part can be isolated from the rest of the content without causing its meaning to be reduced. This view means that the Biblical texts are no longer regarded as objects but are transposed into elements of a larger intricately woven network which in itself forms part of a larger communication complex.

In Paul’s mission and theology, the extreme importance of cultural context is evident from his writings, especially Romans. The thesis’ chapter 3 offers an examination of the experiences of Christians and Jews in Rome in the first century CE, of cultural contexts with regard to status for example, and also focuses attention on Paul’s articulation of such issues.

Weinrich (1967:4) argues that context determines the meaning of a word. He observes that words alone are loaded by culture. When a word is used on its own, the average listener has

been socialised to associate various symbols with the word. When a term is used in an unexpected context, a metaphor is created. It is this unexpected context which forces new meaning to the word used. Weinrich (1967:6) calls such a context the “counter-determining context”. In chapter 4, the “hope” in Romans will be investigated in light of its various counter-determining contexts.

2.7 *History of Social Scientific Criticism*

Social Scientific Criticism arose in the nineteen eighties. The following scholars were vital in instituting a socio-literary method as an amendment to the logical positivistic methodology of Historical Critical research. They were Theissen (1978), Gottwald (1979), Scroggs (1980), Malina (1981), Gager (1982), Elliott (1984), Best (1984), Richter (1984), Neyrey (1986), Barton (1982 and 1984), Meeks (1983), Callagher (1984), Meyer (1986) and Watson (1986). All these scholars focused their attention specifically on the social context of the Pauline Christian community. I will single out Watson, Meeks, Elliott and Theissen in chapter 3 for their significant contributions on Romans.

Robin Scroggs (1980:165) proposed that Social Scientific Criticism (SCC) may have been generated in the wake of the ascending social awareness aroused by events such as the Vietnam war, student rebellions and the harsh economic and political persecution in many parts of the world. He maintained that the goal of socio-semiotic explication of the New Testament is to discover the significance of its message for our world today. Meeks (1982) developed research into the formation of Christian communities which Paul ministered to. These Pauline communities were a microcosm of Hellenistic societies which were composed of poor and deprived slaves and freemen. The “affluent” members of these communities may have relished an appropriately prominent social level. These people were

all dismissed from Rome in 49 CE and they could have conceivably returned in 54 CE, when Claudius died (see chapter 3 of this thesis). In chapter 4 Romans 5:1-7 will be examined demonstrating undoubtedly that even the “wealthy” had motivation to be dissatisfied with Roman supremacy. Meeks (1982) subsequently, cautiously examines the convictions which blended Pauline Christian communities together and the elements which contributed to its social cohesion.

Meeks (1982:271) details several tenets which were rare to ancient Christianity. The most determining occurrence that consolidated the Christian community was the Death and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The accounts of the juxtaposition of the social significance of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus (Romans 3:21-26, 5:9-10, 6:5-11, 10:9 and 8:31-39) will surface in chapter 4.

Elliott's (1986:11) criticism of the use of sociological theories by Theissen, Meeks and Watson, is that it does not clarify the categories of information concerning “roles”, “factors” and “functions”. Meeks (1982) and Watson (1985:38-41) describe the beginnings of Christianity as a process of change from a first century Jesus-Movement to a sect which Paul separated from Judaism. This view concludes a one-dimensional perspective. But, first-century century Judaism was not a consolidated crusade. According to Nickelsburg (1985) and Craffert (1993:246) first-century Judaism was a diverse “complex and variegated phenomenon”. Hence, there was no normative Judaism from which Paul detached Christian communities. Thus, the classification of “sects” is impartial to the household communities which originated instinctively.

2.8 *Rhetorical Criticism*

Rhetorical criticism arose out of a study of rhetoric in antiquity and the modern revival of rhetoric as persuasive argument. However, Rhetorical criticism shares common attributes with Narrative criticism in its focus on the internal relations of parts to a whole and the structure of letters and particular stylistic devices. Rhetorical criticism has much in common with Reader Response criticism especially in its focus on the audience and the rhetorical occasion in which emotional, cognitive and practical effects upon the hearer are emphasised.

Rhetorical criticism focuses on the persuasive power and literary strategies of a text which has a communicative function in a particular historical situation. Rhetorical discourse is generated by a concrete situation which invites a particular response. Thus, in a rhetorical situation, a person is obligated to make a response which ultimately affects the situation. Such endeavours instigate change of attitudes, motivations and cognitive thinking. It strives to persuade or teach the hearer/reader to elicit reactions, emotions, convictions and identifications. It is significant to emphasise that the evaluative basis for rhetoric is not aesthetics, but praxis.

Wilhelm Wuellner (1976:330-51) proposed that the Pauline letters be considered primarily as “argumentative discourse” along the lines of traditional rhetoric. Since Wuellner’s study, a number of works have appeared, the most substantive being Neil Elliot’s (1990) monograph, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraints and Strategy and Paul’s Dialogue with Judaism*. These studies have demonstrated that Rhetorical criticism can illuminate on our understanding of the form and function of the Pauline epistle.

According to Sloan (1975:789-99) “in rhetorical criticism a text must reveal its context”. By “context” is meant more than historical context or literary tradition, genre or the generic *Sitz im Leben*. What is meant by context has recently been discussed in terms of various theories: e.g., the theory of intertextuality, or the notion of the argumentative or rhetorical situation. According to Sloan (1975:802-3) a text’s context means for the rhetorical critic, the “attitudinizing conventions, precepts that condition both the writer’s *and* the reader’s stance toward experience, knowledge, tradition, language, and other people”.

Romans 1-5 includes a number of Rhetorical units which will be analysed in chapter 4. This part of Romans reveals a distinct beginning and ending (*inclusio*) (see Kennedy 1984:33-34). Kennedy (1984) notes that in the case of larger works, such as the Epistle of Romans, discerning self-contained units is not always immediately evident. For this reason, he stresses that the interpreter must identify **signs** of opening and closure.

Further, in chapter 4, Romans 8:31-39 will be analysed. It will take into account the broader and more inclusive units related semantically, as well as the rhetorical features which increase the impact and appeal of these broader units. In order to determine the meanings of these rhetorical devices, rhetorical principles in Hellenistic times will be considered, as well as certain techniques which are used in modern literary analysis.

In order to establish the rhetorical situation, three universal factors in rhetoric need to be determined: **speaker** or **writer**, the **audience** and the **discourse**. The interpreter, in defining the rhetorical situation, proceeds much like the Form critic in analysing the *Sitz im Leben*. In doing so, s/he relates the rhetorical unit to its sociological setting. According to Lloyd Bitzer (1968:33-34) the *rhetorical situation* encompasses:

There is a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence (or occasion) which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain modification of the exigence. Prior to the creation and presentation of discourse, there are three constituents of any rhetorical situation: the first is exigence; the second and third are elements of the complex, namely the audience to be constrained in decision and action and the constraints which influence the rhetor and can be brought to bear upon the audience.

In responding to the exigencies of the Roman situation, Paul saw an opportunity to elaborate Christian *paideia* (cultural context). With the use of Rhetorical Criticism, the cultural context (*paideia*) of the first century will be examined in order to highlight Paul's use of persuasion within the predominant culture of his day. However, Paul, develops his own Christian *paideia* or his own unique rhetorical world in order to present and elaborate the gospel. As is well known, Paul's letters act as a substitute for his presence and were oral in the immediate context. By way of his letters, Paul brought his message/speech to his audience. These letters were read out loud to the audiences by the letter carriers who were mentioned in the opening greetings. These letter carriers also acted as interpreters of his thought and messengers of the audience when they did not understand something or did not react to the effect Paul tried to create. Through his letter carriers/readers, Paul, appeals to values rooted in the past experiences of the Roman audience and seeks to refine their understanding of things they already know. Their "hope" is revitalised by the mimetic model of the Resurrection of Jesus. Their sufferings are re-defined by the Resurrection of Jesus. Real power and genuine "hope" comes in imitating the Risen Lord. The end of history is not defined by suffering and death, but in "hope" and triumph. This "hope" has already occurred mimetically in Jesus Christ.

Thus, Rhetorical criticism leads us away from a traditional message-or-content-orientated reading of Scripture to a reading which generates and strengthens ever-deepening personal,

social and cultural values. Thus Burkes (1950:49-59) indicates that Rhetorical criticism is not primarily for religious persuasion, nor for religious conviction, but, rather, with the help of Rhetorical criticism we should find “ever deepening dynamics of personal or social *identification and transformation*. Thus, one may ask: Given the fact that Paul’s letters do not outline a program of social transformation, is there any evidence that the apostle’s rhetoric has any contact with the realities of socio-economic exploitation and oppression?. These kinds of question will be considered in chapter 5.

2.9 *Comprehensive Theory of Metaphor*

A comprehensive theory of metaphor can help expound the meaning of the Pauline terms used in Romans: *hope, reconciliation, justification, righteousness* by investigating the conceptual systems that were associated with it in the First Century.

A metaphor describes a more unfamiliar object or action in a non-literal way by comparing it with something that is explicitly clear, for example: *he is as strong as a lion*. The metaphor supposes a correspondence between the two things that are compared, but also a difference which does not make them equal. This means that the metaphor itself may not be taken for reality, although the metaphoric reference constitutes a reality which could not, at least initially, be known in the same way.

Black (1962:39) illustrates this idea of metaphor with his famous metaphor:

“*Man is a wolf*”. Black (1962:39) further explained the interplay between **focus** and **frame** by the following copula sentence where two nouns are joined in a relationship of identification:

Sentence 1: Man is a wolf.

DIAGRAM 1: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOCUS AND FRAME IN SENTENCE 1:	
<i>Man is a</i> Frame Principal Subject	<i>Wolf</i> Focus Subsidiary Subject

Black refers to **sentence 1** to demonstrate the type of analysis which is called the **interaction view of metaphor**. The copula verb is in **sentence 1** relates man, the principal subject, to wolf, the subsidiary subject. Since wolf has been identified as the metaphorical word, this sentence of Black is a fine example of a **noun metaphor**. In Black's view, (1962:44) these subjects must be regarded as "'systems of things' rather than 'things.'" The reader must know the literal senses which Black (1962:41) calls the **system of associated commonplaces**, of the subjects "man" and "wolf" respectively, in order to understand the meaning of the metaphor. The effect of the metaphor is to evoke what Black terms the "wolf-system of related commonplaces." The wolf-system of associated commonplaces will, according to Black (1962: 41 and 42), suggest the following characteristics for man: "He preys upon other animals, is fierce, hungry, engaged in constant struggle, a scavenger ... that he too is hateful and alarming."

Black (1962:39,42 and 44) further thinks of a metaphor as a "filter" which:

selects, emphasizes, suppresses, and organizes features of the principal subject by implying statements about it that normally apply to the subsidiary subject.

A fluent English speaker hearing the metaphor will be led by the wolf-system of related commonplaces to construct a corresponding system of implications about the principal

subject, “man.” The pattern of the corresponding system of implications must be determined by the pattern of related commonplaces associated with the literal uses of the word “wolf.” Black continues as follows:

Any human traits that can without undue strain be talked about in ‘wolf-language’ will be rendered prominent, and any that cannot will be pushed into the background. The wolf metaphor suppresses some details, emphasizes others - in short, organizes our view of man.

Other proponents of the interaction theory have employed different labels for the referents. Richards (Maartens 1982:14) calls the primary subject the **tenor** and the secondary subject the **vehicle**. The **tenor** has been designated by a variety of terms. Brooke-Rose (1958:9) calls the **tenor** the **proper term** in the metaphoric expression. Within the theory proposed by Black (1962:28), the **tenor** is the **principal subject** in the metaphoric expression. The NP “man” in **sentence 1**: “man is a wolf” is thus the **principal subject** of the metaphor. The **principal subject** forms part of the **frame** of the metaphor which constitutes the words used **literally** in the metaphoric expression. The **tenor** may be comprised of more than the **remainder** or the **frame** of the metaphoric expression. The **tenor** may in fact be constituted by a literary convention or a context which Weinrich (1967:6) terms the **counter-determining context**.

Miller (1971:123) designated the metaphoric term as the **vehicle** of the metaphor. The **vehicle**, in contrast to the **tenor**, is used figuratively in a metaphorical expression. In Black’s terms (1962:28) the vehicle of the metaphor is the **subsidiary subject** or the **focus** of the metaphor. The **vehicle** of a metaphor leads to the **tenor** of the metaphor which it modifies or qualifies. The vehicle/focus interacts with the tenor in a paradigmatic relationship. The noun “wolf” in **sentence 1** interacts with the principal subject “man” in a relationship of identification. Within this relationship of identification the **vehicle** “wolf”

transfers semantic features, which usually apply to the noun “wolf,” to the principal subject “man.”

Bipin Indurkha (1992:36) one of the more recent expositors of the interaction theory refers to the referents “Vehicle” and “Tenor” as **source** and **target** respectively. The following chart illustrates the different terms used in the analysis of metaphoric expressions.

Sentence 2 – Nomenclature of Metaphor Theory

FRAME		FOCUS
Jesus is the		Bridegroom
Primary subject	Black	Secondary subject
Tenor	Richards	Vehicle
Target	Indurkha	Source

We now conclude our discussion on metaphoric language usage and we will continue in chapter 4 with a detailed analysis of selected passages from the epistle to the Romans.

1.10 *Freytag’s Five Part theory of the “Tragic Pyramid”*

The nineteenth century German scholar Gustav Freytag (1876) published his classic theory regarding the five-part “tragic pyramid”. Although this theory is formulated on the basis of tragedy it has been applied to other literary forms as well. This application will be reflected in elucidation of his theory. That Freytag’s theory can be applied to the New Testament was perhaps foreshadowed by Freytag (1863) himself in his translation of and commentary on the Gospels (*Die Symphonie der Evangelien: Eine Zusammenstellung der achten*

Bestandtheile der vier evangelishchen Urkundin).

Freytag's ideas have had a profound impact upon the analysis of plot structure, especially the structure of drama. It is apparent that in the analysis of drama, the plot follows a dynamic five-part format. The format of this structure would include three main points and two lines of connection. The dramatic event begins from an inciting moment or set of circumstances in which some problem is suggested. It ultimately creates a rising action through the complication of circumstances or the concepts involved. Thus the result is a climax or high point that focuses on the interests of the author and the reader as a crucial turn is made in the argument, which leads to a falling action or reversal as the difficulties are resolved by a working out of the implications of the climax, and then concluding appropriately and logically with a final moment of resolution or catastrophe in tragedy. Thus, the climax becomes the most notable place in the line of the argument, since it is the viewpoint that gives perspective to all of the actions, ideas or concepts preceding and following.

Freytag's pyramid can also be used to analyse the epistle to the Romans. Freytag did not imply that Paul knew, read or attended performances of Greek or Roman drama, or that the Epistle to the Romans is a tragedy, Greek or otherwise, even though some of the concepts Paul discusses in his letter are worthy of the best Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides had to offer. In fact, some of them are concepts that the tragedians dealt with.

A few decades ago it was postulated that the gospels were in some way related to Greek tragedy. According to Bilezikian (1977) one scholar even postulated that the Gospel of Mark was a Christian tragedy which was written by an author who had learnt his drama by

attending the theatre in Rome.

The major problem with this kind of argument is that they are diachronic - more concerned with historical development, background or provenance of the text than with its literary shape and structure. However, there are many other important issues in the epistle to the Romans with regard to its historical and sociological background, namely, the composition of the church at Rome as Gentile and Jews (see chapter 3 of this thesis) and the relation of the epistle to the Romans to other dialogical texts of the ancient philosophical traditions (see Campbell 1994) and the like, which one may highlight in a study of them in analysing the book of Romans. In chapter 5 of this thesis I will use Freytag's pyramid as a heuristic device or as an aid to discover the developing argument of Romans 1-8, and in particular the function of Romans 5 as the climax or the decisive shift, that brings the reader's attention to the point of highest interest and involvement, enabling the author to begin to undo the complications created and to proceed toward resolution (Freytag 1876:111-114).

2.11 *Conclusion*

In chapter 2, I overviewed twentieth century theorisings on literature and literature research. The two aims I had with this approach was to provide a brief overview of these theories, each able to give truth perspectives in critical research. These were Structuralism, Semiotic Theory, Reader-related and Deconstructive theories, Relevance Theory, Socio-semiotic Theory, Social Scientific Criticism, Rhetoric, Metaphor Theory and Freytag's five-part theory of the 'Tragic Pyramid'.

Despite the truth perspectives each theory gives, the larger question is to develop a comprehensive theory which encapsulates and articulates not only one but a variety of truth

perspectives beyond one-dimensional consciousness. This was the one aim of this chapter. The other aim was to indicate elements within these theories which will be used at different parts of the thesis. I have indicated which perspectives and conceptualisations will be used at particular points in the thesis. In summary, they can be described from the perspective of the theories involved or from the topics the chapters address.

From the perspective of the various theories, and despite the fact that the various theories form part of one another implicitly even if they are not explicitly accessed in the research following, the truth perspectives which mainly inform the themes addressed are as follows.

2.111 **Formalism** and **Structuralism** inform the way I deal with the main text which this thesis addresses, Romans 5:1-11, in chapter 4. The insights derived from these movements not only provide the basis of later twentieth century approaches and insights - not least “post-structuralism” and “post-modernism” - but also gave the possibilities for the other to develop, i.e.: it is impossible to think of the latter as having developed as ways of thinking and viewing the world but also in terms of how research is conducted, without these insights and their procedures.

2.112 **Semiotics** plays a role in the analysis of how Paul employs symbols or signs which he draws from daily life. From human life, I have identified symbols of justification and reconciliation, love, peace, hope, death, and union. How he carries these symbols or images over to the event of salvation, is variously explicated in chapters 4 and 5. Further, **Semiotics** plays a role in chapter 6, where it is showed that intellectual habit rooted in the cultural influences of Paul’s time importantly impacted on his text, revealing and understanding not only the ‘dislocated’ and ‘dissimilar’ character of the context of situation

Paul addressed, but also facilitating an understanding of the pragmatic impact or change in the cognitive environment of his addressees, Paul attempted with his argument not only in Romans 5:1-11, but also in Romans 1-8.

2.113 **Reading-related theories** play a role in the analysis of the social context of the addressees in chapter 3 but also in specific texts from Romans in chapters 4 and 5. Here I illustrate how the aesthetic object is consecutively structured in the argumentative and reading process. This is closely tied to the moves in the text as to how the “what” in the text, “hope”, is cultivated and progressively generated. In chapter 6, reading theories again underly the understanding of the impact or transformative cognitive effects of the text.

2.114 **Relevance theory** is used in chapter 4, where it is shown how Paul structured elements in the text to effect a change in the cognitive environment of readers. Chapter 4 shows how Romans 5-8 can be explicated in terms of current understandings formalist and structuralist procedures. Chapter 6, again, shows how the intentional strategy of the text modifies the cognitive environment of the implied recipients. This transformation moves from Gentilic existence and Lawful obedience on the one hand and suffering and banishment on the other, to the cognitive change of accepting suffering in view of the greater, faith in Jesus Christ and the joy and other related effects they have. By deliberately creating contextual effects within a particular experience and understanding of the world, the reader’s cognitive environment is transformed.

2.115 **Socio-semiotics** comes into play in exploring the extreme importance of Paul’s cultural context in his mission and theology in Romans. Chapter 3 has offered an examination of social contexts and also focused attention on Paul’s use of the means of

persuasion available to him in the Hellenistic world. Chapters 4 and 5, again, works with Weinrich's notion of how context determines the meaning of a word. Here it is shown how this impacts on our understanding of "hope" in Romans in terms of its various counter-determining contexts.

2.116 The truth perspectives derived from **Social-scientific criticism** play a role in the analysis of the social context of the Pauline Christian community. I mainly focused on Watson, Meeks, Elliott and Theissen in chapter 3. This chapter also examined the thesis that the "affluent" members of the communities in Rome, may have been dismissed from Rome in 49 CE and that they could have conceivably returned in 54 CE, when Claudius died. In Chapter 6, Romans 5:1-11 is examined in its context. Chapter 6 argues that even the "wealthy" had motivation to be dissatisfied with Roman supremacy. Chapter 6 also examines the accounts of the juxtaposition of the social significance of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus drawing on chapter 5.

2.117 **Rhetorical** analysis is employed in Romans 1-5 and is dealt with in chapter 5. This part of Romans reveals a distinct beginning and ending. The **signs** of opening and closure are addressed here, especially as self-contained units are not always easily detected in the text. Further, chapter 4 also treats Romans 8:31-39. It will take into account the broader and more inclusive units related semantically, as well as the rhetorical features which increase the impact and appeal of these broader units. Here, the meanings of these rhetorical devices are considered. In addition, since Paul's letters do not outline a program of social transformation overtly, the question of whether there is any evidence that the apostle's rhetoric has any contact with the realities of socio-economic exploitation and oppression is considered in chapter 5.

2.118 **Metaphor analysis** plays a role in chapter 4 with a detailed analysis of selected passages from the epistle to the Romans. The counter-determining context of texts will come into play throughout where there is reference to texts other than the immediate context of the text under discussion, i.e. in Romans, or outside this epistle in the rest of the New Testament, Old Testament or other intertextual references in the so-called apocryphal literature.

2.119 **Freytag's five part theory of the 'tragic pyramid'** is mainly employed in chapter 5 as a heuristic device or as an aid to discover the developing argument of Romans 1-8, and in particular the function of Romans 5:1-11 as the climax or the decisive shift, that brings the reader's attention to the point of highest interest and involvement, enabling the author, through the text, to begin to undo the complications created and to proceed toward resolution.

From the perspective of the different topics identified for these chapters, then, chapter 3 focuses on the socio-historical situation of Paul's Roman audience; chapter 4 on "hope" in the context of Romans 5-8; and chapter 5 on the function of Romans 5 in the argument of Romans 1-8. The conclusion overviews the results of the research and shows how the results of the study in chapters 4 and 5 must be understood in context as explicated in chapter 3, in terms of relevance theory.

CHAPTER 3

3 *The Socio-historical Situation of Paul's Roman Audience*

3.1 *Introduction*

The theological and paraenetic arguments of the letter to the Romans aim at uniting the Roman house-churches so that their co-operation in Paul's intended missionary journey to Spain would be possible. The peculiar cultural and linguistic conditions in Spain necessitated the unprecedented preparations implied by the writing of Romans (Jewett 1988:144-164). Within Rome, however, political events had a devastating effect on the churches, not least because of strong anti-Jewish sentiments.

This chapter provides an overview of these realities, asks whether Paul advocated separation from the synagogue, describes his social location as well as ethnic-related issues in Romans and untangles Paul's argument with regard to how these realities have to be addressed in terms of his views on the impartiality of God, the priority of Israel, distinctions between 'weak' and 'strong' and the social function and implications of the doctrine of justification.

3.2 *Romans' Context of Situation*

The environment in which Romans as text comes to life - and not be treated as a dogmatic document - is that of the dynamics between Roman officialdom and Judaism. To a large, extent, from Roman perspective, Christianity was also seen as part of Judaism which had, as religion, a certain standing in the Empire. After Claudius' expulsion of the Jews from Rome, a number of Jewish synagogue communities survived within this large, diverse and cosmopolitan city - the administrative centre of the Empire.

It is unclear as to exactly how Christianity came to Rome. However, the possibility is that it commenced within the organised network of Roman Jewish synagogues (see Heil 1987:7). Thus, the letter of Romans is a carefully designed, tactfully written appeal to the Roman house-churches to support Phoebe's patronage of the Spanish mission, which Paul planned to undertake after delivering the offering to Jerusalem. Thus, it is evident that Romans provides a rationale for co-operative missionary praxis in a cross-cultural context rather than a program of ideological and cultural conformity.

The letter of Romans shows that the situation addressed in Romans resulted from shifts in the population of the Roman congregation. Jews and Jewish Christians, exiled from the city under Claudius, returned, to new and more difficult circumstances. It is possible that the returning exiles that had suffered the confiscation of their property now faced widespread homelessness, experienced difficulties in securing kosher food and had to cope with restrictions on assembly. In such circumstances, it is possible that the Gentile Christian population in Rome, perhaps the majority in the congregations Paul addressed, was tempted to share in the anti-Judaism of their neighbours. During the reign of emperor Claudius before 41 and 49 AD., riots broke out among the Jews because of a certain "Chrestus" (variant spelling of "Christus"). This, however, may have provoked the followers of Christ and the other Jews. Consequently, many Jews were banished from Rome. Among those who were banished were the Jewish Christians Aquila and his wife Prisca, who later became co-workers of Paul at Corinth (see Acts 18:2). The Jewish exiles returned to Rome after the death of Claudius (54 AD). According to Romans 16:3 these exiles were present when Paul wrote the epistle of Romans.

It is also conceivable that Claudius's dismissal of Jews from Rome may have prompted

Christians to flee from the Jewish synagogues and initiate their very own communities. These communities were established in the households of individuals like Aquila, Aristobulus, Narcissus and Philologus. These individuals are referred to in the epistle of Romans as heads of households (see Rom. 16:3,10,11,15). Thus, there must have been a significant expansion in the quantity of Gentile Christians. According to Stambaugh and Balch (1986:160-163), when Romans was written, Christianity at Rome was composed of both Gentile and Jewish Christians, co-existing either within the synagogues or as distinct house churches or both. Paul, in Romans 1:8; 15:14 intimates a fused Christian community/communities of Jews and Gentiles. This Jewish and Gentile combination of Christians characterises the general sociological composition of Romans' audience itself. What are some of the sociological groupings which are involved in the epistle to the Romans?

In his letter Paul speaks to his readers as different from, yet associated to certain Christians and non-Christian groups. The Christian groups he makes reference to are the following: The mother Church in Jerusalem (Rom.15:19,25-32), Pauline communities between Jerusalem and Illyricum in Macedonia and Achaia (Rom.15:19,26; 16:4,16) and Paul's co-workers and close companions (Rom.16). The Non-Christian groups he makes reference to are the following: Jews who do not yet believe in the gospel (Rom.3:1-8; 9-11), Gentiles (these include "Greeks and Barbarians") who have not yet heard the gospel (Rom.1:1-15; 15:14-29) and the ruling governmental authorities (Rom.13:1-7). The Christian and/or Non-Christian groups Paul makes reference to are unspecified-enemies/ persecutors/ opponents in Romans 8:31-39; 12:14-21;16:17-20. It will become evident later what roles these groups play in Romans.

True to the requirements of ambassadorial rhetoric, Paul had to address the Romans in such

a way that each group felt included. Of course, when he mentions his most defined expression, “saints”, he describes the Christian groups. In the Roman context this would refer to many of them banned under Claudius who had returned to Rome. Some of these returning Jews were being discriminated against by the Gentile Christian majorities in the household-churches. The expression “called of Jesus Christ” seems to refer to Christians of predominately Gentile background who may have been using the term, “Jesus Christ” as the proper name of a cult patron rather than as a peculiar messianic title (Jewett 1991:96). The address that does not match the social groupings in Rome is “the beloved of God”. According to Jewett (1991:96) Paul places this address between the two others (i.e. “saints” and “the called of Jesus Christ”) so that it serves as a unifying formula. The words, “all those in Rome beloved of God” (Rom.1:7) is explicitly inclusive. This phrase, however, suggests the theological argument of the entire letter, namely, that God’s love is non-discriminating (Bassler 1982:164-70). No person on earth, whether Greek or Jewish deserves such love as Romans 1:18-3:20 argues. Nevertheless, everyone receives such love in Christ as Romans 3:21-4:25 indicates. Romans 2:11 insists that God is no respecter of persons; all have made themselves into God’s enemies (Romans 5:10) but all are included in the sweep of divine love. We must bear in mind that Paul wrote the letter of Romans to Christians at the heart of the Roman Empire, at the time when anti-Judaism which was rife in imperial circles had begun to infect the church as well (Gager 1981:63). Paul appeals to the Christians of Rome to throw off the mental shackles and change their cognitive thinking of the empire’s theology. To resist conformity to the world and embrace the transformation of their minds and to share God’s compassionate purposes toward humanity, particularly toward the covenant people, Israel.

The transformation which Paul has in mind in Romans requires that specific perceptions and

loyalties be changed. The burden of Paul's rhetoric in this letter to the Romans is to change the way Gentile Christians in Rome look upon Jews. These Gentile Christians are not theological abstractions but flesh-and-blood residents of Rome who are accustomed to hearing Jews regularly ridiculed in public discourse as avaricious, wretched, antisocial, barbarous, lecherous, smelling of strange foods and personal habits (Gager 1981:63-68). Thus, Paul's vision is more than an apocalyptic dream of ethnic harmony. It is a vision of justice, centered on the resurrection of the crucified Messiah (Romans 15:1,3).

Christian theological tradition has sometimes distorted Paul's voice by obliterating his Jewish identity and the Jewish character of his thought. Paul insists that his gospel did *not* abolish the Law (Rom.3:31), the Law remained "holy and just and good" (Rom.7:12), and his exertions to preserve the rights of those who kept kosher within his congregations (Rom.14-15) with a "universalism" based on the suspension of Torah observance.

In summary, then, Paul's main purpose in Romans is to demonstrate to a largely Gentile Christian audience that:

(a) Although it is true that the covenant promises and the Torah itself, cannot now be read in terms of the validation of Jewish ethnic covenant membership, and that therefore (b) Jews who have not believed the gospel are therefore, for the moment at least, putting themselves outside covenant membership, (c) this does *not* mean that the Torah was a bad thing, or that the creator God has cut off Israel forever, so that the species "Jewish Christian" will shortly be extinct. Paul argues these issues in Romans 5-8 (the full restoration of humankind); in Romans 9-11 (divine covenant faithfulness) and Romans 12-16 (the mission of the church). Within the socio-historical setting of Romans, relevant texts from the above passages will

be analysed.

3.3 *Did Paul Advocate Separation from the Synagogue?*

EP Sanders' (1977) criticism of the distortion of Judaism as embraced in much of this century's scholarship (particularly the Lutheran) has received widespread support (see Dunn 1983:95-122). Sanders' postulation is basically that Paul resists Judaism not because of any inborn flaws such as "self righteousness" or "legalism", but plainly because it is not Christianity (see Räisänen 1983:552). Francis Watson's (1986) inquiry seeks to render a historical and sociological foundation for this perspective. Watson (1986) recognises in the Lutheran procedure towards Paul a fundamental defect. This defect is obvious even in scholars who have historical awareness such as Bultmann and Käsemann. This defect pertains to the correlation between Paul's historical context and his theology. The Lutheran method assumes that in Paul's instruction on justification and the law is found the permanent gist of the Christian gospel. Consequently, this justification by faith and not the law - though it springs from a particular historical situation - should be explained existentially and in comparative detachment from its source.

Watson (1986) embraces a sociological viewpoint in order to survey how Paul's hypothesis is related to the real problems he faced. In particular, here, Watson (1986) examines the validity of the law-free gospel for the Gentiles and the position of the Jews. He (Watson 1986:19) rejects sociology as an alien discourse and sees it as "a natural and inevitable concomitant of the historical-critical method". Scholars of the New Testament have always paid attention to the "*Sitz im Leben*" or the social reality undergirding a text. According to Watson (1986:19) this social reality which undergirds the dialogue of Paul on Judaism and the law is his establishment of Gentile-Christian communities in distinct segregation from

the Jewish community. Thus, Paul's theological consideration verifies the separation of church and synagogue. Watson's (1986) sociological paradigms function on the premise that a text presupposes an existing social context and is meant to function within the context in procedures not essentially obvious to the text itself. He maintains that sociological inquiry is not a suitable means of filling in gaps in one's historical information. Also, sociological inquiry is not a replacement for historical data, but a means of decoding the data. Watson (1986) employs two sociological paradigms:

- (i) Changing a reform-movement into a sect; and (ii) Theoretical justification for the separate existence of the sectarian group.

This view focuses on the condemnation of the group's opponents, the use of antithesis and the re-interpreting of the religious practices of the community in view of the convictions that the sectarian group is the only legal inheritor to those traditions (see Räisänen 1983:20). According to Räisänen (1983:45), Paul and his congregations were the only early Christians who embraced the perspective of sectarian separation from the Jewish community prior to AD 70. It is evident that Paul and his co-workers at Antioch deserted their mission to the Jews because they became convinced that their failure to make converts was due to their hearers' divinely ordained hardness of heart (see Räisänen 1983:48). Thus, they directed their mission to Gentiles instead. This, however, implied a radical separation between the church and the synagogue. Hence, we discover in Paul's letters a conscious effort to change the movement which began as a reform-movement into a sect, in reaction to rejection.

What, then, are the merits and limitations of Watson's sociological approach? Watson

(1986) observes a social reality behind Paul's discussions of Jerusalem and the law. This implies Paul's establishment of Gentile-Christian communities which are in clear segregation from the Jewish community.

According to Rohrbaugh (1987:103-119) sociology is not history, but sociology of religion cultivates ample ways of depicting the pre-history of a group that may subsequently form into a separate sect. Watson (1986) observes that the cohesiveness of Paul's assertions about the law are at the level of practical strategy and not at the theoretical level.

How well does Watson succeed in his attempt to de-Lutheranize Paul? The antithesis of faith and works seen by many as integral to Paul needs to be re-examined. For Watson (1986:120f) the antithesis of faith and works merely asserts the separation of the church from the Jewish community. It does not supply a theoretical explanation for the separation. How does this differ from the traditional Lutheran approach? When Paul makes reference to the "works of the law" he does not point to morality in general, but to the exercise of the law within the Jewish community. Paul does not oppose a particular attitude to the law such as legalism but the actual exercise of the law within Judaism. It would be almost illogical for the standard first century Jew to imagine participation in God's covenant apart from these "works of law". For Paul, faith in Jesus Christ became the main identity sign relativising all others. The dilemma with the conventional Lutheran approach is because of the law-gospel debate. Paul's assertions to Gentile-Christians (especially in Galatians) concerning their proselytism to Judaism have been interpreted as a blanket criticism of Judaism and not as a view that required all Gentile-Christians to Judaize.

Sociologically, it is relatively simple to imagine Paul striving for the separation of his

Gentile-Christian communities over against Judaism. This, however, must not be overstressed for it will minimise the importance of Paul's chief struggle in not opposing Judaism, but opposing sin and the powers of evil prevalent in this world. Sanders' (1983:171) strategy presents an occasion for Christian scholars to re-evaluate the gospel and erase anti-Judaic statements that are not of its original nature.

But, did Paul endeavour to transform a Reform Movement into a Sect? There is insufficient data to confirm that this was actually Paul's intention. Sanders (1983:117ff) implies that Paul did not consciously set out to separate the church from Judaism despite the fact that his congregations were socially distinct from the synagogue. He maintains that Paul unintentionally paved the way for the historical outcome of the church emerging as a "third entity". Also, Sanders (1983:120) perceives the development of Early Christianity as involving "the simultaneous appropriation and rejection of Judaism". Watson (1986) portrays Paul as promoting the separation from the parent body. However, Watson proposes this argument by suspending the whole of Romans 11 which for him, is only Paul's effort to make his own conviction more persuasive by presenting it in the context of Jewish beliefs and hopes.

In the history of interpretation, there are some scholars who consider Romans as being written essentially to address a Jewish Christian minority (see Campbell 1981:33). Watson (1986) also attaches himself to this minority group of scholars and argues that Paul writes to persuade the Jewish Christians to accept his viewpoint - involving the social re-orientation of separation from the synagogue and living in future the lifestyle of Paul's Gentile Christian communities.

Robert Jewett (1985:99f) maintains that the distinctive character of Paul's teaching as found in Romans 14-15 is that Paul only in this letter embraces diversity of life-style within the church and imagines it as an abiding reality, rather than a momentary deviation. According to Jewett (1983:114f), the apostle's enthusiasm is for unity and mutual acceptance and not for the radical separation of the Jewish and non-Jewish components. Thus Paul resists to give the word "Israel" a completely Gentile-Christian or a Jewish-Christian content. For Paul, "Israel" refers to all God's people and God determines in his election who these shall be! In Romans, however, the term "Israel" is somewhat flexible. Also, Paul resists the word "Jew" to be equated with unbelief. This indicates somehow that for Paul the Jew is still a potential Christian. It is important to note that when Paul wrote Romans, Christianity as a separate entity has not fully emerged. Watson (1986) commences from the assumption that the Pauline communities and the synagogue were "socially distinct". Consequently, he asserts that Paul's letters provide reason for division.

It must be stressed that in Romans, Paul's approach was to pursue the social re-orientation of both Jewish *and* Gentile Christians through the Gospel rather than separation of church and synagogue. This orientation must have both theological and sociological implications for both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

Paul's "hope" in writing this letter to the Romans is to heal the divisions within the Roman household-churches and thus enable them to participate in the campaign to evangelise to the end of the known world.

3.4 *Paul's Social Location*

The author of Acts portrays Paul as a man of considerable status. He came from Tarsus, "a

citizen of no mean city” (Acts 22:3) and had been born a Roman citizen, a reality that caused considerable frustration to the civil magistrates and military officers who detained him. He was privileged to have a distinguished Jewish education and he possessed excellent oratorical skills. He clearly belonged to the city rather than the countryside, and he moved easily in the circles of Roman proconsuls, Epicureans, Stoic philosophers and synagogue officers. He was at ease even when he stood accused before governors and kings.

According to the social historian, EA Judge (1960:22) the evidence of Acts suggests we locate Paul in “the privileged group of Hellenistic families which had also been accorded Roman citizenship in return for services rendered”. Paul possessed “an unusually well-balanced set of social qualification” shared with only “a very small minority of persons in the eastern Mediterranean” world as demonstrated by his free movement “in the best circles in that society” (Judge 1960:23).

The question we are faced with today, is, how do we go about making judgements about social class in a society so distant from our own? Social historians maintain that we cannot simply measure social class in terms of, for example, wealth alone. Wayne Meeks (1983:61) suggests that a person’s status in Paul’s world was a combination of several different and often inconsistent factors which includes “power (defined as the capacity for achieving goals in social systems), occupational prestige, income or wealth, education and knowledge, religious and ritual purity, family and ethnic-group position and local community status”.

Antoinette Clark Wire (1990:62-71) suggests two additional factors, namely, “whether the

person was a slave or whether the person was a woman". Of course, the more factors we take into account, the more complicated the task of measuring social status becomes. However, status is something which becomes effective in social relationships. Thus, Richard Rohrbaugh (1984:531-537) proposes that "instead of looking at how much money a person has, and thereby classifying him in relation to his neighbours, we must look at a person's position in relation to his neighbours and his position in relation to others that enable him to acquire the money in the first place. *Position is the key*".

Rohrbaugh (1984:537) thus, recommends that we speak of status in terms of power and exploitation, classifying people "by whether they do or do not make use of (control?) the labour of others". If the New Testament is analysed by using these criteria we will find that "nearly all of the early Christians we know anything about were in that powerless situation that left them subject to the machinations of others" (Rohrbaugh 1984:537).

Actually, few Christians were in a position to control their own status through the exercise of power. Thus, Rohrbaugh (1984:542-543) speaks of "the precariousness of wealth ... without power in the Roman world. The fear of loss, of the downward mobility that was so common, was nearly universal. It was often expressed by Roman writers as the fear of fate".

The classical historian Ramsay MacMullen (1974) calls this "complex", "precarious", "volatile" world a "very steep social pyramid". The question is, where would Paul be located on such a pyramid?

A few scholars have emphasised Paul's efforts to cultivate a network of well-off

householders as his patrons and suggest that this is the group with which Paul would most likely fit in. Stanley K. Stowers (1984:59-82) argues that Paul's preaching usually occurred in private homes which were the "centre of intellectual activity and the customary place for many types of speakers and teachers to do their work". Since lectures by itinerant philosophers were routinely "private affairs and audiences came by invitation" this setting in private homes implies a more privileged class of people (Stowers 1984:61). Thus, according to Stowers (1984:62), "it became commonplace that the well-to-do liked to have philosophers seen hanging around their houses". In addition, since "the patron or host could provide the speaker with an audience and a kind of social legitimisation" it is "no accident that patrons, households and house churches are so prominent in the letters of Paul the missionary" (Stowers 1984:62). Thus, for Stowers (1984:82) a fundamental concern in all Paul's letters is to maintain this network of householders: "The importance of private residence for his teaching activity was crucial. Paul needed a platform".

On the other hand, the status enjoyed by these householders was relative. Wayne Meeks (1983:65) concludes his detailed investigation of the evidence in Paul's letters by describing the people who made up Paul's social platform as fitting "the picture of fairly well-off artisans and trades people as the typical Christians". These people were nevertheless "small people, not destitute, but not commanding capital either" (Meeks 1983:65).

One must be careful not to lump Paul together with the interests of the upper classes. Stowers (1984:82) observes that Paul insisted on his independence from the householders who acted as his hosts by making it his practice to support himself with manual labour (see ICor.9:15-19; 2Cor.2:17 and IThess.2:9). Holmberg (1978:91) specifies that "only when

Paul has left a church he has founded does he accept any money from it, in order to stress the fact that it has the character of support in his continued missionary work”.

Furthermore, Ronald Hock (1980) regards Paul’s practice of manual labour itself as an important clue to his social location. According to Dale B Martin (1990:122-124) Paul’s defence of his manual labour was undertaken “so as to win the weak” (ICor.9:22). This indicates that Paul did not imagine that he *had* to work but that manual labour was something free to choose. Also, Paul viewed working with his hands as humbling. This view could have originated in the working class.

The overall impression of Paul’s social origin remains in the fact that “Paul himself came from, the upper strata” (Theissen 1978). If Paul did indeed come from the upper strata, did he remain at home there? To what extent did his higher-status origins shape his perceptions and attitudes as an apostle?

Wire (1990:66-67) makes an important contribution towards our understanding of Paul’s thought when she correlates his experience of social status loss with his proclamation of the cross as “the divine path of chosen loss”. Wire (1990:66-67) maintains that “before Paul is called to believe in Christ, he is wise, powerful and a person with rank. He is also favoured in the other three status indicators – Jew, free, and male. The significance of these is basic to what he is able to accomplish before he is called. The lack of any would have been prohibitive. In wisdom, power, rank, ethnic security, caste and sex, Saul – (to use Luke’s name for him at this stage) has status”. But Wire (1990:67) observes that Paul did suffer a loss of status: “Paul’s calling to preach Christ to the Gentiles [had] a direct impact on his social status, cutting off his promising career among the Pharisees without providing

him the kind of wisdom that can be a solid power-base in the Greek world". Although Paul continues to enjoy the status as "a Jew, free and male" his privileges as a Jew "have been severely compromised, his rights as a free person have been limited by the Christian slaves' freedom in Christ, and his position as a male is now being lived out in the same world with the Corinthian women prophets. *Paul unquestionably sees himself as having lost status*" (Wire 1990:68). Wire (1990:69-70) relates Paul's experience of status loss to his theology of the cross: "There is a close parallel between Paul's view of his status loss and his view of what God is doing in Christ". Paul interprets his own status loss as a sharing in the cross of Christ (Wire 1990:69). According to Wire (1990:70), Corinthians' "exaltation of the crucified One" correlates to "their rising social status, which is seen as Christ's wisdom and power, giving them honour, group solidarity and respect as women and/ or slaves". The concept of the cross of Jesus Christ energised Paul's entire apostolic endeavour. In chapter three of this thesis attention is given to the importance of the cross of Jesus Christ for Paul.

3.5 *Ethnic Issues in Romans*

Paul was aware of the political dangers that Christianity faced in Rome since Roman Christianity was undergoing a critical change in its self-definition as he wrote. Christianity in Rome was not unified and the issue threatening Christianity was the exact one that made Paul's mission controversial among the Jews from Jerusalem to Rome. There was insufficient regard for Jewish practice and identity in the gospel.

The epistle to the Romans provides a justification for co-operative missionary praxis in a cross-cultural context in contrast to cultural conformity. Throughout Paul's letters it is evident that Paul was sensitive to cross-cultural issues (see Rom.16:17-20). Paul's main

approach to the complicated situation of cultural and theological conflict is to seek a common ground among the Jews and the Gentiles. Thus, in the letter to the Romans, Paul highlights a multiple congregation which comprises of different cultural backgrounds. It is individuals from these multiple cultural contexts which interact critically with each other and are resistant towards the return of some Jewish Christian exiles after the lapse of the Edict of Claudius in 54 CE. Thus, many of Paul's commentators have questioned the reason for Paul not addressing the "church" or "churches" in Rome. A close examination of the book of Romans highlights three parallel phrases used to describe the recipients of the letter: "the called of Christ Jesus"; "to those in Rome beloved of God"; "the called saints".

Paul deliberately addresses the Romans in this way so that each group felt included and accepted. It is thus evident that Paul carefully selected language that would be inclusive of the two broad streams of the house-and tenement-churches and those leaders not yet incorporated in their membership (Hay 1995:95). In this way, Paul emphasized that God's love is non-discriminating. God is no respecter of persons. It is Paul's prayer that this Gospel will be grasped by his readers so that the splintered congregations in Rome would become united in co-operation while still preserving their uniqueness.

Analysis of texts from Romans will make it apparent that Paul was cognisant of the crisis of self-definition that the Roman Christian communities faced. The socio-historical context of Romans will be outlined in order to demonstrate Paul's treatment of ethnic issues in his letter to the Romans. The three major arguments developed by Paul in Romans are applied by the apostle to ethnic relationships: the impartiality of God; the priority of Israel; the co-existence of the weak and the strong.

3.51 *The Impartiality of God*

The central premise of Paul's argument is that God is impartial. This affirmation functions rhetorically to minimise perceived distinctions between Jews and Gentiles. In Romans 1-4, Paul exposes the implications of this premise for Christian self-definition by emphasising God's judgement by works and God's justification by faith. Paul's goal in Romans 1-4 was not to explain justification by faith, but rather to break down distinctions between Jews and Gentiles (Stendahl 1976:3). Evidently, Jewish and Gentile Christians were not living in harmony with one another. Justification by faith and judgement by works both contribute to Paul's re-evaluation of the relationship between Jews and Gentiles. According to Marxsen (1970:102) the employment of the word "all" by Paul compels the Jews and Gentiles, "whose relationship to God from the Jewish standpoint is a fundamentally different one, into a unity".

Paul's assertion that "God shows no partiality" functions rhetorically as a summary of the argument found in Romans 1:16-2:10 (Dahl 1982:135). It is a reasonable conclusion that Paul was deliberately inclusive since he intended to cast a wide net that would encircle "the Jew first and also the Greek". Paul's arguments indicate that his goal is to show that ethnic distinctions do not count.

Romans 1:16-17: "the gospel is the power of God to salvation to everyone believing, to the Jew first and also the Greek; for [the] righteousness of God in it is revealed by means of faith to faith" forms the statement of theme for the "poetic sequence" of the letter. Paul presents his gospel as a revelation from God, which brings a mandate for mission. Thus, God reveals himself as the God who saves believing Jews and Gentiles. This principle is developed in Romans 1:18-4:25. The consequences of this principle is developed in

Romans 5:1-15:13. The letter is addressed to the Jews until Romans 11:13, where it is addressed to the Gentiles. Paul addresses the Jew specifically in Romans 2:17, “If you call yourself a Jew” and in Romans 7:1, “for I am speaking to those who know the law”. He repeats the phrase “not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles” in Romans 1:16; 2:9; 3:9,29; 9:24. Not only “circumcised” but also “uncircumcised” is mentioned in Romans 4:9. For Paul, circumcision was the fundamental boundary marker between Jews and Gentiles. According to Romans 2:6, God’s impartiality renders to “every man according to his works”. Thus, ethnic distinctions do not count. Here, it is evident that Paul’s emphasis on the deeds of the Jews and Gentiles demonstrates the mutual ground on which they stand. This relativises their ethnic differences. Paul utilises his principle proposition that “God shows no partiality” as a rhetorical device to force a re-evaluation of the prevalent Jewish-Gentile categories based on the law and circumcision. On this basis, Paul hopes to challenge ethnic distinctions and at the same time propose re-definition for Christianity in Rome. Paul emphasises that the people of God are not nor have they ever been) merely those who possess the law and are circumcised. Rather, the people of God are (and have always been) those who *do* what the law requires and are “circumcised”.

This theme that “God shows no impartiality” was affirmation that Paul assumed would command widespread acceptance among his readers. Even the Jews would have accepted the theologumenon in principle since Jewish literature commonly defended the justice of God’s judgement by affirming God’s impartiality (see Deut.1:16-17; 16-18-19; Lev.19:15; Ps.82:1-2; Pss.Sol.2:17-19; IEnoch 63:8-9; Jub.5:12-16). For Paul, Christians do what the law requires by the Spirit and not by nature (Romans 8:4).

In both the contexts of Romans 2 and 11, Paul attacks pretension and arrogance that stems

from ethnic identities. An analysis of Paul's use of diatribe in Romans is also indicative that Paul's basic purpose was to create mutual ground between Jewish and Gentile Christians (Stowers 1981:115). Thus, in Romans 1-4, Paul constructs an inclusive argument on the basis of a theological principle he assumed all his readers would understand – the impartiality of God. Thus, both justification by faith and judgement by works both demonstrate the impartiality of God.

For Paul, the whole message of the Gospel is not restricted exclusively to the religious conversion of believing individuals but it involves God's deliverance of the world from its "bondage to decay" (Rom.8:21).

In conclusion, then, the statement in Romans 1:16-17 which makes reference to "all who have faith"; and "from faith to faith" explicitly underscores the inclusion of the two culturally distinct groups, the Jews and Greeks. The counter-determining context here is Habakkuk 2:4 which implies that anyone, irrespective of cultural background or pedigree can obtain new life on the same terms. This inclusive Gospel equalises the status of the Greeks and Barbarians, Wise and Uneducated and the Jews and Gentiles. It is Paul's "hope" that this inclusive and restorative righteousness will heal all the divisions and contentions within the church so that the church can participate in global mission to the uttermost most parts of the world. It is sincerely Paul's desire to seek peace between the diverse cultural groups through changing the cognitive environment of his readers.

3.52 *The Priority of Israel*

The theme of Israel's priority is widespread in the book of Romans. Romans 1-4 and 9-11 engage in a vehement discourse with Israel: Paul speaks directly to the "Jews" or to

“Israel” and quotes scripture fifty-three times. He uses the term “Jew” nine times (Rom.1-4) and twice in Romans 9-11. Paul uses the term “Israel” eleven times in Romans 9-11. He quotes scripture twenty-one times in Romans 1-4 and thirty-two times in Romans 9-11 (Scroggs 1976:278). However, in Romans 5-8 Paul never mentions “Israel” and the term “Jew”, rather, the subject is Christ rather than God. Also, in Romans 5-8, Paul quotes scripture only twice.

Romans 9-11 highlights the theme of Israel’s priority. In Romans 1:1-3 Paul highlights the distinct relationship that exists between the Gospel and Israel: The Gospel was “promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures”, and this Gospel concerns “his Son, who descended from David according to the flesh”. Only in this reference does Paul appeal to the Davidic descent of Jesus. This indicates Paul’s aim to stress the special relationship that exists between the Gospel and Israel.

Paul himself boasts self-confidently that, “I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin”. But, Paul qualifies this claim of ethnic self-portrayal with the affirmation that “God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew” (Romans 11:2). However, in Romans 11:17ff Paul discourages Gentile Christian arrogance toward the Jews by indicating that the roots of the olive tree into which the Gentiles have been grafted are Jewish and supports the whole tree.

In Romans 15:4 Paul asserts that Christians have “hope” through the encouragement of Israel’s scriptures. The conclusion that God had rejected Israel (Rom.11:1) was already attractive to the Gentile-Christians in their attempt to claim special status according to Romans 11:17-24.

The outgrowth of self-identity among Roman Christians in the aftermath of the detachment of Christianity from the synagogues accelerated tensions between Christians who lived like Jews and those who did not. The Jewish communities in Rome were seeking to differentiate themselves from Christians for their own safety. Simultaneously, the Gentile Christians in Rome were also responding with autonomous ambitions of their own. Thus, Romans 9:30-33 outlines the contemporary locale with which Paul had to grapple: Gentiles have attained righteousness by faith, Jews have stumbled.

Jewish Christians were under unique pressure since the Christian and Jewish communities were describing themselves in contrast to one another. The breach between the communities expanded. As Christianity sought more of its members from the non-Jewish residents in Rome, the self-definition of Christianity in Rome was being determined by Gentile Christians in a non-Jewish setting. Paul's intention to emphasise the theme of Israel's priority is most conspicuous in Romans 9-11. Before any literary development of Romans 9-11 is examined, attention should be given to Paul's general rhetorical design as appropriate to Romans 9-11.

At the end of Romans 8, Paul asserts the faithfulness of God. In Romans 9-10 he emphasises the key themes already mentioned in Romans 1-8, namely, God has promised; Israel has failed. From Paul's own language it is evident that he aspired to capitalise on the tension created by juxtaposing God's promise with Israel's failure.

Observe Paul's glaring comparison in Romans 11:28 when he says "as regards the gospel they are enemies ... as regards election, they are beloved". Consequently, the Jews are said to be enemies of God as regards the Gospel, but beloved of God as regards the election.

The two poles of Paul's tension are the Gospel and the abiding faithfulness of God to Israel. These two fundamentals Paul is unable to relinquish. The rhetorical significance Paul saw in this design which explains Israel's situation vis-à-vis the Gospel in terms of a radical tension can be illustrated by comparing Romans 9-11 with Romans 3:1-8. Many scholars identify a relationship between Romans 9-11 and 3:1-8 since Romans 3 conveys a concern that is not dealt with in detail until Romans 9 (see Campbell 1981:33).

In Romans 3 Paul discusses the status of Israel's priority only within the framework of God's faithfulness in spite of Israel's failure. The importance of Romans 3:1-8 reaches its climax upon comparison with Romans 9-11, where Paul establishes the same framework for his more detailed argument of the topic. There is however no proof that Paul's readers were questioning the faithfulness of God. It is important to note that the Gentile Christians were questioning the place of Israel vis-à-vis the Gospel, and not the faithfulness of God. Consequently, Paul desires his readers to grasp that a denial of the continuing priority of Israel can persist only by denying the faithfulness of God. Paul's integral purpose in Romans 9-11 was to confront Gentile-Christian viewpoints towards the Jews. Thus, Paul highlighted the implications of Israel's election and God's faithfulness. Following the juxtaposing of the privileges of Israel with the faithfulness of God in Romans 9:1-5, Paul emphasises that God's election has never been established on physical descent or works. Paul refers to the examples of Isaac/ Ishmael and Jacob/ Esau. According to Paul it is God's promise and election that matters and not ancestry or merit. It is imperative for Paul to demonstrate that the priority of Israel is not the result of an ethnic judgement which is underpinned by God's valuation of people. Thus, in order for Paul to underscore God's faithfulness, he must portray God's actions in terms of promises God made to Israel, which are not appropriated on the basis of ethnicity or works (see Romans 9:1-13). In order for

Paul to assert the impartiality of God while he defends the priority of Israel, Paul has to liberate ethnicity and works from the promises of God. It is of course evident from Jewish history and Israel's scriptures that the Jews had a particular priority in terms of God's promises. Regardless, the promises of God includes both Jews and Greeks (Romans 9:24-29).

Paul indicates in Romans 11:1 that God did not reject the Jews in spite of their failure. Paul maintains that God did not annul the promises He made to Israel. This indicates that God had not finished his work with Israel. The main thrust of Paul's argument is apparent: God had not rejected Israel and the Gentile-Christians in Rome must not either. Paul very clearly reprimands the Gentile-Christians as "proud" (Rom.11:20), "latecomers" (Rom.11:24), "branches unnaturally grafted on" (Rom.11:24). Gentile believers should not be disdainful toward their Jewish counterparts. Rather, the Gentiles should be grateful because they relish the riches of an olive tree whose roots are distinctly Jewish. Thus, the Christian self-definition that Paul promotes in Romans does not compel Gentiles to become members of the Jewish nation in order to secure their salvation.

Subsequently, Gentile Christians in Rome were rewriting the self-definition of Christianity in Rome under the supposition that God had rejected Israel. Thus, it became essential for the apostle Paul to highlight that the "natural" and "unnatural" branches have *Jewish* roots in common.

In chapter 3 of this thesis, the function of the story of Israel in the argument of Romans 5-8 will be highlighted.

3.53 *The “Weak” and the “Strong”*

Romans 14:1-15:13 highlights the conflict between Christians over the appropriate perimeters of the Christian community. Paul is very candid in his rejection of food and special days as the perimeters for the Christian community. Hence, he proposes an alternate identification in Romans 14:17-18. It is Paul’s desire to approach this conflict as an issue of diet and special days and not as an ethnic problem to avoid expanding the ethnic distinctions already prevalent in Rome.

Also, Paul does not suggest the following equations to the reader: “weak” equals Jewish Christian and “strong” equals Gentile Christians. These equations are not acceptable. Paul’s discussion does not demand strict categories. Paul’s main concern is that the conflicting self-definitions of Jewish and Gentile Christians be addressed within the boundaries of vegetables and special days. Only under these conditions would the argument be adequate. Paul was chiefly concerned with the boundaries that separated Jews and Gentiles. Paul emphasises the current status of these two ethnic groups in view of God’s faithfulness in fulfilling the promises made to the patriarchs in Romans 15:8,9. It is evident here, that Paul associates the “weak” and the “strong” with the theme of the priority of Israel. Throughout the book of Romans Paul appeals to the Jew-Gentile conflict in attempt to create as much common ground as possible. In Romans 15:5-6 Paul’s prayer is that the Christians in Rome will discover a “harmony” among themselves so that God can be praised with “one voice”. The “strong” are to accommodate the “weak”.

3.6 *The Doctrine of Justification: Its Social Function and Implications*

Romans 3:28 says: “man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law”. This statement is integral to the Pauline doctrine of justification. Paul also outlines this doctrine of

Justification in his epistle to the Galatians. Here, in Galatians, the doctrine is argumentative whereas in his epistle to the Romans it is a more thorough account in order to remedy any misinterpretations. It is this purpose which lifts Paul's view out of doctrinal speculation and places it in social reality, asking for explication of its social function and social implications.

The phrase "social function and implications" demonstrates that the doctrine is more than a dogmatic doctrine. Thus this doctrine does not only pertain to the individual and his/ her relationship to God but also to the significance it has for the common life of the Christian in social reality.

The counter-determining context of the expression "justification" has its beginnings in the language of the Old Testament and the Qumran documents. Such an example is found in Paul's use of Psalms 143:2 (LXX 142:2): "For no man living is righteous before thee". This for Paul means that, "for no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the Law", namely, before God's court (see Rom.3:20). There is justification in God's sight but its base is distinct from the works of the Law.

In view of the counter-determining context of Habakkuk 2:4, Paul establishes a positive complement to the negative assertion in Psalms 143:2: "The righteous shall live by his faith" (Hab.2:4). In Romans 1:17, Paul says that "He who through faith is righteous shall live". In Romans 1:17, Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4 to support his assertion that the gospel reveals God's righteousness and, consequently, is the power of God for salvation. Thus, Paul concludes that nobody is justified by the Law, since righteousness and life are given to those who have faith (see Gal.3:11). In Romans 10:5, Paul emphasises that the quotations

that the righteous shall live by faith challenge the assertions of the Mosaic Law that the one who keeps the Law's commandments and ordinances shall live by them. For Paul the Mosaic Law was from God and that it was good and holy. Paul maintains that God never intended the Law to last forever and that it was a temporary measure which was valid only until the coming of Christ. Appropriately, the Law is simply an interim measure to accentuate the essence of grace which is completely undeserved (Rom.5:20-21).

Thus, Paul concludes that Jews and Gentiles are justified in the same way, namely, by faith alone. Paul uses Romans 10:6-17 to promote this reasoning. Also, in Romans 8:15-17 Paul asserts that it is by the announcement of faith that God has given the Holy Spirit to Gentiles and Jews, as a guarantee of their inheritance. Thus the Gentiles now share in the promises which God made to Abraham (Gal. 3:1-5). Paul underscores the universal character of justification, namely, as all humanity sinned (Jews and Gentiles alike), so are all men justified only through faith. For Paul there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles (Rom. 3:29f; 10:12f).

The Pauline expression of the doctrine of justification has a distinct social significance. It suggests a perception of what Christian community is and supplies direction showing how the members of the Christian community should relate to one another.

The doctrine of justification establishes that Christian Gentiles need not become Jews in order to become full members of the church. Gentile-Christians should remain part of their ethnic group from which they originated. Thus, Paul whilst not refuting the legality of the Old Testament, maintains inflexibly the universality of the gospel and the church.

Paul, however, in reference to Romans 3:29ff and Romans 10:12ff does not declare that there are no differences among individuals in relation to sex, nationality or social status. This doctrine of justification which Paul so emphatically propounds has definite practical social implications not diminishing the different kinds of people in society and how they articulate.

This kind of reasoning is then also, in the context of Paul's own projection of his intended mission to Spain, the unifying basis from which we may assume he expected unified support from the church in Rome. He introduces himself and his gospel which he preaches in his letter to the Christians at Rome, in order to win the support of the Roman Christians for his projected labour in the West. Simultaneously, in Romans 15:15-22, Paul requests the Roman Christians to sustain him and his congregation in Macedonia and Achaia with their prayers, so that the gift which his Gentile congregations offer might be acceptable to the saints in Jerusalem. With this request in mind, however, Paul develops his doctrine of Justification. He aspires to guard against misunderstanding and to avoid providing an excuse for Christians continuing to sin and to safeguard the holiness of the Law. Paul continuously reminds the Romans that he has not become a renegade or turned his back on his own people. For Paul, salvation for Israel is the supreme target toward which he is aspiring even as an apostle to the Gentiles. Hence, the doctrine of justification emerges in Romans as an integral and determining element of an all-encompassing theology of missions.

This doctrine of justification does not only entail the individual and his salvation but for Paul also embraces *history* and *eschatology*. This according to Dahl (1977:110) includes Adam, mankind and Christ, the promise to Abraham and the Law given to Moses on Sinai,

the gospel preached to the Jews and to the Gentiles, God's work in the past and in the future, the apostle's own work in the past, future and present, the first fruits among the Gentiles and the remnant of Israel, the unity of Jews and Gentiles in the local congregation and in the world-wide church, Christ's dominion over principalities and powers, and the comprehensive goal of God's plan for his creation.

Evidently, the doctrine of justification is not fundamentally *social*. It is not social gospel. It is *theological* and *soteriological*. Paul, however, chooses to establish the doctrine of justification within its social and historical framework rather than a psychological and individualistic framework.

Paul's confession in Philippians 3:3-11 and Galatians 2:15-21 makes it obvious that his route to the doctrine of justification was dissimilar to that of Martin Luther. By the law's measure, Paul's life as a Pharisee was "blameless". It was this ardour for the Law which made Paul a persecutor of the church. Thus Paul repudiated everything in which he once hoped, in order to procure a righteousness which was not his own but a benefaction from God. Paul is aware that he amounts to no more than a sinner who received God's grace and who now works as God's instrument.

Justification is the compassionate pardon of sinful humanity, since for Paul, both the Jews and the Gentiles are without excuse for their sins. Throughout all of Paul's letters he stresses that the believers do not obtain nor possess justification, holiness, wisdom, power or life through their own endeavours. They receive everything because as members of the church they belong to Christ. Thus Paul emphasises in his letters the important aspect of the Christian's relationship with fellow believers (Rom.13:8-10). According to Romans

8:4, in the life according to the Spirit which Christians live, they realise the conditions of the Law, on the basis of justification. The Christian's affiliation with those outside the community is confirmed because of the fact that God is the Judge and the gospel is for *all* humanity. But, however, for Paul, Christian brotherly love fulfils the Law as he clarifies the relationship between Christ and the Law and between faith and works, in the doctrine of justification.

Why did the Pauline doctrine of justification not have great impact for the Christians in the period following Paul? There are a number of arguments for this.

It is doubtful that the doctrine of justification had much social relevance in the ancient church before Augustine. The first equally great Christian thinker after Paul certainly was Augustine. It was Augustine who apportioned pivotal significance to the doctrine of justification. According to him, God's grace was at work not only in baptism and at the beginning of the Christian's life, but also in the sanctification which continued throughout that life and in the final perfection which would be its culmination. There is some similarity between Paul's view and that of Augustine but the context and the emphasis have been changed. Paul ensues an eschatological theology of mission, while Augustine concentrates theologically on human and divine activity in those justified by baptism.

The Augustinian tradition was championed by the Augustinian monk, Martin Luther. Thus it was Luther who rediscovered the Pauline doctrine of justification through which he discovered the answer to the question of how to discover a gracious God.

The relationship between Paul and Luther has been very much discussed (see Rothermundt 1965). Catholic scholars and radical Protestants (Wrede and Schweitzer) together with

conservative theologians (Schlatter and Paul Althaus) all assert that Luther's explication of Paul is one-sided and deluding. Luther differs from Paul since they both ask different questions. This research does not permit me to catalogue all the questions at issue between Paul and Luther. It is unquestionable that what Paul had to express about the Mosaic Law, circumcision, feasts and the Sabbath attained fresh significance when Luther implemented it to suit the Catholic practices of penances and indulgences and to the spirituality of monastic order and the church liturgy. It must be emphasised that this doctrine of justification which sprung from the new Lutheran exegesis had immense social repercussions which would be inconceivable to disregard. Consequently, for Luther and the Lutheran affirmations, this doctrine of justification by faith is not one doctrine among the many already existing doctrines. For Luther, this doctrine of justification defines the total knowledge of Christianity that, in fact, revolutionised the church structure as well as society. This was established negatively by the extermination of monastic life and church hierarchy, by breaking away from canon law and from the papacy. Positively, it conferred intense religious meaning to service in secular profession, in the family and in society.

Thus, through this uncompromising belief on the doctrine of justification, Luther strived at a reformation of the whole Catholic Church. This concluded historically in the creation of distinct Reformation churches having the doctrine of justification by faith as its confessional stamp. This doctrine thus became the support of life in both the Lutheran and Reformed countries. However, there was a definite constriction with regard to this doctrine since - now the nucleus of the doctrine became the individual's relationship to God. Thus, justification became a final step on the path to salvation: starting with the awakening through the Law, then rebirth through faith and with it justification, the acquitting judgement in the heavenly court, after that, sanctification and so on. Evidently, justification

lost its all-encompassing nature.

Even Pietism supplied a distinctive status to the doctrine of justification. Pietists of the last several centuries conserved the doctrine of justification as a key component of their religious life instead of adhering to a confessional criteria which would sustain denominational or church identity.

It is apparent that even in the pietistic circles, that the doctrine of justification has social relevance. The obligation to evangelise the world globally has been a vital duty for the pietists or the evangelicals. Thus, proclaiming and teaching the word to the whole cosmos became a compulsion and so the doctrine of justification has been the power operating together with other factors to destroy old societies and invent new ones to succeed them. This encouraged overwhelming modifications in the church and the whole world. It is thus evident that the revivalistic movement and the evangelical mission programmes provide examples that the doctrine of justification can have considerable social significance.

Also today, the pressing assignment is to rediscover the social significance and implications of the doctrine of justification. This would be an exhaustive assignment which would prompt questions such as: To what extent does the prevailing practice of the church denounce *de facto* the doctrine of justification, because it prohibits certain people from free access to God's grace in his church? A distressing illustration of this is demonstrated in racial discrimination. This issue is not outside the duty of preaching the gospel. It is an added responsibility to the church. This is the heart-throb of the gospel message since God shows no partiality. Consequently, the gathering of Christians in Christ's name can no longer practice partiality. If only the Christian churches in the United States and South

Africa, or elsewhere, had been able to settle this problem of discrimination it would have made the numerous amount of demonstrations, strikes, boycotts unnecessary and thus made it simple to arrive at political resolution to the problem of racial discrimination.

The social implications of the doctrine of justification implies that Christians must discernibly communicate their unity in the fellowship of the Lord's table, just as Paul demands. But, even the Lutheran churches have repudiated this affirmation that preaching of the gospel and right supervision of the sacraments are sufficient grounds for the unity of the church.

The question, however, is whether the message of the doctrine of justification that "there is no distinction," had any impact on the social structure of the churches? The doctrine of justification must have practical, tangible social consequences for today. I believe that much would hinge on what the ministers of the churches preach or teach and how the allegiant Christian reacts. Romans 3:21-26 is primarily a revelation text to serve the needs of mission. According to Paul, God's revelation takes place precisely in the proclamation of the gospel (Rom.1:17). The revelation of the righteousness of God points to the saving activity of God in the Cross.

Chapter 3 of this thesis focuses on "hope" in the context of Romans 5-8:31-39 and the social consequences of the power of the "Cross" and the "Resurrection" of Jesus in the context of Romans 5:9-10.

3.7 Conclusion

The intention in this chapter was to provide perspectives on 'The Socio-historical Situation

of Paul's Roman Audience'. For this purpose, I have drawn on insights from especially reading-related, socio-semiotic and socio-scientific studies.

On the one hand, socio-historical studies have shown that Romans must be understood in the context of Paul's purposes of expanding his mission activities in the West. For this to happen, and while he hoped to have the Roman church(es) as support, his writing aimed to not only introduce his views to the churches there, but also to socially facilitate unity between Gentile and Jewish Christianity, if not a closer co-operation and mutual understanding between Jew and Christian in Rome.

In order to come to an understanding of the socio-historical situation of Paul's Roman audience, the argument developed through four stages after the initial context of situation has been sketched: 1) whether there is any indication in Romans as to whether Paul advocated separation from the synagogue; 2) Paul's social location; 3) Ethnic issues in Romans; and 4) the social function of the doctrine of justification through faith.

On the first, it was found that Paul does indeed not advocate separation from the synagogue. The obverse is true, namely that, especially with Paul's universalised understanding, Jews still occupy the pre-eminent position in salvation history. This is also evident from the use of terms such as "Israel" in Romans, where, if Paul so wished, he could have had it have separationist impact on his message. Even so, with the gospel, all ethnic and religious divisions have been relativised in the face of God's salvation through Christ, opening up the possibility that no-one is excluded from the appeal of the gospel. This view is a far better articulation of Romans than what has been the case with notions of "Legalism" and related terminology as well as earlier Lutheran theology.

Secondly, these same sentiments are present in Paul's articulation of his own status and social location in the face of the gospel message. That it is true that Paul experienced a loss of status with his becoming a Christian has been argued. Even so, it has placed him in a different order of status, one conferred through the salvation brought about by Christ.

Thirdly, in order to untangle the ethnic-related issues in Romans, three perspectives from Romans have been provided: Paul's arguments on 1) the impartiality of God; 2) the priority of Israel; and 3) the distinctions between 'weak' and 'strong'. On the first, it was found that this move in Paul's argument prevents any one-sidedness which could be ascribed to him, because all ethnicity of whatever colour, creed or persuasion is relativised in the face of God's decisive impartiality whether concerning Jews or Gentiles. Secondly, even though Paul consistently argue for the priority of Israel, this priority is only due to God's consistent adherence to the promises to the patriarchs, the covenant and Israel. On this score, warning statements against people from Gentile background who would forward claims to the contrary, have been identified. Thirdly it has been shown that Paul's argument on "weak" and "strong" is not to be collapsed into the Jewish - Gentile binary.

Finally, the analysis of the social function and implications of the doctrine of justification has revealed that there is a decided social component to this notion in Romans, that it must be understood within the larger context of not only the context of situation, but also all the other elements with social under- and overtones in Romans. As such, this notion was not purely a doctrinal matter, but a social matter. It was also pointed out that Luther who gave this doctrine such a central place in his own theology - together with all the repercussions it had all over the world and throughout the last five centuries - functioned within his own social context as did Augustine, and as did Paul. Even so, it was pointed out that there are

also theological elements to this notion which prevents it from being collapsed into social gospel.

In general, we can then say that Romans does indeed have a strong social message, one which, if only looked at from doctrinal perspectives, remains hidden if not result in a distortion of not only Romans itself, but also Paul's own views.

In order to move closer to the more particular addressing of the topic of this thesis, the next chapter deals with the significance of "hope" not only in Romans itself but in especially Romans 5-8. It is in this nexus, where "hope", as it is to be articulated against the background of the argument in chapter 3, has to be understood.

CHAPTER 4

4 *"HOPE" in the Context of Romans 5-8*

4.1 *Introduction*

In a social context of strong anti-Jewish sentiments as advanced by Roman officialdom and as overviewed in chapter 3, it is understandable that one of the major social practices Paul wished to prevent is for Christians from Gentile backgrounds to participate in such views. That it must have existed is quite probable - for which alternative reason would Paul have made such a strong case for the Jewish roots onto which Christianity have been grafted? In this social context, the fact that hopelessness would be a central experience for Christians and Jews in Rome is not only possible, but, as will be argued in this chapter, beyond dispute - for why would Paul have "hope" play such a central part in Romans, if not to encourage perseverance in the face of even the most devastating opposition and suffering?

The focus of "hope" is specifically appropriate for the situation of the church and humankind in our world today. There are numerous incidents today which cause extensive feelings of dejection that signify the necessity for an authentic perspective of what "hope" actually is. We are continually threatened by wars, hunger, poverty, moral decline, desperation of drugs, alcohol and sexual abuse. These critical situations close the thought of the future and does not open it up – give hope. In the face of these gloomy situations, Christians can have a genuine attitude of "hope" because the ultimate closure, death, has been opened up in the resurrection of Jesus. Christians can display "hope" to our world. It is evident in the epistle to the Romans that Paul presents us with such a "hope". It is this "hope" that urgently needs to be heard and in the process become tangible.

In order to address this theme in Romans 5-8, then, the argument in this chapter provides seven perspectives. In the first place, a general overview of the prevalence of “hope” in Romans is provided. This is followed by a surface structural analysis of Romans 5:1-11 (Sentences 100-112) and an exegetical analysis of Romans 5:1-11. How Christian “hope” surpasses “hopelessness” in Romans 5:12-21 and the argument articulating Paul’s assurance that future “Hope” surpasses present sufferings in Romans 8 is then analysed. The fifth focus is on the “hope” of Christians in Romans 8:23-25, followed by an interpretation of Romans 8:28-30 and 8:31-39 in terms of the “Suffering Servant” or the “Righteous Servant/ One” in terms of Weinrich’s counter-determining context theorising of metaphor. Finally, an analysis of the social consequence of the power of the “cross” and the “resurrection” in Romans 4:24f and 5:1ff is provided.

The rationale for the perspectives in this chapter is five-fold.

- 1) The rationale for the first main perspective is that one needs a general mapping of the prevalence of “hope” in Romans;
- 2) that the next two sections, the surface structural analysis and exegetical analysis of Romans 5:1-11 provide focus to the main text used in the interpretation of the topic of this thesis;
- 3) the argument on how Christian “hope” surpasses “hopelessness” in Romans 5:12-21, the argument articulating Paul’s assurance that future “Hope” surpasses present sufferings in Romans 8 and the argument on the “hope” of Christians in Romans 8:23-25 articulate the main sentiments in Romans 5:1-11;

4) the interpretation of Romans 8:28-30 and 8:31-39 in terms of the “Suffering Servant” or the “Righteous Servant/ One” in terms of Weinrich’s counter-determining context theorising of metaphor reveals the intertextual meaning network, i.e. apart from that of the covenant and law;

5) an analysis of the social consequence of the power of the “cross” and the “resurrection” in Romans 4:24f and 5:1ff gives focus to the argument in its social significance.

4.2 *Hope in Romans*

The theme of “hope” has been of primary concern to the apostle Paul throughout all his letters. Intense investigation into the book of Romans discloses a striking highlighting of hopefulness. Especially Romans 1:18-15:13 engenders a hope-filled climax. The word for “hope” (ἐλπίς) occurs at several structurally significant places: Romans 4:18; 5:1-5; 8:20; 8:24-25; 12:12; and 15:12-13.

Romans 4:18

... hope he [Abraham] believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations; as he had been told, "So shall your descendants be."

Romans 5:2

... him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God.

Romans 5:4

... endurance produces character, and character produces hope,

Romans 5:5

... hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

Romans 8:20

... the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope;

Romans 8:24

... in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?

Romans 8:25

... if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Romans 12:12

... in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

The structural significance of these particular verses will become apparent in the course of this study. Consequently, it is obvious that Paul generates a conscious and a concerted attempt throughout the letter to the Romans in order to spark and magnify the “hope” of his Roman audience.

Throughout the centuries numerous scholars (see Michel 1978:385; Woshitz 1970-497-544; Loane 1968; Menezes 1979; Rische 1970) have recognized the relevance of the theme

of “hope” that permeates the whole letter to the Romans. According to Michel (1978:385) “the allusion to ‘hope’ permeates the entire letter to the Romans”. Woschitz (1979:497-544) focuses his study on the Greek word ἐλπίς as a “key-concept” in order to explicate the various important facets of this theme as found in Romans. However, it is evident that Woschitz (1979) does not pay attention to the expressions of “hopelessness” in Romans. The concept of “hopelessness” should be considered in order to obtain a complete perception of the interpretation and purpose of “hope” as it appears in the whole of Romans.

In order to come to full appreciation of the importance of “hope” in Romans, it is not only necessary to understand its significance as positive concept. One must also understand its negative counterparts, namely, “hopelessness” or “despair” (cf. Rom.1:18-32) and “overconfidence” or “presumption” (cf. Rom.2:1-16) in the face of practices counter to those put forward in covenant and Torah. These negative correlatives are dynamically associated with “hope”. “Hopelessness” or “despair” refer primarily to an absence or lack of authentic “hope”. We may portray it as the act or attitude in which there can be no expectation for God’s future because of the recognition and/ or experience of the human condition of sinfulness or separation from God. By “overconfidence” or “presumption” we refer to an attitude of confident expectation for the future based upon what one has or thinks he has accomplished. This, however, illustrates a false security for the future because it is ideally centered upon oneself. This is brought out by especially Paul’s criticisms of both Gentile and Jewish practices he criticises and which can be summarised in terms of his notion of the “flesh”.

According to Paul, all of humanity is ensnared by the awful destructive forces of

hopelessness (Rom.1:18-3:20). According to Romans 1:18-32, the “ungodly” exhibits a death-bringing despair (Rom.1:18-32) and the so-called “righteous” display a contemptuous overconfidence (Rom.2:1-16). For Paul, all have transgressed the Law of God and thus no one can adhere to even the slightest spark of “hope” before God.

With these introductory deliberations of “hope” and its counterparts, we will focus our investigation on the theme of “hope” (ἐλπίς) as it is highlighted in Romans 5:1-11 and Romans 8.

Romans 5:1-11 contains three occurrences of the word “hope” (ἐλπίς) and Romans 8:18-39 contains six occurrences of “hope” (ἐλπίς) and several of its synonyms.

4.3 *Structural Analysis of Romans 5:1-11 (Sentence 100-112)*

To meet the principles of a structural analysis it is necessary to provide a sentence specification of Romans 5:1-11. This necessitates a demarcation of the text into syntactic units. The text of Romans 5:1-11 will be demarcated into sentences using the rules of the “Aspects” model of linguistic theory (see Maartens 1989:3) which defines the sentence as a syntactic unit consisting of a noun phrase and verb phrase (S = NP VP). From now on, sentence numbers will be used when referring to a particular verse.

Inclusio

5·1 [100] Δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως εἰρήνην ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

5·2 [101] δι' οὗ καὶ τὴν προσαγωγὴν ἐσχήκαμεν [τῇ πίστει]

[101.1] εἰς τὴν χάριν ταύτην ἐν ᾗ ἐστήκαμεν

[102] καὶ καυχώμεθα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ.

The Plot or the Highpoint (Freytag 1863)

Joyous hope and suffering

5·3 [103] οὐ μόνον δε, ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμεθα ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν, εἰδότες ὅτι

[103.1] ἡ θλίψις ὑπομονὴν κατεργάζεται,

5·4 [103.2] ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ δοκιμὴν" κατεργάζεται

[103.3] ἡ δὲ δοκιμὴ ἐλπίδα" κατεργάζεται

5·5 [104] ἡ δὲ ἐλπίς οὐ κατασχύνει,

[104.1] ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς

καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν.

God's Love

5·6 [105] ἔτι γὰρ Χριστὸς ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν ἔτι κατὰ καιρὸν ὑπὲρ ἀσεβῶν ἀπέθανεν.

5·7 [106] μόλις γὰρ ὑπὲρ δικαίου τις ἀποθανεῖται·

[107] ὑπὲρ γὰρ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τάχα τις καὶ τολμᾷ ἀποθανεῖν·

5·8 [108] συνίστησιν δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην εἰς ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός, ὅτι ἔτι ἀμαρτωλῶν ὄντων ἡμῶν Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανεν.

Resurrection Power

5·9 [109] πολλῶ οὖν μᾶλλον δικαιωθέντες νῦν ἐν τῷ αἵματι

αὐτοῦ σωθησόμεθα δι' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς.

5·10 [110] εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ

διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ,

πολλῶ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέντες σωθησόμεθα ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ.

Inclusio

5·11 [111] οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν τῷ θεῷ

δια τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

δι' οὗ νῦν τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν.

4.31 *An Exegetical Analysis of Romans 5:1-11*

Romans 5 divides into two sections (5:1-11 and 5:12-21), on the evidence of both content and structural differences. Romans 5:1-11 employs first person plural forms to depict the common experience of all Christians, namely, *we* are justified; *we* rejoice; *we* were weak; Christ died for *us*, *we* were reconciled to God. Paul, in Romans 5:1-11 demonstrates the results of reconciliation by emphasizing the coming glory and the present “hope” during affliction. Paul designs his language to stimulate faithfulness by explaining what his Christian audience can expect in the future based on what they have received in the past. It is through the apostle’s distinct use of contrasts that he emphasizes the extent of God’s gift of justification. He stresses that Christians deserve nothing from God - all comes to humanity as a glorious gift from God.

Paul begins Romans 5 with a technique called *transitio*, which means a figure which

briefly recalls what has already been said (Romans 1:18-4:25: Paul's comment on justification), and likewise briefly sets forth what is to follow (Romans 5:1-11: the implications of the life lived by faith).

Romans 5:1-11, also as it picks up from Romans 4:23-35, anticipates the conclusion of the whole section of Romans 8:31-39 (discussed in 4.8). The central thrust may be stated as: if the creator God has acted in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on behalf of people who were then sinners - showing his love - he will certainly act again at the last to reveal his glory, now that they are already his people. These two sides form the complex of actual "hope" in the face of struggle and challenge.

Paul begins in Romans 5:1-11 by describing the new epoch in which believers have entered into - an age of righteousness (Rom.5:1,9), peace (Rom.5:1), the outpouring of God's love into believers' hearts through the Holy Spirit (Rom.5:5) and reconciliation (Rom.5:10-11). It is evident that Paul's use of these terms simultaneously characterises the eschatological "hope" of God's people. This "hope" recalls the biblical "hope" that God's wrath toward a disobedient Israel would end someday, resulting in the People of God receiving the covenantal promise of blessing. Paul consciously echoes this biblical motif by using appropriate language and the existing context to compare with the prophetic descriptions of the restored Israel according to the counter-determining contexts of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. These prophets constantly spoke of Israel's restoration period as a time of "peace" which was characterised by the presence of a new spirit (cf. Sentence 100).

In Romans 1-3 Paul explained that all people urgently need the grace of God expressed through Jesus Christ because all are guilty before God and deserve his wrath. In Romans

5:2 (Sentence **101**; **101.1** and **102**) Paul intensifies his message by creating a word play with the repetition of sounds in the verbs ἐσχήκαμεν and ἐστήκαμεν - present tense verbs - which form an alliteration. This implies a metaphorical imagery of “standing” in grace. For these verbs in Sentence **101**, ἐσχήκαμεν constitute the cause of salvation while the verb ἐστήκαμεν decides the consequences with regard to the “grace in which we now stand”. We also notice the use of the verb καυχώμεθα already in Sentence **102** which enhances the theme of joy mentioned in Sentence **103**.

The verb ἐσχήκαμεν in Sentence **101** is in the perfect indicative. Thus, according to the principle of relevance, the verb ἔχομεν in Sentence **100** also stands in the perfect indicative mood. The verb ἐστήκαμεν is also perfect indicative and also influences the indicative verb ἔχομεν in Sentence **100**.

In Sentence **102**, ἐλπίδι expands the noun πίστεω in Sentence **100**. Thus, ἐλπίδι adds semantic features of confident expectation to the noun πίστεω.

In Sentence **100** the expression “peace” points, in general, to the Jewish concept of “shalom” and the newness the justified believer now experiences (see Rom.3:23-26; 4:5-8,25). For Paul, this position of “peace with God” does not refer to a subjective/psychological state or a “peace of mind” which a believer may obtain. Rather, it refers to an objective association that God has generously granted this association or relationship, which is confirmed by faith between God and the ones who are justified. It is this “peace with God” that illustrates the reverse of previous ungodliness, unrighteousness and sinfulness which made all “enemies” and without peace with God. According Romans 4:24-25 this “peace” (Rom.5:1) believers enjoy, comes “through our Lord Jesus Christ”,

through his death and resurrection for our justification.

Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel speak of the period of Israel's history when "peace" was absent, and worse, when Israel's religious and kingly officials claimed peace, when there was none. see for instance:

Isaiah 57:21

... is no peace, says my God, for the wicked."

Isaiah 59:8

The way of peace they know not, and there is no justice in their paths; they have made their roads crooked, no one who goes in them knows peace.

Jeremiah 6:14

... have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace.

Jeremiah 8:11

... have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace.

Ezekiel 7:25

... anguish comes, they will seek peace, but there shall be none.

Ezekiel 13:10

... yea, because they have misled my people, saying, 'Peace,' when there is no peace; and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets daub it with whitewash;

Ezekiel 13:16

prophets of Israel who prophesied concerning Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for her, when there was no peace, says the Lord GOD.

Isaiah, Ezekiel and Malachai also speak of a restoration time when God will establish a "covenant of peace" with his people. See for instance:

Isaiah 54:10

... the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

Ezekiel 34:25

... will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts from the land, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

Ezekiel 37:26

... will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.

Malachai 2:5

... covenant with him was a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him, that he might fear; and he feared me, he stood in awe of my name.

Isaiah 32:17;48:18;60:17 implies that peace will reign during God's time of restoration because of the presence of righteousness.

Isaiah 32:17 - 18

... the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust for ever.

Isaiah 48:18

... that you had hearkened to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea;

Isaiah 60:17

... of bronze I will bring gold, and instead of iron I will bring silver; instead of wood, bronze, instead of stones, iron. I will make your overseers peace and your taskmasters righteousness.

Here, the presence of righteousness with peace are used to describe the eschatological period of "hope" but also the time that God's Spirit is poured out. The relating of peace, covenant and righteousness (or even Spirit-peace-righteousness - see Isa.32:15-17) is thus attested in the prophets. As such, especially as it relates to the covenant or the restoration of the covenant, it parallels the context of Romans 5:1-5. And, if hope is not attested in the

immediate contexts, these texts were to generate hope. Although we must be careful not to over emphasise the resemblance of both contexts, it is close enough to reveal that Paul conceived of the eschatological period to which believers now have access as the beginning of the final chapter in the biblical story of Israel. Thus, Romans 5:1-11 bears a strong similarity with the biblical interpretation of Israel's history.

In Sentence **101.1** "grace" is God's generous and courteous award of righteousness, forgiveness and reconciliation upon all those who believe.

In Sentence **102** Paul then redirects his thoughts from "standing" in God's grace to "boasting" in the "hope" of sharing the glory of God. This boasting has a remarkable practical purpose: it permits Christians to look at the complex circumstances of their lives not as setbacks but as aids to character building (see Romans 5:3-5). This extreme view of justification apart from human endeavours leads to a reorientation of how to respond to hardships and trials.

Paul heralds a Christian "boasting" which displaces and even supersedes former Jewish "boastings" (Rom.2:17,23; 3:27; 4:2). He strongly emphasizes that Christians who are justified by faith, now, enjoy a genuine and legitimate "boasting". Thus, the Christian "boasts" of the new perspective of "hope" for God's future salvation. The exhibition of God's salvific activity in the death and resurrection of Jesus for the justification, peace and grace of believers has prompted Christians to "boast" of their confident and secure "hope" of joining and sharing in the future "glory" of God. Not only do believers "boast" of their "hope" for the *future*, they also "boast" paradoxically in their *present* afflictions.

Sentences **100-102** and **112** establish an *inclusio* to form a chiasm. Thus the verb *καυχώμεθα* in Sentences **102** and **103** and the participle *καυχώμενοι* enhance the joy of reconciliation. “Justification” and “peace” (Sentence **100**) and “reconciliation” (Sentence **112**) are highlighted by the reiteration of the phrase *διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*.

Sentence **103**, *καυχώμεθα ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ* (“we rejoice in the glory of God”) and *καυχώμεθα ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν* (“we rejoice in suffering”) is an example of oxymoron. The contrast between “rejoicing” and “suffering” underscores the fact that God’s grace encompasses both glory and suffering.

Thus, “suffering” does not only embrace the distressing afflictions and persecutions that Christians encounter both externally and internally for the sake of their faith, but “suffering” also embraces the universal afflictions, miseries and torments that one regularly meets in all spheres of life.

How can these “sufferings” invoke the joy and delight implied by “boasting”? It is precisely this which perplexes the readers of Paul. However, this paradox is untangled by the real, lived experience of Christian “hope” as characterised through a rhetorical “*gradatio*” or a chain-like sequence of terms climbing to a dramatic climax. This rhetorical progression is a continuing repetition in which the last member of a syntactical group is repeated as the first member of the following group. This chain-like repetition emphatically raises the expression from one level to the next, and often, as in Romans 5:3-4, further explains the expression. According to Lausberg (1973:619), the “*gradatio*” (which the Greeks call *climax*) in Romans 5:3-4 (Sentences **103**, **103.1**, **103.2**, **103.3**) exemplifies the “*modus per incrementa*” in which the most stressed member of the series, in this case,

“hope”, is placed in the final emphatic position. Paul also uses *gradatio* in Romans 8:29-30 and Romans 10:14-15. By using such a paradox, Paul is revealing to his audience that when believers who have “hope” encounter sufferings, they experience that suffering produces for them an attitude of “steadfastness”, patient perseverance or endurance which vigorously withstands constant agony (see Rom.8:25; 12:12; 15:4-5). The verb *κατεργάζεται* in Sentence **103.2** and **103.3** is deleted, thus highlighting the nouns “perseverance, character, hope”. Thus Paul’s message is not only “theological”, but impacts on those Graeco-Roman perceptions, most prized in perceptions of human personality.

Consequently, Paul prompts his readers to remember that their suffering does not cause a loss of “hope” but rather a transformation from “hope” to patient steadfastness. There are several passages elsewhere in the Pauline writings where “steadfastness” is closely connected to and further describes the attitude of “hope” in the midst of opposition and suffering (see ICor.13:7; 2Cor.1:6-7; 6:4; 12:12; IThess.1:3).

Romans 5:3-5 paradoxically highlights “suffering” as a sign of “hope”: the present suffering of the people of the true God as they await their divine vindication. This is a Jewish theme which is now transferred through Jesus Christ, the Messiah to ALL of his people. This “hope” which emanates out of suffering is a sure “hope” since the love of God has been poured out in hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom.5:5). The inter-textual references for this “love of God” is found in Romans 5:6-10 and Romans 8:28 and ICorinthians 2:9;8:3. The counter-determining context is found in the fulfilment of the *Shema*. Now, in Christ and by the Spirit, the creator/ covenant God has created a people who in turn will return for redemption and love him sincerely from their hearts.

But, is Paul in Romans 8 really puzzling over why the believing community suffers? Hardly so. In Romans 8:17 Paul emphasizes that the community suffers because it is united with the crucified Christ in a world not yet redeemed. This community's sufferings are not unique since it shares in the painful groans of a creation that longs for redemption. Instead of exempting the believing community from suffering, the Spirit in fact intensifies its sense of unfaithfulness (Rom.8:23) and even turns its praying into "inarticulate groans" (NEB). Also, the sufferings of the believing community are distinct (Rom.8:28-39). Paul states that union with Christ inevitably subjects the believing community to the hostility of the unredeemed world. Thus, Paul writes of the incomparable love of God in Christ which sustains the believing community in the midst of their tribulations (Rom.8:36). Paul uses Psalms 44 as the counter-determining context.

This Psalm looks back to how God has cared for Israel of old, how it suffers in their current circumstances and how God does not intervene despite the fact that Israel has not strayed from dedication to her God. Whereas this lament signals a Job-like rebuke of God, this is not the case in Romans because the context is that of the all-surpassing love of God which has been finally revealed in Christ and from which not even the harshest tribulations or suffering can separate the believer.

In Sentence **103.2** and **103.3**, Paul further amplifies the progression: steadfastness, in turn, produces "proven character". In other words, we are placed in a state of having been tested and approved before God. Climactically, this "provedness" produces "hope". For Paul, Christians who have been tested and approved by steadfast suffering encounter a renewal and growth of "hope". Thus, the believer's suffering, instead of exterminating "hope", ultimately cultivates and revivifies Christian "hope". This is exactly why Christians can

audaciously “boast” even of sufferings since these sufferings actually encourage, revitalize and even increase the “hope” of which believers “boast”.

However, there is a caution not to misconstrue this rhetorical progression of “hope” as merely a subjective or a psychological process which may indicate that suffering might psychologically be the cause of “hope”. Rather, Paul presupposes the attitude of “hope” already in Romans 5:2 so that what he is portraying to his audience is an objective experience which is common to Christians as a result of their attitude of “hope”.

Sentences **101**; **101.1**; **102** and **103**; **103.1** illustrate the paradoxical growth of Christian “hope”. Each of the statements in Sentences **103.2** and **104.1** and **104** begins with “δέ” (polysyndeton). Both Sentence **103.2** and **103.3** rely on the verb *κατεργάζεται* (“works”) from Sentence **103.1**. Thus, instead of simply saying, “We boast in affliction because they build character”, Paul employs polysyndeton, and *gradatio* to formulate a string of statements that rhetorically builds to a climax.

Thus the attitude of Christian “hope” encompasses any and all possible sufferings one might encounter throughout this life. Of course, it is God himself who undergirds and sustains this “hope” of all Christians.

Sentence **104** highlights the climax in stating that this “hope” does not “shame” or embarrass or disgrace before the world and God. On the contrary, God himself supports and endorses the reliability of “hope” assuring the believers that their “hope” never becomes an empty or senseless attitude.

In Romans 5:3-5 (Sentences **103–104.1**) suffering itself is claimed as a sign of “hope”. The

present suffering of the people of the true God, as they await their divine vindication, is also a Jewish theme now transferred, via the Messiah, to all God's people. The "hope" that arises out of suffering is certain, because the love of God has been "poured out" in the believers' hearts by the Spirit.

Sentence **104.1** and Sentences **105-108** indicate that "love" is the agent of "hope that does not disappoint us". Sentence **104.1** mentions that God's love is bestowed upon the believers through the Holy Spirit. This divine love is contrasted in a chiasmic antithetical parallel. Paul emphatically assures the believers that God extravagantly "poured out" his love into their "hearts" or their innermost beings, through the Holy Spirit, "given" to Christians. By using the verb "poured" for love in Sentence **105.1** Paul metaphorically moves this word from its natural semantic domain in an effort to increase the distinctness of the expression. Although "to pour out" (ἐκκεῖν) occurs in Acts 2:17-18,33; 10:45 and Timothy 3:6 to describe the giving of the Holy Spirit, it is doubtful that Paul is merely using a standard form for expressing the gift of the Spirit in Romans 5:5 (see Sentence **105.1**). According to Cranfield (1975:262-63) ἐκκεῖν is more often used in the LXX for the pouring out of God's wrath (as it is nine times in Revelation). In Sirach 18:11 ἐκκεῖν indicates the pouring out of God's mercy, and in Malachai 3:10 it signals God's blessing. Thus, Paul most likely uses ἐκκεῖν in Sentence **105.1** metaphorically, as a means of indicating the lavish way in which God pours his love through the Spirit into his people. Bullinger (1968:890) calls the "pouring out of the Spirit" in Sentence **104.1** an instance of *anthropopatheia* ('the ascribing of human attributes etc., to God')."

Paul moves from his optimistic expression of "hope" based on the presence of the Spirit to a description of the unworthiness of people to receive God's gracious gift.

In Sentence **105** God proved his unconditional love for the believers in that while they were still hopelessly weak, ungodly and sinners (see Rom.3:9-20,23), Christ died for them. Paul crafts an elaborate antithesis in Romans 5:6-8 (see Sentences **106;107;108** and **109**), in order to emphasise the radical nature of Christ's death. Both the beginning and the end of this antithesis stress the undeserving condition of humanity when Christ gave his life for people. Intensifying the construction of the antithesis is the fourfold use of ὑπὲρ to introduce types of people, followed each time by a form of the verb ἀπέθανεν ("die").

Sentences **105-111** echo 2 Macc. 7:37f; 4 Macc. 17:20-22, namely, the death of Jesus has achieved what the martyrs had hoped to achieve, that is, the turning away of divine wrath from the people of God. Of course, in Romans, the community rescued by Jesus' death, is not the nation of Israel but the Jewish-plus-Gentile family as set out in Romans 3:21-4:25.

God's love is unconditional. This love is bestowed upon the believers through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. Sentences **105-108** elaborate the creative character of divine love. Syntagmatic foregrounding contrasts God's love and human love in a chiastic antithetical parallel.

The significance of ἀσθενῶν (our "weakness") forms a pun with the noun ἀσεβῶν (the "ungodly"). Both ἀσθενῶν and ἀσεβῶν illustrate alliteration. Both Sentences **106** and **107** form a synonymous parallel. Strictly speaking they form a coupling (Levin 1969:33). Thus Sentences **105-108** forms a double chiastic parallel or an inclusio.

Paul establishes his major points by stressing how doubtful it is that one person would die for another, even if the other were a very good person. "We", Paul says, were weak,

ungodly sinners when Christ died for all believers. This final sacrifice came not because of merit on the part of believers, but strictly as an expression of God's grace. Thus Paul dramatically enlarges the force of his point by placing side by side the contrasting descriptions of what people might do and what God has done. Bullinger (1968:696) maintains that Paul appears to have crafted the language of his contrast carefully in order to show the magnitude of God's love for and gracious gift towards the sinner. Bullinger (1968:696) calls Romans 5:8 (Sentence **109**) an example of *hyperbaton*: the words are out of the natural order to excite attention, since the Greek is: "But commends His own love to us - God". We notice that the nominative is put last, and the verb first, to emphasise both.

In Sentence **108** this abounding love of God perpetually underpins Christian "hope" for the future, based on the believers' present position before God because of what he has established through the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. The root of this love of God is evident in Sentences **109-110**.

Romans 5:9-10 (Sentences **109** and **110**) summarise the content of Romans 5:1-8, thus providing a brief *transitio*: In Sentences **109** and **110** Paul elevates the certainty of Christian "hope" by implementing a traditional Jewish argumentative device known as *qal wahomer*. This "how much more then" type of *qal wahomer* conclusion exemplifies the first exegetical rule of Rabbi Hillel (Heil 1987:27).

Thus beginning with another of his comparative phrases, "therefore how much more", Paul continues his thought from Romans 5:8 by referring again to Christ's death. Here, however, Paul does not repeat ἀπέθανεν ("die") but he uses the phrase "by his blood" which is equal in meaning. This technique, where one word is substituted for another, is

called *metonymy*. Thus Paul emphasizes here the sacrificial nature of Christ's death which results in justification of the sinner and salvation from God's wrath (Sentence 109). Thus Sentence 109 expresses future "hope" in terms of the more negative concept of being saved from God's future and final "wrath". Sentence 110 goes beyond this by expressing future "hope" in terms of the positive concept of being saved by the new "life" believers now share with the risen Lord. Thus the faithful are "justified" (Sentence 109) and "reconciled" *κατηλλάγημεν* (Sentence 110) by the death of Jesus.

In Sentence 110 *ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ* is the focus of the sentence. The resurrection power illustrated in Sentences 109-110 makes humankind aware of their future. It is precisely this love which God exhibits that actually creates "hope".

The repetition of "how much more" in Sentences 109 and 110 heightens the emotional content of the message: if Christ by his death did all of that for believers while all were still enemies of God, *just think how much more* his life implies for the believer now!

The emotional quality of Paul's words of Romans 5:10 (Sentence 110) is carried over to Romans 5:11 (Sentence 111), "And not only that, but also...!". This phrase Paul previously used in Romans 5:3 (see Sentence 103).

It is precisely God's reconciliation of sinners, which is part of his justification by faith, that actually sustains Christian "hope". "Now" that believers have graciously received reconciliation from God through the death of Jesus, the Christian positively "boasts" in *God himself* (see Sentence 111), who is the final goal of all of what is encapsulated in "hope", namely the "glory" of God.

Throughout Romans 5:1-11 Paul has energetically bragged about “*our hope*” as Christians. This emphasis on the first person plural (“our”) indicates “our” sure Christian “hope” for participating in God’s future salvation. This emphasis is meant to encourage further the assured “hope” that follows from the faith which the Christian shares with God (Rom.1:11-12) and all other Christians world-wide.

In Sentence **100** the mood of the verb ἔχομεν is coupled to the form of the verb ἐλάβομεν in Sentence **111**. Thus Paul affirms the joy, peace and reconciliation of the Roman community, which, despite their differences, they already have in God. Paul concludes Romans 5:1-11 by asserting that “we” (former enemies of God), may now boast because of the reconciliation received from Christ. This perspective contrasts with the sinful boasting in personal achievement that Paul condemns in Romans 3:27. Those who are weak, ungodly, sinful, enemies of God “boast” in what they have accomplished to earn their own righteousness. However, those who have been justified by faith in Christ boast in what God has accomplished for them. Consequently, on this note of confidence in God, Paul shifts into the next section of his argument which is a fascinating contrast between Christ and Adam.

Romans 5:1-11 forms a prologue to Romans 5-8. Thus Sentences **100-102** and Sentence **111** establish an *inclusio* in an ancient rhetorical style (Porter 1991:655-677). Thus Jesus is the mediator who facilitates “justification”; “peace” (Sentence **100**) and “reconciliation” (Sentence **111**). And, as already indicated above - and which will be elaborated on below - Romans 5:1-11 also links in a larger inclusion with Romans 8.

4.4 *Christian “Hope” surpasses “Hopelessness” (Romans 5:12-21)*

In Romans 5:1-11 (Sentences **100-111**) Paul proclaimed a vibrantly realistic “hope” that comes from being justified by faith. Now, Paul compares and contrasts this new situation of “hope” with that of “hopelessness” in Romans 5:12-21.

On the basis of Romans 3:21-4:25 it is evident that Paul announces that it is in Christ that Adam’s sin is finally dismantled. As in Romans 1, Paul confronts the universal first - that of Adam as the first human being - because it is on this universal level that his argument must ultimately make an impact on turning people to Christ but also transcending the Gentile - Jewish divide.

In Romans 5:15-17 Paul describes the ways in which Christ does more than Adam. Israel’s obedience/ faithfulness should have been the means of unfolding the problem of Adam’s sin which affected the whole of humanity (Rom.2:17-24;3:2f), but, it was the death of Christ which superseded both Adam’s obedience and Israel’s obedience. Thus, where Adam and Israel finished, Christ started. So, Paul says in Romans 5:17 that Christ came into the reign of death in order to re-instate the divinely intended reign of human beings. Consequently, the re-telling of the story of Adam throughout Romans 1-4 and in Romans 5:12-21, is a way of emphasizing that the fulfilment the believer seeks (despite tribulations) and the true human life, is only found in Christ Jesus and the hope that this effects. He is the climax of Jewish covenant history.

In Romans 5:12-21, Paul switches to third person plural forms to speak of the universal human experience of sin and death as a consequence of Adam’s sin (e.g. death spread to *all people*, *all people* sinned, condemnation for *all people*). Paul graphically depicts in

Romans 5:12-21 the effects of Adam's disobedience and Christ's obedience. Paul sequences together a series of five antitheses to establish Adams disobedience and Christ's obedience.

Romans 5:12 commences with "therefore", probably referring to the summary statement in Romans 5:9-11 or (more likely) to all of Romans 5:1-11. Thus, Paul uses *δια τούτο* as a means of calling to his audience's mind the previous content. A more striking link of Romans 5:12 to Romans 5:11 is the repetition of *δια*. According to many exegetes (see Cranfield 1975:272-73) Romans 5:12 begins a comparison that is not actually completed until Romans 5:18. According to Kirby (1987:284) Romans 5:12 is a rhetorical syllogism, a construction that Aristotle calls an enthymeme.

There is a chiasmic structure to this statement: Because of Adam, sin entered the world and brought death; likewise, death came to all men because all sinned. Thus, the blame lies not just on Adam but also on all of his descendants as well; death spread to all because all sinned. In Romans 5:13-14 Paul unfolds his explication of the history of sin and death in the world. Paul indicates that sin was certainly dominant in the world before the giving of the Law by Moses, but it was not reckoned against people because there was no law. By using a metaphor, Paul describes death as ruling as a king from Adam until Moses. This seems to reflect the case for universal human guilt which Paul develops in Romans 1-3. Thus in Romans 3:19-26, Paul mentions that although Gentiles do not have the Law of God, they are still guilty of sin on the basis of natural revelation and their doing what their consciences tell them not to do. Even, Jews are more guilty because they break God's law. Paul mentions that the law functions to intensify the sin of Adam (Rom.2:25-29;3:20 and 4:14f). But, whether Jew or Gentile, all stand condemned before God and in need of His

grace. Adam's sin was so universal that Paul announces Adam (the instigator for the "hope"-negating powers of sin and death) in Romans 5:14 as a type of the "one to come", the eschatological Adam, Christ who is the originator and mediator of a new "hope" for all. In rhetorical terms this is an instance of *antonomasia*, the substitution of a descriptive phrase for a proper name. After Paul draws his comparison between Adam and Christ, he contrasts them by employing rhetorical techniques that display the exceptional nature of the work of Christ over the universal destruction wrought by Adam's sin. Paul uses the "not as/so as" construction followed by the "much more" clauses (cf. Rom.5:9-10) to assert that God's gift of grace surpasses Adam's sin. The expression "the many" in Romans 5:15 is equivalent to "all men" in Romans 5:12. We may only surmise on whether this is merely a stylistic variation or an echo of the language of Isaiah 53:11 ("my servant [shall] make many to be accounted righteous; and shall bear their iniquities"), or even a rhetorical way of contrasting "the one" and "the many". Paul uses the superlatives "much more" and "abounded" to increase the striking sound of the accomplishment of the gracious gift. It is these emotionally-saturated words which increase the persuasive sound of Paul's argument. The motif of the "one" and the "many" continues in Romans 5:16-17 with an antithesis in Romans 5:16. In Romans 5:17, however, Paul repeats the devastating impact of Adam's sin by repeating his metaphor that death *rules* because of sin (cf. Rom.5:4). This awful situation is diminished in importance with Paul's contrast: "How much more those who have received the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will rule in life through the one, Jesus Christ". Paul concludes his juxtaposition of Adam and Christ with two beautifully balanced antitheses in Romans 5:18-19.

Romans 5:19 further explains Romans 5:18 whilst employing rhetorical antithesis. Thus Adam's disobedience caused "the many" (except Christ) to be sinners. Christ's obedience

will cause “the many” (i.e. those who believe) to be righteous. Thus “the many” in Romans 5:19a is not parallel to “the many” in 5:19b.

Romans 5:20 demonstrates that precisely where the hopeless power of sin decreased, the hopeful power of God’s grace “superabounded” and has thus overcome the power of sin and despair. Thus in the midst of the pervasive powers of sin and death we can manifest a certain “hope” for God’s future eternal life, a “hope” that abolishes and exceeds the dreadful “hopelessness” effected by sin and death.

Also evident in Romans 5:21 is the development in Romans of the theme of Christian “hope” for the “life” which is an essential consequence of God’s righteousness and justification by faith. It reaches a climax in Romans 5:21 with the emphatic expression “eternal life”.

Paul has strongly provoked his audience to the vital “hope” that is theirs even in the midst of the prevailing powers of sin and death. He dynamically pictures a confident Christian “hope” for God’s future eternal life, a “hope” that annihilates and surpasses the appalling despair brought about by the evil powers of death and sin.

Romans 5:12-21 functions both as the place where the “poetic sequence” or rhetorical intention of the letter is summed up and as the place where the underlying “narrative sequence” or theological sequence of Paul’s theology finds its most fundamental statement. Considering the “poetic sequence” or rhetorical intention of Paul, it seems Paul deliberately summed up Romans 5-8 in Romans 5:1-11 in order that, by thus assuming for a moment the conclusions he will reach by the end of Romans 8, he can offer a bird’s eye view of the

whole story. Paul retells the Adam story explicitly in Romans 5:12-21 indicating that true human life is to be found in Jesus Christ since He is the climax of not only the Jewish covenant story, but that of humanity.

Considering the narrative/ theological sequence of Romans 5:12-21, Paul's emphasis is on the story of the creator/ creation, of the covenant purpose of salvation, of the strange twist that this purpose of salvation has apparently included and of how that twist is finally restored. In the poetic/ rhetorical intention of Romans 5:12-21, Paul deliberately sums up Romans 5-8 and Romans 5:1-11 in order to reach his conclusion in Romans 8. He, thus, offers a bird eye's view of the entire story in order to develop specific aspects of the narrative in Romans 6-8. Paul's rhetorical and theological intention in Romans 5:12-21 is as follows: Adam's story is the story of all humanity, if not the pagan story (Rom.1:18-32). The end of this universal (pagan) story is death. Thus, those who do not worship the true God will share in the corruption of the order which they worship. Consequently, Paul retells the Adam story in Romans 5:12-21 in order to highlight that true human life and fulfilment is found only in Christ. For Paul, God's people are distinguished not by Torah but by the death and resurrection of Christ which is the great "hope" for Israel. In Romans 8:1-7 Paul vindicates the Torah through the action of God in Christ and the Spirit. In Romans 8:3f he emphasises that it was Jesus' death only which was able to condemn sin in the flesh, something which the Torah was unable to accomplish.

In the narrative sequence of his letter, Paul mentions that the Messiah took on the weight of Adam's sin which the Torah was unable to carry. This is the central significance which Paul attaches to Jesus Christ. Elsewhere, Paul is adamant that without the crucifixion of Christ there would be no renewal of the covenant (Gal.2:21). For Paul, the resurrection of

Christ is not merely the glorious destiny of God's people, but it is also the fulfilment of the highest Israelite expectation.

As such, the hopelessness which has prevailed since Adam but also within Jewish "obedience", has been superseded in the "rule" of grace. This rule of grace – which abounds more than sin and by implication, death (!) – is "through righteousness to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord".

4.5 *Assurance that Future "Hope" will Surpass Present Sufferings*

(Romans 8)

As we move from Romans 5 to 8, we notice that references to Israel are still a prominent feature in the argument. Paul makes reference again to "Spirit, peace, righteousness, heart, life". Also, there are more references to the "law" in Romans 8 than in Romans 5. In Romans 7, Paul emphasizes that the law was good and should have been obeyed. In Romans 8, Paul has his argument progress in that the eschatological era is one in which "the requirement of the law" is fulfilled in believers (Rom.8:4) who, because of the Spirit, are able to submit to it (Rom.8:7-9). In Romans 8:6-7 Paul alludes to the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26 (cf. Mal.2:5) to indicate that the time of God's favour has come. This interpretation derives from the fact Malachai 2:1ff is addressed to the priests, that it raises the issue of "blessings" and "curses" which go out from the priests (!) and not from the covenant, that it also raises the common prophetic critique of externalising dedication to God in "feasts" and then says that, in contrast to such practices, where the requirement was that glory to God should emanate from the "heart", the "covenant" with the priests (Levi), was "life and peace". In Romans 8:6, this phrase, "life and peace", captures the "mind of the Spirit" in the counter-determining context of the

covenant.

Further, Paul calls the believing community “the children of God” (Rom.8:14), the term used to describe God’s covenant people in Deuteronomy 14:1 and Hosea 1:10. Thus, the descriptions of “suffering” in Romans 8:35, must firstly be interpreted in the context of covenant disobedience. “Suffering” must then be understood in terms of the portraits of the sufferings of God’s disobedient people mentioned in Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26. But the sufferings which Paul and other believers experienced as the people of God is analogous to the suffering that the disobedient and un-restored Israel experienced because of their sins. Therefore, Paul asserts in a rhetorical question that suffering will not be able to separate the believers from Christ’s love. Paul uses the counter-determining context of Psalms 44 to explain the problem of a righteous but suffering community.

Romans 8:31-39 gathers up the themes of the entire letter thus far and distinguishes them in a good rhetorical way. The divine love which has been under argument ever since Romans 5:6-10 re-emerges as the major theme of the entire gospel. This is covenant love which was promised to Abraham and his family, a family now seen to be the world-wide people who benefit from Jesus’ death. Since it is the love of the creator covenant God, this love rests on His unbreakable promises. Thus, the language of the lawcourts and marriage contract merge in Romans 8:33-34,35-39. Both of them reveal a vital metaphorical aspect of the one basic truth, which can be expressed as “righteousness of God” and as “love of God”.

It is important to note that while Paul is celebrating Christian “hope” in Romans 8, he also engages himself in a brilliant rhetorical design. Thus it is no denial of this poetic or

rhetorical point to suggest that, in terms of the underlying narrative sequence or theological story of the Roman letter, Romans 8 stands out as one of Paul's greatest and most mature summaries of the gospel (Jewett 1995:55).

In Romans 8:18 Paul has strongly convinced his readers that God's future glory will exceed the sufferings Christians presently encounter. Paul emphasizes his conviction of "glory" over "suffering" in Romans 8:17,18. In Romans 8:19 Paul is very certain of "the coming glory to be revealed to us" that even creation itself has an "eager expectation" which actually "awaits" the future "revelation of the sons of God".

Creation's "eager expectation" and "awaiting" clarifies the eagerness of our Christian "hope" (see also ICor.1:7; Phil.1:20; 3:20; Gal.5:5). This "hope" of creation looks forward to the same future that Christians await, the "revelation of the sons of God", the future conclusion of the present position of Christian sonship as depicted in Romans 8:14-17.

According to Romans 8:20 creation eagerly anticipates and awaits God's future glory. In accordance with apocalyptic-eschatological thinking, creation had been subjected to "futility". This indicates that God predestined creation to future nothingness and a failure to accomplish its initial God-given intention, that is the "glory" for which it was begotten.

However, this brutal subjection was not creation's own achievement, but it transpired because "of the one who subjected it", which presumably alludes to Adam, who was the model of mankind. Adam's trespass permitted the power of sin to invade the world (see Gen.3:15-19). However, although creation was subjected to futility, this already raised future "*hope*" (Rom.8:20). In reality, then, creation has the eager "hope" that "*it will be*

freed” from its bondage to evil by joining in “the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Rom.8:21).

In the above references to Romans 8, Paul intends to promote the “hope” of his readers. He encourages them by emphasizing that Christian “hope” extends to and encompasses *even creation itself*!

The “groaning together” of all creation in Romans 8:22 symbolises the “hope” of creation in terms of longing to be released from present enslavement. This “groaning” of all creation is an expectant striving toward God’s future glory. Also, creation’s groaning is strengthened by its “being in travail together”. This is an expression of excruciating suffering as in the process of childbirth. According to the counter-determining contexts of the Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic traditions “birth pangs” allude to the sufferings out of which the messianic age is given birth. Thus, the “travailing together” of all creation is a present suffering which ultimately looks in “hope” to the future or final glory of God. On this basis, however, Paul admonishes his readers to understand that all of creation hopes. This “hope” is a kind of suffering in “hope”, a painful struggle for God’s irrevocable emancipation from hopelessness. Paul, thus, captivates his audience by affirming the immensity of the future glory of God in that *all* of creation from the past even *until now* “groan” and “travails” in the “hope” of God’s glory! (Rom.8:24,25,30).

4.6 *The “Hope” of Christians (Romans 8:23-25)*

After these more general observations, closer attention needs to be given to Romans 8:23-25 in the context of the topic of this thesis.

Along with creation, Christians who have the Spirit strive forward “in hope” of future sonship and redemption. In Romans 8:24 Paul describes the present and future goal of our “hope” as “hope that is seen is not hope”. So, if the goal of “hope” is something that can be seen, then it cannot be a genuine goal of the “hope” Christians can profess. For, the believers’ “hope” does not look forward to what is presently visible but to the future invisible hope of the arrival and final revelation of God’s Glory as Romans 5 has stated already. Thus, the true goal of “hope” is “what we do not see”, that is, the future, invisible glory of God. Christians can, thus, eagerly await what they do not see, “with steadfastness” and endure perseverance over and against the “sufferings of the present time” because the unseen, future glory of God for which they “hope” (Rom.8:25) will abundantly surpass any sufferings they presently encounter (Rom.8:18).

The context of “hope” in 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 closely approximates the idea of “hope” in Romans 8:18, 23-25, where Paul depicts the “hope” of Christians for the coming glory of God which will far exceed the present sufferings believers experience.

So, in Romans 8:26-27, Paul encourages his readers to pray in “hope” for God’s future and confirms their certain attainment of this “hope” in Romans 8:25.

After reassuring and encouraging his listeners toward the sure “hope” that all Christians can confidently claim, Paul returns in Romans 8:31-34 to the diatribe style with a bluntly rhetorical inquiry.

Romans 8:31 is the culmination of all that Paul has been saying in Romans 5-8. Paul confirms that God is totally on the side of the believer, since no-one can prevail “against

us". Believers have the irrefutable proof of how much God has done "for us" in giving them his own Son. Thus Paul asserts the uncompromising "hope" that therefore God surely *will give* believers - together with Christ, "all things" which climactically recapitulates all of Paul's previous expressions of the future goal of "hope" which he mentions in Romans 8:18-32.

Paul encourages his readers and all Christians to unite with his proclamation of this confident "hope".

4.7 *Weinrich's Counter-determining Context and the "Suffering Servant" or the "Righteous Servant/ One" in Romans 8:28-30 and 8:31-39*

So far, "hope" has been interpreted mainly in the counter-determining contexts of Covenant, law and also that of Adam and universal humanity. One other important counter-determining context, however, needs to be specified - that of the "Suffering Servant" as well as the "Righteous Servant/ One".

This section focuses on the different elements of hope as they are tied to notions of the "Suffering Servant" as well as the "Righteous Servant/ One". These elements together with intertextual references, provide semantic features in terms of which Romans 8:28-30 and 8:31-39 can be understood. That is, the semantic features can be attributed to these two notions separately, but also in terms of how they are combined as in this text.

4.71 *Romans 8:28-30*

Romans 8:28-30 must first be understood in the context of Romans 8:18-27. The section is introduced with reference to "the sufferings of the present time", which is contrasted to

“the coming glory to be revealed in us” (Rom 8:18). Then follows references to creation’s expectations, its subjection to vanity, hope for it too, to be freed from slavery and corruption to “the glory of the children of God”, and its own “groan” and “travail” (Rom.8:19-22). This is the context of the parallel between creation and the believers: suffering but also (future) glory.

Within suffering, however, and also because of the focus on (future) glory, we find the “hope” of creation as well as that of the believers. But, since this “hope” cannot be seen, the Spirit “pleads our case” and, knowing “the mind of the Spirit” with the Spirit interceding “according to God”, God accommodates the “hope” of the believers - a hope in what cannot be seen, and which could be weak (Rom.8:23-27).

Then follows Romans 8:28-30 with the verbs “call”-“foreknow”-“predestine” of which God is the subject and “love of God”, of which the believers are the subject. It culminates in a conforming “to the image of his Son” (εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ) - which is an image of suffering and death but also of vindication and resurrection captured in πρωτότοκον. Then follows the verbs “predestine”-“call”-“justify”-“glorify” with God as subject.

In Romans 8:28-30, Jesus is here the vindicated suffering servant - with a focus on εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ - and the triumphant righteous one - with a focus on πρωτότοκον. Since this is stated as “for him to be the firstborn among many brothers”, the image is also that of new community.

Within Romans, “Son” is used to indicate Davidic descent but most importantly, “the gospel concerning his [God’s] Son” (Rom.1:3). This gospel derives from the fact that

“Jesus Christ our Lord” was “designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ;” (Rom.1:4-6). Here “Son” indicates (power according to the Spirit of holiness) (resurrection) (mediator of grace) (the apostolic call to the nations [all] for obedience of faith in him).

In Romans 1:9, Paul says that he serves God “with my spirit in the gospel of his Son” and in Romans 5:10, reconciliation to God - and by implication, which is also a symbol of God’s all embracing love as stated earlier in Romans 5:8 - it is said, to come about “by the death of his Son” and even more, “now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life”, indicating resurrection. “Son” can then be said to be associated with (gospel) (reconciliation) (love), all mediated by Jesus’ (death) and (resurrection).

In comparison with the law, the “Son” is also the one sent to do what the law could not do. The sending of the “Son” is associated with the fact that he came “in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom.8:3). “Son” is here related to (being sent by God) (likened to sinful flesh/sin) (condemning of sin).

The “image” which Paul then has of the “Son”, is one that can be portrayed broadly in terms of (power according to the Spirit of holiness) (resurrection) (mediator of grace) (aimed at eliciting obedience of faith from all nations); (gospel) (reconciliation) (love), all mediated by Jesus’ (death) and (resurrection); (being sent by God) (likened to sinful flesh/sin) (condemning of sin in the flesh).

For the believer in tribulation, to conform to this image, means to, through faith, participate in God's achievement through his Son: (power according to the Spirit of holiness) (resurrection) (grace) (gospel) (reconciliation) (love), all mediated by Jesus' (death) and (resurrection); (being sent by God) (likened to sinful flesh/ sin) (condemning of sin in the flesh).

(Death) and (likened to sinful flesh/ sin) signal "suffering", and, because the Son has been sent by God, the image to conform to is that of the "Suffering Servant".

All the other semantic features which can be associated with the Son, are those of vindication and victory, derived primarily from the image of the "Righteous Servant/ One". These are: (power according to the Spirit of holiness) (resurrection) (grace) (gospel) (reconciliation) (love) (resurrection) (being sent by God) (condemning of sin in the flesh). It is this image - that of the "Righteous Servant/ One" - that the believer is called to conform to.

In addition to the parallels of the suffering of the believer and creation in Romans 8:21-27, we have here the parallel to the "Suffering Servant"; and parallel to the believers' and creation's "hope" in the "glory of God", the hope in vindication and triumph, derives from a conforming to the "Righteous Servant/ One". Placed together, these can indicate the complex, the "Suffering Righteous Servant/ One".

Among others, the counter-determining context or source realm of the "Suffering Righteous Servant/ One" - which in Romans is the target realm - is mainly found in Psalms 3, 6, 18, 27, 28, 30, 31, 42/43, 54, 56, 59, 80, 89 and 109. In these Psalms, the Psalmist

finds himself in a situation of suffering - due to enemy action - or distress, for example, the threat of death. In this situation, God as saviour is either called on or affirmed metaphorically as rock, shield or fortress. What is also central, is the affirmation of the righteous dedication to God. Often, God is also praised for his saving intervention and praised with joy. Central, however, remains the three focus areas: suffering - righteousness - vindication. The following semantic traits can be identified in general:

For suffering: (distress) (threat) (experience of injustice) (unjust enmity) (tribulation) (persecution) (famine) (nakedness) (peril) (sword) (affliction) (humiliation) (servitude).

For righteousness: (humility) (trustworthiness) (joy) (stability) (truth).

For being a servant: (dedication) (obedience) (faithfulness) (sonship) (covenantal election).

Salvation or hope for salvation: (deliverance) (vindication) (healing) (divine purpose) (glory) (honour) (judgement) (covenantal faithfulness)

A more detailed study - which is not the aim here, may reveal more semantic features. The main point, however, is that these are elements of the “Suffering Righteous Servant/ Son” which also play a role in Romans 8. As such, they not only play a role in Romans 8 as target realm, but also indicate that, communally, they indicate the fact that believers share such understanding, thereby creating community. In Romans 8:29, this is especially brought to the fore in the metonymically closer specification of εἰκόνας τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ with πρωτότοκος.

The reference to “first born” (πρωτότοκος) calls forth the question as to what this refers to.

In terms of the general cultural understanding of first-born, the first-born was the first-born son of the Israelite as in virtually all other Mediterranean cultures. The first-born not only

carried the hopes of the future of the father's family but also that of his clan and people. What is evident from this perspective, is that the first-born - as anthropologically evident from the Old Testament - was mainly associated with hope and future promise, prosperity or continuation of the lineage of the father. Concerning God's wrath and judgement, then, it was a severe calamity if the first-borns were destroyed as in terms of what happened to the Egyptians when Israel left Egypt. However, in Sirach 36:12, the first-born is equated too, to Israel.

Sirach 36:12

Have mercy, O Lord, upon the people called by thy name, upon Israel, whom thou hast likened to a first-born son.

In Romans 8:29, however, this indicates something of the first-born of a new creation or a new and vindicated community. In Collosians, the author also refers to first-born of both "creation" and "from the dead".

Colossians 1:15-18

He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities - all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent.

Since the context in Romans is also that of creation and of new community, one can interpret it in these senses too.

If the “suffering righteous servant” is the principle subject in Romans 8:18-30, then, communally, it is further specified by πρωτότοκος. In terms of the parallels of the suffering but also the hope of both the believers and creation, πρωτότοκος also signifies the firstborn not only of a new vindicated community but also, by implication, (a new) creation.

Thus the following semantic features best describe the πρωτότοκος: (sinless) (identification with corrupt creation) (identification with tribulation and suffering) (triumph) (death of old dispensation/ creation) (beginning of new dispensation/ creation) (redemption) (justification) (symbol of grace) (new community).

Thus the faithful ones are predestined to harmonise or conform with all the characteristics of the “suffering servant”, the “righteous one”, the “image of the Son” or the triumphant “first-born”.

4.72 Romans 8:31-39

Romans 8:31 begins with a rhetorical question. Psalms 118:6 (“with the Lord on my side I do not fear”) is the counter-determining context for Romans 8:31. The likeness of the servant as a triumphant first-born is further developed in Romans 8:31. Thus we have God as Shield, which means that nothing can rise up against the believer. Believers are convinced of this protection because of God’s unconditional love for humanity. The counter-determining context for this unqualified love is evident in Genesis 22:16 which describes the sacrifice of Isaac by his father Abraham. However, in Romans 8:31-39 Paul especially characterises the “suffering servant” in terms of victory and not distress. The believer has this sure “hope” that, since God is his/ her invincible end-time saviour, his/ her victory is guaranteed.

Romans 8:32-34 forms a parallel referring to the “suffering servant” and thus elevates Jesus as the end-time Mediator for all humanity.

Romans 8:35-38 also forms a parallel which refers to the “suffering servant” but elevates the faithful ones to live a triumphant Christian life. Thus, Romans 8:31-39 illustrates a double parallel:

Romans 8:31-34 basically represent the “suffering servant”. Romans 8:35-38 represents the faithful Christian community in Rome - who are characterised as “suffering servants”.

The implications of the chiasmic parallelism in Romans 8:32-34 is as follows:

Romans 8:31-32 (“He who did not spare his own Son but gave himself for us”) emphasizes the theme of “suffering” and “deliverance”. Both the verbs “he spared not” (ἐφείσατο) in Romans 8:31 and “he delivered” (παρέδωκεν) in Romans 8:32 are verbs evident in the counter-determining context of Genesis 22:16. The verb “but” (ἀλλὰ) in Romans 8:32 indicates a comparison which refers to the counter-determining context of Isaiah 53:12.

Romans 8:32, “How will he not also give us all things?” strengthens the unqualified love of the sacrificial death of Jesus already mentioned in Romans 5:6-8 (Sentences **105-108**).

The rhetorical question in Romans 8:33: “Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect ones?” finds its counter-determining context in Isaiah 50:8.

Also Romans 8:33 indicates that it is “God who justifies”; and “Who shall bring any

charge against God's elect?" "Who is to condemn?" (Romans 8:34) all allude to the context of the Isaiah 50:8.

Paul mentions in Romans 8:34 that it is "Jesus, who died and who resurrected and who is on the right hand of the father". Here, Jesus is typified as the already crowned end-time king. The counter-determining contexts for these images of Jesus as king allude to Psalms 110:1 and Psalms 80:18. These expressions of Jesus as a triumphant servant should have been very persuasive to the Roman community. Paul reminds them that even in their suffering they should be aware that Jesus who was also afflicted is and will be the end-time judge.

In Romans 8:35 the emphasis shifts from suffering to the vindication or exoneration of Jesus. Romans 8:35 begins with a rhetorical question: "Who will separate us from the love of God?", indicating the circumstances which threaten to separate the believing community from the love of God (cf. ICor.4:11, 2Cor.4:9 and Rom.2:9; 5:3). In Romans 8:36 Paul alludes to Psalms 43:23 which actually reinforces the theme of the "suffering servant". In Romans 8:37 the "suffering ones" in the persecuted Roman communities become victorious. The verb "we overconquer" (ὑπερνικώμεν) refers to the faithful community at Rome and identifies this faithful community with this victorious servant.

Romans 8:38 is a reply: "For I am sure that neither death nor life ..., will separate us from the love of God in Christ ...". According to Paul nothing will separate the faithful Christian from the love of God for the grace of God is freely available. It is evident from Romans 8:38 that the love of God triumphs over destruction while the grace of God defines a barrier for all the forces of evil as well as the force of death.

Thus the “hope” mentioned in Romans 8:31-39 is a “hope” to an alternate community - a suffering yet triumphant community.

Intertextuality presents a helpful medium to combine the semantic features of “the suffering righteous one” and the text of Romans 8:31-39. The semantic features which illustrate the “suffering righteous one” may be portrayed as follows:

(humiliation) (dishonour) (embarrassment) (disgrace) (indignity) (death) (resurrection)
(obedience) (acceptance) (submission) (faithfulness) (loyalty) (steadfastness) (exaltation)
(glory) (election) (trustworthy) (honesty) (vindication) (acquittal) (justification)
(exoneration) (substitutionary salvation) (vicarious suffering) (intercessory assistance)
(righteousness) (redemption) (emancipation) (salvation).

In comparison with Phillippians 2:4-11 - which also hints at the imagery of the “suffering righteous one” - there is one exception. In Phillippians 2:7 Jesus is distinguished from the “suffering righteous one”. Jesus supersedes the “suffering righteous one” and procures the qualities of the “suffering servant”. Consequently, the faithful believers are the “suffering righteous ones”. The semantic features of the “suffering righteous one” are also ascribed to the “Son of Man”. These references can be found in the following “suffering righteous” Psalms and other texts: Ps.3,5-7,18,22,26-28,89,110,118,142; Is.52:13-53:12; Wis. 2-5, 2 Macc 7; 4 Esdras 13.

It is significant to observe that in Romans 8:32-34, Paul hints at the imagery of the “suffering servant” and in Romans 8:36-39 he refers to the “suffering righteous one”. Thus in Romans 8:31-39 Paul associates the figure of the “suffering servant” with the figure of the “suffering righteous one”. The counter-determining context for this reference is Isaiah

52:13-53:12. Here, the two contexts of the “suffering righteous one” and “the suffering servant” harmonise. However, we observe in Philippians 2:4-11 “the suffering servant” reference alludes to Jesus exclusively. Here, Jesus moves outside the principles of the “suffering righteous one” to actually replace “the servant”.

4.8 *The Social Consequence of the Power of the “Cross” and the*

“Resurrection” in Romans 5:9-10 (Sentences 109-110)

The central element for the understanding of the social consequence of the power of the “cross”, is that of the expiation of sin for all people irrespective of race, colour or creed. For the “resurrection”, it is the same, with this added significance that it is especially the resurrection which made justification and therefore reconciliation with God, true. This is already stated in Romans 4:25 and provides the key to understanding Paul’s argument on “justification”. As gleaned from this verse, it appears that expiation is not Paul’s central concern in Romans 5-8 but that of justification as it derives from resurrection.

This view is confirmed by Elliott (1994:129) who says that, in writing the letter to the Romans, Paul was more concerned with the life-giving power unleashed by the death and resurrection of Jesus than with Christ’s death as an atoning sacrifice. However, Paul did not deny the expiatory significance of Jesus’ death.

The question, however, is as to the social significance of this perspective.

According to Barton (1982:14) the cross became the emblem of “reversal”. Consequently, the concepts of honour and shame were overturned. This notion is evident in Romans 8:32-34 (Sentences 502-506). This indicates that the notion of “reversal” as proposed by Barton

(1982:14) intensifies the fact that the resurrection and the justification it implies, takes away all prejudice - if God did all this, even gave his own son, then, so the text says, there can be no kind of charge or condemning of the believer, meaning to take away all kinds of “travail”, including diversification or social stratification among believers.

Similarly, in Romans 5:3-5 (Sentences **103-104.1**) it is likely that Paul is also hinting at a “reversal” of the readers’ motives: Our “suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character and character hope”. This resulted in the “reversal” of the rank of the ones who were considered “powerless” in Roman society. This is especially significant for those converts to Christianity in Rome who experienced uncertainty with regard to their social status with the Roman Empire and within the Roman church. According to Meeks (1982:268), distinguished members within the Pauline community experienced “high status inconsistency” or “low status crystallisation”. According to Barton (1982:14) Paul, himself was a victim of such “status inconsistency”. Paul, himself as a leader found himself in a position of authority and power. However, Barton (1982:14) recognises that Paul’s authority was restricted by the supremacy of the Church in Jerusalem and his own deficiencies. Paul’s experience with the resurrected Lord on the Damascus road placed him on the same level or even higher rank than the other leaders of Jerusalem. Thus, for the “powerless” and “women”, the cross and justification through resurrection, symbolised a status of power, prominence, importance, influence, authority and significance. How believers share in these realities and how they face up to their various sufferings and how they deal with these in faith - “suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character and character hope” - makes all equal. In contrast to the social categories of the Pauline era, the cross symbolises a standard base for the individual and the believing community as a whole.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ was the conclusive component for the establishment of the socio-cultural environment of the Christian community in Rome. According to Barton (1984:70) it was the resurrection of Jesus that clarified the powerful theodicy which supported the continuation of the Christian community after the death of Jesus on the Cross. For the Christian community in Rome, the encouraging factor for their stability as followers of Christ was their belief that the resurrection was a guarantee and a seal of the presence of Christ Jesus always. Barton (1982:70) argues sociologically that Jesus' transformation after his death was represented by his resurrection. It is this resurrection which is an epitome of the metamorphosis of the Christian community at Rome and which, especially in Romans 4:25, provides the key understanding to the whole of the Romans 5 - 8 complex.

Romans 4:25 says:

... who was delivered for our sins, and was raised for our justification.

The key element is not only that Jesus' death signals expiation from sins, but especially that it is "resurrection" which brought about "justification" or vindication - for both Jew and Gentile.

The radical vulnerability to which Paul calls the Christian believers is significant for ekklesia formation. This does not mean that Paul "merely founds another sect of the cross" (Hamerton-Kelly 1982:85-86). Thus, the congregations of the crucified and resurrected are established in a reality other than the sacred violence upon which human community is so often founded. According to Hamerton-Kelly (1982:86), "the antidote to sacred violence is identification with the victim". Thus, Paul in his apostolic activity deliberately takes his

stand with the victim. The church also is the “the body of the victim and so the target rather than the source of sacred violence” (Hamerton-Kelly 1982:68-71). There the churches’ participation in the rites, baptism and the Eucharist “are essentially rites of identification of the victim” (Hamerton-Kelly 1982:179-180), for baptism is a dying with Christ, specifically to the dominion of death (Romans 6) and the Eucharist is the “proclamation of the Lord’s death until he comes” (ICor.11:26).

Consequently, Paul’s exhortations are saturated with metaphorical allusions to aspects of baptism ritual. They may be represented with the following semantic features (nudity) (symbolic death) (rebirth as a child) (abolition of distinctions of roles and status). The **ekklesia** itself and not just the initiates during the period of their induction is supposed to be marked by the following features: (sacredness) (virtue) (reverence) (homogeneity) (unity) (love) (equality) (humility).

Paul envisioned the Christian experience “as living out of the non-violent life of the divine victim in the world of sacred violence” (Hamerton-Kelly 1982:69). Thus, according to Hamerton-Kelly (1982:69) the *ekklesia* is a “new community of non-acquisition and nonconflictual agape love”.

Given the fact that Paul’s letters do not outline a program of social transformation, is there any indication that the apostle’s rhetoric has any connection with the physical existence of socio-economic exploitation and oppression?

It is significant to observe that Paul was perfectly aware of the socio-economic exploitation and oppression which operated in the middle of an elaborate social grid of patron-client

relationships. Although, Paul accepts the patronage of those more closely his peers (Phoebe of Cenchrae in Romans 16:1-2) he refuses to submit to the patronage of the powerful in Corinth because the truth of the gospel is at stake.

Paul's congregations (with the exception of Corinth) were probably drawn from the ranks of small, independent artisans and merchants, people who "neither exploited the labour of others (outside their own families) to any extent nor were they exploited to any marked degree, but lived not far above subsistence level" forming a "kind of intermediate class, between exploiters and exploited" (Elliott 1994:202). Even so, sporadic persecutions such as under Claudius and later Nero and also due to cultural factors, people would still not be treated equally. Thus, for the powerless, the women and the Greco-Roman community, the cross and belief in the resurrection of Christ, was a very dynamic "source of power" for an identity reversal in contrast to the existing social stratification, which was prevalent.

Paul saw the events of the cross and the resurrection as revelation and as events which constitute a break in time. Whereas in Romans 1:17 Paul refers to the ongoing revelation in the proclamation of the gospel, in Romans 3:21 this revelation points to the specific act of Christ which ushered in the new aeon. For Paul this revelation of the cross and the resurrection of Christ covered past, present and future. In Romans 1:4;3:25 Paul focuses on the revelation of Christ's death and his resurrection. The focus in Romans 1:4 is unique in that the status of Jesus as Son of God with power is what is actually revealed, and the christophany to Paul of this Son of God constitutes a commission to bring about the obedience of faith among the Gentiles.

The resurrection of Jesus was an act of divine initiative which is central to the Gospel of

God. It is this gospel which Paul was compelled to preach (Rom.1:1-4). It is this same God who calls into existence an alternate global community of believers (Barton 1984:70). This crucified and risen Christ brought about “another world to live in”. This new world was instituted by the resurrection of Jesus as an “alternate community of believers” (Barton 1984:69). It is this resurrection which exonerates the continuation of the believers after the gruesome death of Jesus on the cross. For the believers, the transformation of Jesus through the resurrection was indicative of the modification of the Christian community. Thus the new community of believers justified their existence by the presence of the resurrected Jesus. This resulted in the emergence of a new religious order. Neyrey (1986:93) argues that the resurrection episode established the Christian community as a distinct socio-cultural group. Jesus now sets new standards for their old purity maps of people, places and time. It was this enthusiasm of the Resurrection of Christ which became the catalyst for Paul’s missionary endeavours among the Gentiles.

The resurrection caused a shift from the rule of the law (Rom.5:20-21; 6:14) to the rule of Grace of God. Through the grace of God a universal and plural society is created in contrast to the previous Jewish societies (Rom.2:1-4:25) and Greek societies (Rom.1:18ff). For the believers, the resurrection of Christ marks a new era. It is an eschatological event. This “hope” that “we will be raised” also is a driving force of the new community of believers.

4.9 *Conclusion*

It was shown that the central thrust of hope in Romans, may be stated as: if the creator God has acted in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on behalf of people who were then sinners - showing his love - he will certainly act again at the last to reveal his glory, now

that they are already his people. These two sides form the complex of actual “hope” in the face of struggle and challenge.

As shown in the *inclusio/transitio*, introducing the complex, Romans 5-8, “hope” is in the first place, then, determined by justification and by the “faith” in this justification, which has been brought about by God. Faith gives access to God’s act of justification, and if this is so, then it follows that not enmity but “peace” between the believer and God is the result. Moreover, it has been shown that this justification-faith link not only gives access to this “peace” but that it also gives access to God’s “grace”. Romans 5:1-2, then shows that the justification-peace-grace chain is accessed through faith. As such, the result is a “standing” in this grace, a “filling” up in rejoicing, and “boasting” “in hope of the glory of God”. The analogy is that, between the justification-peace-grace chain as a past act of God and a present experience of the believer through faith, present joy both arises from these past acts, opening up hope for the future in the face of the revelation of the “glory of God” (Rom.5:1-2). In the face of hardship from Roman officialdom, non-peace between Jew and Christian or Gentile and Jew as explicated in chapter 3, “hope” is then an attitude arising from a reality different from that which Christians face in actual life-experience.

If Romans 5:1-2 is the meaning-foundation of Paul’s whole argument in Romans 5-8, the justification-peace-grace chain as a past act of God and a present experience of the believer through faith, then, this also impacts on the attitude of the believer towards actual hardship. This is addressed in the “plot” and identifies another chain, again climaxing in “hope”. The attention here is not “theological” meaning but the realities which joyous suffering in hope cultivates in the believer: 1) “patience”; 2) “proven character” and 3) “hope”. “Hope” then is not only that which arises from the content or “what” of faith, but also how this “what”

impacts on the cultivation of three of the most prized attributes within Graeco-Roman culture - “patience”, “proven character” and “hope” (or an open attitude towards the future). In the “plot” here, there is also an added meaning argument chaining to the justification-peace-grace chain: “because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which was given to us”.

After having turned to the realities the believer has to face, the argument then further develops the theological frame: God’s love (of people in a sinful state) and the resurrection life with the *inclusio* putting “reconciliation” next to “peace” with which it started this section out.

Articulated with “hope”, it is this attitude in the present which not only arises from past acts of God through which his love was demonstrated - not least in the resurrection of Christ, but is also focused on the “glory of God” as part of the present joy in the face of hardship and challenge.

Further, this argument opens up the issue of “hopelessness” - sin and death which came about through Adam became universal, the paradox that the law was supposed to address this state of sin but in the end, because of its nature, made sin more. This is contrasted to the grace and gift of God in Jesus Christ which abounds much more in this single instance than in the single instance of the sin of Adam or even in the Law that came in “from the side” as it were. Rooted in the “grace” and “gift” of God - which opened up to “everlasting life” - hopelessness is replaced by hope (Rom.5:12-21). The argument above was that, as in Romans 1, Paul confronts the universal first - that of Adam as the first human being - because it is on this universal level that his argument must ultimately make an impact on

turning people to Christ but also transcending the Gentile - Jewish divide in Rome. However, he also addresses the issue of the law, but then again in its covenant context. Paul, then, retells the Adam story explicitly in Romans 5:12-21 indicating that true human life is to be found in Jesus Christ since He is the climax of not only the Jewish covenant story, but that of what we may call, God's covenant with humanity.

Romans 8 interprets the gift of the Spirit of God in the counter-determining context of the law's function within covenant context. The main point is that the "life and peace" that the covenant promised has not been fulfilled, and that the prophetic critique is the proof. However, because of the death and resurrection of Christ as well as the outpouring of the Spirit, the covenant's promises has been fulfilled, making its promises of "life and peace" a reality. However, this is so only for the covenant's "children of God" and - because Paul also addresses people who come from non-Jewish backgrounds, to those who are "heirs" or who have been "adopted" into the covenant. Such "adoption", however, comes about because it rests on Paul's "creation" argument - already started in Romans 1 and carried through especially in Romans 5:12-21 in his comparison of Adam and Christ. Paul's comparison then is that not only human beings are afflicted and suffer, but that all creation also look forward to God's final and ultimate redemption. This is followed by the encapsulating Romans 8:31-39 where God's love stands supreme and nothing of any kind can separate the believer from this healing and divine love - a love into which the believer has been drawn through the death and resurrection of Christ but also the outpouring of God's spirit. It is this fact that Paul then expounds as being the foundation of "hope". Moreover, this "hope" is not only a "hope" from those within the covenant - Israel - which have turned to God through Christ, but a "hope" shared with all creation. Along with creation, Christians who have the Spirit, who are "sons" or "heirs" of the covenant, strive

forward “in hope” of future redemption - the sharing of the “glory of God”. As Romans 8:24 says, this is both a present and future goal of “hope” as “hope” that is not seen.

Up to this point, “hope” has been interpreted mainly in the counter-determining context of Covenant, law and also that of Adam and universal humanity. One other important counter-determining context, however, has been identified - that of the “Suffering Servant” as well as the “Righteous Servant/ One”. With reference to the conforming “to the image of his Son” (εἰκόνας τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ) - which is an image of suffering and death but also of vindication, it has been shown that this latter notion is further strengthened by πρωτότοκον. Concerning Romans 8:28-30, it has been shown that the main counter-determining features of the “Suffering Servant” and “Righteous Servant/ One” are as follows:

For suffering: (distress) (threat) (experience of injustice) (unjust enmity) (tribulation) (persecution) (famine) (nakedness) (peril) (sword) (affliction) (humiliation) (servitude).

For righteousness: (humility) (trustworthiness) (joy) (stability) (truth).

For being a servant: (dedication) (obedience) (faithfulness) (sonship) (covenantal election).

Salvation or hope for salvation: (deliverance) (vindication) (healing) (divine purpose) (glory) (honour) (judgement) (covenantal faithfulness)

For Romans 8:31-39, it was shown to be:

(humiliation) (dishonour) (embarrassment) (disgrace) (indignity) (death) (resurrection) (obedience) (acceptance) (submission) (faithfulness) (loyalty) (steadfastness) (exaltation) (glory) (election) (trustworthy) (honesty) (vindication) (acquittal) (justification) (exoneration) (substitutionary salvation) (vicarious suffering) (intercessory assistance)

(righteousness) (redemption) (emancipation) (salvation).

The central element for the understanding of the social consequence of the power of the “cross”, is that of the expiation of sin for all people irrespective of race, colour or creed. For the “resurrection”, it is the same, with this added significance that it is especially the resurrection which made justification and therefore reconciliation with God, true. This is already stated in Romans 4:25 and provides the key to understanding Paul’s argument on “justification”. As gleaned from this verse, it appears that expiation is not Paul’s central concern in Romans 5-8 but that of justification as it derives from resurrection. Moreover, it is the “hope” which is founded on this fact, which means that, socially speaking all believers are equal. As such, it is the belief in the resurrection which not only inaugurated a new creation and aeon, but also a new community of equals where love and service rule. If the cross signals equal access to the expiation of the death of Christ, the resurrection signals equal justification and therefore, as Romans 5 starts out, a new dispensation of peace, faith and joy. Confronted with suffering, it is the hope derived from this reality but also the hope in the future revelation of God’s glory, that (both) believing community (and creation more generally and universally speaking), can live as suffering righteous servants. As such, it is the resurrection and Jesus as πρωτότοκος which have introduced this new community as a distinct socio-cultural group.

The resurrection caused a shift from the rule of the law (Rom.5:20-21; 6:14) to the rule of Grace of God. Through the grace of God a universal and plural society is created in contrast to the previous Jewish societies (Rom.2:1-4:25) and Greek societies (Rom.1:18ff). For the believers, the resurrection of Christ marks a new era. It is an eschatological event. This “hope” that “we will be raised” also is a driving force of the new community of

believers.

“Hope is then not merely a subjective or a psychological process which may indicate that suffering might psychologically be the cause of “hope”. Rather, Paul presupposes the attitude of “hope” already in Romans 5:2 so that what he is portraying to his audience is an objective experience which is common to Christians as a result of their attitude of “hope”.

In Chapter 5, the function of Romans 5 in the argument of Romans 1-8 will be outlined using the model of Freytag (1863).

CHAPTER 5

5 *The Function of Romans 5 in the Argument of*

Romans 1-8

5.1 *Introduction*

Freytag's (1863) pyramid will be used as a heuristic device to discover the developing argument of Romans 1-8 and the function that Romans 5 executes in this structure.

5.2 *Structural Outline of Romans 1-8*

The book of Romans is divided into three parts: chapters 1-8, 9-11 and 12-16. Special emphasis will be on Romans 1:16-8:39 which comprises a major unit of the book of Romans. Within Romans 1-8, chapter 5 has caused the most problems regarding its place in Paul's argument. According to Cranfield (1988:vii-ix), scholars are undecided whether Romans 5 belongs to chapters 1-4 or with chapters 6-8 of the book of Romans. Cranfield demarcates Romans as chapters 1-4 and 5-8 while Dunn outlines Romans as chapters 1-5 and 6-8 (see Cranfield 1991:300-303). This, however, is an unresolved debate and the arguments are many and variegated. However, one of the traditional ways of outlining Romans is to specify that Romans 1-5 is concerned with justification while Romans 6-8 is concerned with sanctification or life in the Spirit.

Kaye (1979:150) identifies Romans 5 as a convergence point for many of the themes in the book of Romans and also that Romans 5 uses some vocabulary not regularly found in Romans or in the other Pauline letters. Romans 5 highlights the language of reconciliation. This vocabulary will become clear when Freytag's pyramid is applied to

Romans 1-8. It will become evident in this chapter that Romans 5 falls in the center of Romans 1-8 not only forming a center point of the book of Romans but also the conceptual climax or the turning point of the argument in Romans 1-8. The main focus of Romans 5 is the discussion of reconciliation. According to Martin (1990:1-6) many scholars argue that reconciliation is the center of Pauline theology and thought. I will not argue that reconciliation forms the center of the whole of Pauline theology but highlight the fact that the concept of reconciliation forms the climax of the argument in Romans 1-8.

5.21 *The Inciting Moment: Romans 1:16-17*

Romans 1:16-17 forms the first stage of what Freytag's pyramid describes as the "inciting moment" of the motivating event, words or situation (Freytag 1863). According to Fitzmyer (1993:253), it is traditional for commentators of virtually every stripe to consider Romans 1:16-17 as constituting a "theme" statement. Thus it is evident that the major subjects of Romans 1-8 are alluded to in Romans 1:16-17. Paul alludes to the content of the gospel, salvation, faith and belief, the righteousness of God, life, the relationship of Jews and Gentiles, and the role of proofs (i.e. the function of Old Testament quotations).

For Freytag, these initial motivating statements enforce further exemplification of what is presented in the opening scene. Romans 1:16-17 is a fundamental progression to Paul's thought regarding the gospel of which he is not ashamed. Paul uses litotes to highlight this progression. Thus Romans 1:16-17 and Romans 1-8 are in essence an exposition of Paul's gospel. This progression commences with Paul's recognition of the reciprocity of salvation and the human response of faith that includes both Jews and Gentiles.

According to Hays (1989:36-41) God reveals his righteous character (subjective genitive or genitive of origin) in the revelation of faith supported by a climactic quotation from Habakkuk 2:4: it is the one who is righteous or of legal right-standing before God by his faith who can expect to live, that is, have salvation in its entirety.

Thus two terms warrant special attention: Δικαιῶ (denotes the one who is justified or made righteous by God); ζῆσεται and its relationship to salvation. Salvation, according to Romans 1: 16b for Paul is an inclusive term which encircles life in the now and the future. Thus Paul emphasises the capability of God to effect salvation and he defines it in terms of God revealing his righteous character in faith. This theme is supported by the quotation from Habakkuk 2:4 which states that the righteous one can expect to live in the sense of divine acceptance and final salvation. Paul uses the language of reconciliation as a pivotal term to unite the forensic/ legal dimension of justification with the personal dimension of living the Christian life.

5.22 *The Rising Action: Romans 1:18-4:25*

This stage, for Freytag (1863:108-11) requires a heightening of anxiety through the intensifying tangle or complication of the plot or argument. Paul highlights such a tension in Romans 1:18-4:25. Here Paul concentrates on legal issues especially the violation of “law” by all humanity in view of God’s impartial divine character (Bassler 1982:121-70). Paul utilises the diatribe to communicate his highly condemning rhetoric on human behaviour. Recently there has been much debate around diatribe (Porter 1991:656-61), especially whether it qualifies as a literary genre or not. Evidently, diatribe creates a rhetorical pattern, which consists of the interplay between assertions and questions. Paul ingeniously utilises this rhetorical attitude throughout the book of

Romans.

In the first subsection of Romans 1:18-2:11 Paul is concerned with how humanity from its earliest times got to its present condition. Paul states that human beings have failed to honour God despite the knowledge of God revealing himself through creation. Consequently, God has given humanity up to various forms of idolatrous practices and beliefs. This is a universal condemnation. In laying out this legal context Paul uses the third person and then supplants the second person in Romans 2:1-5 in a striking manner to point at his listeners (“you”).

Following this assertion, Paul employs a series of rhetorical questions using direct address in the vocative case. Now the condemnation which was universal is converged on Paul’s audience, the Jews and Gentiles. The foundation of God’s condemnation for humanity according to Paul is the righteousness of God. Paul is now forced to switch back to the third person specifying that it is God who will render just judgement on all humanity and this includes the Jews and Gentiles (Romans 2:6-11).

In the second subsection of Romans 2:12-3:20 the issue of the law is presented by Paul. Paul emphasises that anyone who is disobedient to the law stands condemned by it. This issue of the law has been a center of many scholarly debates (see Moo 1991:144-145). Three important factors need to be highlighted at this juncture. Firstly, Paul is here thinking dichotomously throughout this section. He distinguishes God from humanity, obedient from disobedient human beings, humanity with and without the law. In so doing, Paul draws a conclusion with regard to each category.

Secondly, Romans employs intentional hyperbole or exaggeration. Paul highlights here the extreme repercussions of sin in his all-inclusive statements of blame (Rom.2:12,21-24).

Thirdly, regarding those who do not have law, Paul says that they become a law to themselves and they exhibit the work of the law written in their hearts, with their *consciences* bearing witness (Rom.2; 14-15). This fact does not mean that such persons replace their conscience for the work of Christ (Moo 1991:144-45) but it resonates with similar views in Greek literature.

Nevertheless, the question of the place of the Jews becomes highly significant here. It is evident that in Romans 2:17-19 Paul employs the diatribal procedures of the second person entreaty and eloquent rhetorical questions to distinctly address the Jews as comrades in his argument. Consequently, Paul denounces Judaism at the juncture where they thought that they were most securely selected, namely, possessing the law and directing others. Paul denounces the Jews as blaspheming because they broke the law. Even their most characteristic custom of circumcision Paul discards as hypocritical. For Paul, circumcision is of the heart, by the spirit and not by letter (Rom.2: 29).

Paul's conversational partner poses more questions in Romans 3:1-18. Paul cleverly uses this opportunity to rectify several misunderstandings regarding the Jews and the character of God. Paul indexes the peculiarities of the Jews and highlights the fact that the Jews have been commissioned with the oracles of God (Rom.3: 2). It is important to underscore that for Paul the unbelief of the Jews does not reflect on God's righteousness. For Paul, human righteousness demonstrates God's righteousness. The counter-

determining context Paul uses to illustrate this is endorsed by extensive quotations of the Old Testament (Rom.3:10-18). In Romans 3:19-20 the conclusion is that justification or the right relationship with God as judge, cannot be accomplished by obedience to the law. Paul establishes the “legal” position of all humanity before God and permits no defense to any group, especially the Jew who maintains the false assumption that possessing the law constitutes for them a status of privilege. Paul convincingly defends the legality of God’s actions. The plot, to use Freytag’s model, cannot get more uncompromising and elaborate than this.

In the third subsection of Romans 1-4, 3:21-4:25, Paul demonstrates the legal solution to the human predicament. The focus is on the fact that all have sinned and defaced the image of God (Rom.3: 23). According to Paul, only through faith in Jesus Christ can one’s proper status before God be determined. God gives this status as a gift in all graciousness (Rom.3: 24). In Romans 3:21 Paul utilises irony to emphasise that a right standing with God is recognised apart from the law just as the law and prophets attested. In Romans 3:27-42 Paul converses with his imaginary partner in order to explain his discussion. Paul reiterates the assertion that justification is by faith (Rom.3:30) which prompts the truth that God is the God of the Jews as well as the Gentiles. This, however, does not annul the law but authenticates or justifies the law (Rom.3:31). In order for Paul to validate this legal situation he appeals to a very significant Old Testament person, Abraham (Rom.4:3-25). This is an example of a standard convention in Greek rhetoric (called an *exemplum* or paradigm). Thus, Paul uses Abraham to verify the notion that there is a reliable precedent for his allegation about justification and its relation to faith, because Abraham himself is the paradigmatic example.

5.23 *The Climax: Romans 5*

According to Freytag (1863:111-114) the climax or high point to the development of the plot indicates the place where the consequential crisis in the action happens. Here, something highly significant is said or done that causes a decisive shift or crisis which ultimately brings the reader's attention to the point of highest interest and involvement. This enables the author to begin to cancel the complications created and to advance toward resolution. The climax gives the dramatic pyramid its conceptual shape (Freytag :111-14). According to Elliott (1990:226), "Romans 5 is the pivot on which the letter's argument turns".

In the opening theme of Romans 1:16-17 Paul propounds that he resolves to deal with the complex relationship between God and all humanity including Jews and Greeks encompassing both their legal and personal status, including how one is to live in the new "justified" state brought about by the advent of the gospel. In Romans 5, the climax, Paul uncovers and advances the metaphor of reconciliation. Reconciliation transcends mere legal standing - to invoke language of public legal *and* personal spheres. Although this is inclusive of legal status it also incorporates a personal element. Thus Paul provides the basis for life in the Spirit.

5.24 *Falling Action: Romans 6-7*

According to Freytag (1863:114-16), this stage of action is concerned with what occurs after the climax and before the resolution. This stage also reflects how the course of events falls into place in view of the consequence of the climax. Once a person has been reconciled to God, he/she moves into a new realm of existence. Romans 6-8 details this realm of existence. Traditional commentators have labeled Romans 6-8 as a section

concerned with “sanctification”. This for Paul means the life of the Christian who has been reconciled and now lives in the realm of the Spirit’s authority. One must be careful not to mean that Paul believed that the Christian is now destined to a life of sinlessness. In actual fact, Paul in Romans 6-7 addresses the conflict intrinsic to the life of reconciled believers who find themselves still subject to the powers sin.

In Romans 1-4 Paul used the third person predominantly with occasional use of the second person when challenged with his interlocutor. Here in Romans 6-7 Paul makes repeated use of the first person in the singular and the plural. Paul uses the following different experiences from Christ’s life as emblematic of shared Christian experience: baptism (Rom.6:3), death (Rom.6:4,5,8,11), burial (Rom.6:4), crucifixion (Rom.6:6) and resurrection (Rom.6:5). Paul uses these experiences to highlight that Christians now “live” with Christ (Rom.6:8,11) reflecting on Romans 1:17. The notable events of Christ’s life structures and serve as emblematic guidelines for the life of the believer.

Considering that Paul mentions in Romans 3 that the sinner still lives in the realm of sin, Romans 6 announces that the sinner lives in the realm of grace since he has been liberated from the slavery of sin. Paul inflates his imagery employing “slave” terminology (Rom.6:22). To further amplify this imagery Paul utilises the analogy of marriage (Rom.7:1-3).

In Romans 7:13-25 Paul employs a striking feature of dualism, which reflects a common link with Greek thinking of the time. The predicament for Paul is that the realisation of the earthly outward existence is still in the world or the flesh, which is subordinate to the influence of evil and sin. His spiritual (and mental) inward experience is in the realm of

the Spirit, which is not subordinate to the influence of evil but is subordinate to God. The shift in tense from the aorist to the present signals a shift in focus and immediacy representing the Christian's ongoing struggle which Paul has already experienced himself.

5.25 **Resolution: Romans 8**

According to Freytag (1863:118-20) the resolution ties together the major threads of the sequence of thought and events. For Freytag (1963:119), the objective of the writer is to occasion an appropriate resolution in keeping with the depth of the proceeding action. Paul makes such a conclusion in Romans 8. Two statements regarding the rewards of one's life in Christ are highlighted.

In Romans 8:1-17 Paul reiterates in the third person: what the law could not explicitly do, God did by sending his son. The inclusiveness of this statement must be emphasised: the re-establishment of one's relationship with God in all its fullness. This is what Paul meant by the life in the Spirit. Life in the Spirit involves more than a legal standing before God; it is all that the relationship implies.

In Romans 8:18-39 Paul outlines a continuity between the believer's present condition and the future eschatological hope. This places Christian existence within a wider context of what it actually means to have "life". Thus Romans 8:19-25 forms an *inclusio* with Romans 1:18-32. Paul recants the situation that initially established the human predicament, namely, the subjection to creation of which humanity is part. Paul then traces the course of Christian existence from predestination to calling to justification to glorification (Rom.8: 30). This passage and its amplification in Romans 8:31-39 is a

projection of Romans 5:1-11. This conclusion is an echo to the major stimulus of Paul's argument concerning reconciliation as the central descriptive designation for the Christian encounter. It is self-evident that Paul uses intimate expressions to indicate a relationship between human beings and God that is a prototype of the loving relationship between God and his son, Jesus.

5.26 *Romans 5:1-11 and 8:31-39 and the Concept of Reconciliation*

The concept of reconciliation reflects the nature of the relationship portrayed in Romans 8. The actual word for reconciliation is not used in Romans 8. There is a climactic use of reconciliation in Romans 5. The verb καταλλάσσω is a word for exchange – indicative of material exchange, or the exchange of money for goods. However, a more significant usage of this verb is its usage as treaty language. Thus, as treaty language, καταλλάσσω is used of legal-personal relationships where one party has bitterness toward another. This antagonism is overcome and peaceful associations are reinstated.

It is the offender who is expected to seek reconciliation (cf. 2 Cor.5:18,19). As Paul has shown at length in his letters and also in Romans, the human being cannot be reconciled to God. Paul believed that God performed reconciliation *through* the work of Jesus Christ. This inverted the social structure of the treaty.

Paul utilised the same vocabulary throughout Romans. In Romans 1:18-3:20, Paul illustrates the sinful condition of humanity and argues that justification brings about a solution to this sin problem (Rom.3:21-4:25). Following on Romans 4:24f, in Romans 5:1, Paul illustrates the dynamics of justification which came through the resurrection. It is, he argues, through "faith" in this justification, that the believer come into a condition

of “peace” - that God and humanity is reconciled. Paul utilises the subjunctive mood. It is important to note that the subjunctive mood is commonly found in diatribe as a means of exhorting one’s interlocutor to accept the teaching that is being proposed. Peace with God alludes to reconciliation. Reconciliation is a condition that assumes justification and yet it is large enough to encompass both the legal and relational dimensions. The magnitude of reconciliation is further mirrored in the progression of Romans 5:3-5 which stretches far beyond the appalling human condition (Rom.1:18-3:20) through to glorification or eschatological hope (Rom.8:18-39).

The “love of God” is highlighted twice in this progression. Paul emphatically utilises relational terminology whilst referring to the legal domain of God’s activity. Paul projects that, once a person’s legal problems are resolved, then, personal bonds can be restored.

In Romans 5:9-11 Paul uses parallels to highlight the climax of his argument. The assumption is that there was enmity between God and humanity, and that all humanity was subject to the wrath of God. This has now been replaced by “peace” as Romans 5:1 says. And, this “peace” or “reconciliation” came about through having been “justified now by his blood” and the “death of his Son” (Rom 5:9f). Having acquired this reconciliation, then, even more, the believer shall “be saved by the [resurrection] life” - which again is occasion for joy. This is the context within which “hope” functions - despite suffering and inside tribulation and opposition.

5.3 Conclusion

Freytag’s pyramid then gives us one interpretative tool to determine how Romans 5 fits

in with Paul's larger situation.

Firstly, Paul foregrounds the language of reconciliation by creating a conceptual realm of hostility which is exchanged for a peaceful relationship. In Romans 1:18, Paul refers to the wrath of God which refers to divine hostility. Paul further elaborates that the relationship between God and human beings is that of being enemies because of humanity's sin. Hence, God is the offended party and human beings are the offenders (Rom.5:10).

Secondly, Paul emphasises four phrases to illustrate the work of Christ in this process of reconciliation: "by his blood" (Rom.5:9); "through it [his blood]" (Rom.5:9); "through the death of his son" (Rom.5:10); "by his life" (Rom.5:10). Paul highlights the death of Christ as a sacrificial death. It was through this sacrificial death that God accomplished his purpose with humanity. Paul stresses that God has reconciled humanity to himself.

Thirdly, in a climactic way Paul links justification and glorification through reconciliation. Justification overcomes the legal sphere laid out in Romans 1-4, since reconciliation assumes legal harmony. Thus salvation which is first mentioned in Romans 1:16 and later developed in Romans 6-8 is already predicted. Thus the metaphor of reconciliation switches the legal terminology to the personal and eschatological. The use of this metaphor of reconciliation also indicates a language switch from the second person and third persons in Romans 1-4 to the use of the first person in Romans 6-8.

Fourthly, Reconciliation also provides premise for hope and triumph (Rom.5:11). These themes of hope and triumph are developed in Romans 8:31,33,35,37,38-39.

Thus, following Freytag's pyramid, the structural significance of Romans 5:1-11 is seen as the vortex of the paradigm. Just as Romans 5:12-25 describes a series of concise parallel assertions about Adam and Christ, so in Romans 5:9-11, Paul switches to the third person stressing the work of Christ in both these passages. But in Romans 5:9-11 the work of Christ is portrayed to counter and actually overwhelm the work of Adam in the following section - the original human who, according to Paul was instrumental in causing the condition of sin and death. Paul uses the examples of Adam and Christ to highlight the concept of reconciliation: Adam was responsible for shattering the intimate relationship that existed between God and Man in Eden; and Jesus provides the means for overcoming the mutual hostility that existed between God and humanity and subsequently restores peace between the two parties. This comparison which Paul makes is disproportionate since Christ's life and death exceeds Adam's actions.

Then, apart from "justification" in terms of how it is both related to resurrection (Rom.4:25) and Jesus' sacrificial death (Rom.5:9f), the context for "hope" in Romans 5:1-11 is that of the "peace" with God, the "reconciliation" with God, the disappearance of "enmity" with God. Not only the metaphor of "justification" (from courts of law and trial) but also that of "reconciliation" from the realm of the treaty or covenant, is central to understanding "hope" in Romans.

Since, as Paul has shown in Romans 1:18-32, humanity at enmity with God is subject to all kinds of vile actions against God but also one another, reconciliation, by implication inverts this whole complex. Socially speaking, this means that "reconciliation" with God - to be restored to "peace" with God - means reconciliation to fellow humanity on all those counts in Romans where it is shown at enmity with one another. If this argument is

accepted, then it likewise means that the “grace” in which the believer now “stands”, to “fill up with rejoicing” and not least, to do so “in hope of the glory of God” means that these are the realities which also characterise the believer’s actual conduct - even in the face of suffering - and that of the believing community as part of the new creation of which Christ is the πρωτότοκος - a new, reconciled community - with God and one another. And, concerning the world, if the believer or the new community does suffer at the hands of others or in general, together with creation in the general distress that all creation finds itself in, then, hope is that which is focused on the final revelation of the “glory” of God.

In the next section, the topic of this thesis, *Hope in the Social Context of the Epistle to the Romans*, addresses the rationale (why), the procedure (how) and the content (what) of “hope”, especially in Romans 5:1-11, but also in the main context of this text, Romans 5 - 8 and ultimately in Romans 1 - 8.

In order to come to a comprehensive conclusion to the research, this conclusion must however also provide an overview of the findings of the research in chapters 3-5. This is done, so that a good overview can be acquired. Then follows the section on the “why”, “how” and “what” questions of the significance of “hope” in Romans. Ultimately, however, is to see whether one can develop an interpretation of “hope” in terms of relevance theory in this text. This will require that one specifies all the assumptions which would be regarded as shared assumptions about current conditions. In terms of this shared information - old information - one then needs to outline the new information through which Romans wished to create contextual cognitive effects. It is these cognitive effects which not only aimed at providing a change in cognitive environment but also

new perspectives on how to deal with reality . This is specified and a final conclusion to the whole research provided.

CHAPTER 6

6 *Conclusion*

6.1 *Introduction*

In chapter 1 I stated that the topic of this thesis, *Hope in the Social Context of the Epistle to the Romans*, asks the question as to “why” and “how” the theme of “hope” has been so prominent in Romans, especially in Romans 5:1-11, but also in the main context of this text, Romans 5 - 8 and ultimately in Romans 1 - 8. I have pointed to the fact that the answer is implicit in the title of the thesis - namely that, from the social context, the suffering and tribulations both the Jewish and Christian communities were subjected to required a comprehensive theological as well as practical argument in which “hope” in an often “hopeless” situation, is cultivated.

In the process of researching this problem, in chapter 2 I first provided a few brief theoretical and methodological perspectives from twentieth century theorising of literary scholarship. These were implicitly employed in various parts of the research. Chapter 3 provided a comprehensive social overview of research into the social realities underpinning Romans and chapter 4 researched the “what” of the main thrust of Paul’s argument. Chapter 5, again, provided an overview of how Romans 5:1-11 is positioned within Romans 1 - 8.

In order to come to a comprehensive conclusion to the research, this conclusion first provides an overview of the findings of the research in chapters 3-5. This is followed by an answer to the “why”, “how” and “what” questions of the significance of “hope” in

Romans and an interpretation of “hope” in terms of relevance theory in this text. Finally, a concluding summary of the research is provided.

6.2 *Findings*

6.21 *Chapter 3*

Drawing on socio-historical studies, I have shown that Romans must be understood in the context of Paul’s purposes of expanding his mission activities in the West. For this to happen, and while he hoped to have the Roman church(es) as support, his writing aimed to not only introduce his views to the churches there, but also to socially facilitate unity between Gentile and Jewish Christianity, if not a closer co-operation and mutual understanding between Jew and Christian in Rome.

In order to come to an understanding of the socio-historical situation of Paul’s Roman audience, the argument developed through four stages after the initial context of situation was sketched: 1) whether there is any indication in Romans as to whether Paul advocated separation from the synagogue; 2) Paul’s social location; 3) Ethnic issues in Romans; and 4) the social function of the doctrine of justification through faith.

On the first, it was found that Paul does indeed not advocate separation from the synagogue. The obverse is true, namely that, especially with Paul’s universalised understanding, Jews still occupy the pre-eminent position in salvation history. This is also evident from the use of terms such as “Israel” in Romans, where, if Paul so wished, he could have had it have separationist impact on his message. Even so, with the gospel, all ethnic and religious divisions have been relativised in the face of God’s salvation through Christ, opening up the possibility that no-one is excluded from the appeal of the gospel.

This view is a far better articulation of Romans than what has been the case with notions of “Legalism” and related terminology as well as earlier Lutheran theology.

Secondly, these same sentiments are present in Paul’s articulation of his own status and social location in the face of the gospel message. That it is true that Paul experienced a loss of status with his becoming a Christian has been argued. Even so, it has placed him in a different order of status, one conferred through the salvation brought about by Christ.

Thirdly, in order to untangle the ethnic-related issues in Romans, three perspectives from Romans have been provided: Paul’s arguments on 1) the impartiality of God; 2) the priority of Israel; and 3) the distinctions between ‘weak’ and ‘strong’. On the first, it was found that this move in Paul’s argument prevents any one-sidedness which could be ascribed to him, because all ethnicity of whatever colour, creed or persuasion is relativised in the face of God’s decisive impartiality whether concerning Jews or Gentiles. Secondly, even though Paul consistently argues for the priority of Israel, this priority is only due to God’s consistent adherence to the promises to the patriarchs, the covenant and Israel. On this score, warning statements against people from Gentile background who would forward claims to the contrary, have been identified. Thirdly it has been shown that Paul’s argument on “weak” and “strong” is not to be collapsed into the Jewish - Gentile binary.

Finally, the analysis of the social function and implications of the doctrine of justification has revealed that there is a decidedly social component to this notion in Romans, that it must be understood within the larger context of not only the context of situation, but also all the other elements with social under- and overtones in Romans. As such, this notion was not purely a doctrinal matter, but a social one. It was also pointed out that Luther who

gave this doctrine such a central place in his own theology - together with all the repercussions it had all over the world and throughout the last five centuries - functioned within his own social context as did Augustine, and as did Paul. Even so, it was pointed out that there are also theological elements to this notion which prevents it from being collapsed into social gospel.

I then drew the conclusion that, in general, we can then say that Romans does indeed have a strong social message, one which, if only looked at from doctrinal perspectives, remains hidden if not result in a distortion of not only Romans itself, but also Paul's own views.

6.22 *Chapter 4*

In order to move closer to the more particular addressing of the topic of this thesis, the next chapter dealt with the significance of "hope" not only in Romans itself but in especially Romans 5-8. It is in this nexus, where "hope", as it is to be articulated against the background of the argument in chapter 3, has to be understood.

It was shown that the central thrust of "hope" in Romans, may be stated as: if the creator God has acted in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on behalf of people who were then sinners - showing his love - he will certainly act again at the last to reveal his glory, now that they are already his people. These two sides form the complex of actual "hope" in the face of struggle and challenge.

As shown in the *inclusio/transitio*, introducing the complex, Romans 5-8, "hope" is in the first place, then, determined by justification and by the "faith" in this justification, which has been brought about by God. Faith gives access to God's act of justification, and if this

is so, then it follows that not enmity but “peace” between the believer and God is the result. Moreover, it has been shown that this justification-faith link not only gives access to this “peace” but that it also gives access to God’s “grace”. Romans 5:1-2, then shows that the justification-peace-grace chain is accessed through faith. As such, the result is a “standing” in this grace, a “filling” up in rejoicing, and “boasting” “in hope of the glory of God”. The analogy is that, between the justification-peace-grace chain as a past act of God and a present experience of the believer through faith, present joy both arises from these past acts, opening up “hope” for the future in the face of the revelation of the “glory of God” (Rom.5:1-2). In the face of hardship from Roman officialdom, non-peace between Jew and Christian or Gentile and Jew as explicated in chapter 3, “hope” is then an attitude arising from a reality different from that which Christians face in actual life-experience.

If Romans 5:1-2 is the meaning-foundation of Paul’s whole argument in Romans 5-8, the justification-peace-grace chain as a past act of God and a present experience of the believer through faith, then, this also impacts on the attitude of the believer towards actual hardship. This is addressed in the “plot” and identifies another chain, again climaxing in “hope”. The attention here is not “theological” meaning but the realities which joyous suffering in hope cultivates in the believer: 1) “patience”; 2) “proven character” and 3) “hope”. “Hope” then is not only that which arises from the content or “what” of faith, but also how this “what” impacts on the cultivation of three of the most prized attributes within Graeco-Roman culture - “patience”, “proven character” and “hope” (or an open attitude towards the future). In the “plot” here, there is also an added meaning argument chaining to the justification-peace-grace chain: “because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which was given to us”.

After having turned to the realities the believer has to face, the argument then further develops the theological frame: God's love (of people in a sinful state) and the resurrection life with the *inclusio* putting "reconciliation" next to "peace" with which it started this section out.

Articulated with "hope", it is this attitude in the present which not only arises from past acts of God through which his love was demonstrated - not least in the resurrection of Christ, but is also focused on the "glory of God" as part of the present joy in the face of hardship and challenge.

Further, this argument opens up the issue of "hopelessness" - sin and death which came about through Adam became universal, the paradox that the law was supposed to address this state of sin but in the end, because of its nature, made sin more. This is contrasted to the grace and gift of God in Jesus Christ which abounds much more in this single instance than in the single instance of the sin of Adam or even in the Law that came in "from the side" as it were. Rooted in the "grace" and "gift" of God - which opened up to "everlasting life" - hopelessness is replaced by hope (Rom.5:12-21). The argument above was that, as in Romans 1, Paul confronts the universal first - that of Adam as the first human being - because it is on this universal level that his argument must ultimately make an impact on turning people to Christ but also transcending the Gentile - Jewish divide in Rome. However, he also addresses the issue of the law, but then again in its covenant context. Paul, then, retells the Adam story explicitly in Romans 5:12-21 indicating that true human life is to be found in Jesus Christ since He is the climax of not only the Jewish covenant story, but that of what we may call, God's covenant with universal humanity.

Romans 8 interprets the gift of the Spirit of God in the counter-determining context of the law's function within covenant context. The main point is that the "life and peace" that the covenant promised has not been fulfilled, and that the prophetic critique is the proof. However, because of the death and resurrection of Christ as well as the outpouring of the Spirit, the covenant's promises has been fulfilled, making its covenant promises of "life and peace" a reality. However, this is so only for the covenant's "children of God" and - because Paul also addresses people who come from non-Jewish backgrounds, to those who are "heirs" or who have been "adopted" into the covenant. Such "adoption", however, comes about because it rests on Paul's "creation" argument - already started in Romans 1 and carried through especially in Romans 5:12-21 in his comparison of Adam and Christ. Paul's comparison then is that not only human beings are afflicted and suffer, but that all creation also looks forward toward God's final and ultimate redemption. This is followed by the encapsulating Romans 8:31-39 where God's love stands supreme and nothing of any kind can separate the believer from this healing and divine love - a love into which the believer has been drawn through the death and resurrection of Christ but also the outpouring of God's spirit. It is this fact that Paul then expounds as being the foundation of "hope". Moreover, this "hope" is not only a "hope" from those within the covenant - Israel - which have turned to God through Christ, but a "hope" shared with all creation. Along with creation, Christians who have the Spirit, who are "sons" or "heirs" of the covenant, strive forward "in hope" of future redemption - the sharing of the "glory of God". As Romans 8:24 says, this is both a present and future goal of "hope" as "hope" that is not seen.

Up to this point, "hope" has been interpreted mainly in the counter-determining context of Covenant, law and also that of Adam and universal humanity. One other important

counter-determining context, however, has been identified - that of the “Suffering Servant” as well as the “Righteous Servant/ One”. With reference to the conforming “to the image of his Son” (εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ) - which is an image of suffering and death but also of vindication, it has been shown that this latter notion is further strengthened by πρωτότοκον. Concerning Romans 8:28-30, it has been shown that the main counter-determining features of the “Suffering Servant” and “Righteous Servant/ One” are as follows:

For suffering: (distress) (threat) (experience of injustice) (unjust enmity) (tribulation) (persecution) (famine) (nakedness) (peril) (sword) (affliction) (humiliation) (servitude).

For righteousness: (humility) (trustworthiness) (joy) (stability) (truth).

For being a servant: (dedication) (obedience) (faithfulness) (sonship) (covenantal election).

Salvation or hope for salvation: (deliverance) (vindication) (healing) (divine purpose) (glory) (honour) (judgement) (covenantal faithfulness)

For Romans 8:31-39, it was shown to be:

(humiliation) (dishonour) (embarrassment) (disgrace) (indignity) (death) (resurrection) (obedience) (acceptance) (submission) (faithfulness) (loyalty) (steadfastness) (exaltation) (glory) (election) (trustworthy) (honesty) (vindication) (acquittal) (justification) (exoneration) (substitutionary salvation) (vicarious suffering) (intercessory assistance) (righteousness) (redemption) (emancipation) (salvation).

The central element for the understanding of the social consequence of the power of the “cross”, is that of the expiation of sin for all people irrespective of race, colour or creed.

For the “resurrection”, it is the same, with this added significance that it is especially the

resurrection which made justification and therefore reconciliation with God, true. This is already stated in Romans 4:25 and provides the key to understanding Paul's argument on "justification". As gleaned from this verse, it appears that expiation is not Paul's central concern in Romans 5-8 but that of justification as it derives from resurrection. Moreover, it is the "hope" which is founded on this fact, which means that, socially speaking all believers are equal. As such, it is the belief in the resurrection which not only inaugurated a new creation and aeon, but also a new community of equals where love and service rule. If the cross signals equal access to the expiation of the death of Christ, the resurrection signals equal justification and therefore, as Romans 5 starts out, a new dispensation of peace, faith and joy. Confronted with suffering, it is the hope derived from this reality but also the hope in the future revelation of God's glory, that (both) believing community (and creation more generally and universally speaking), can live as suffering righteous servants. As such, it is the resurrection and Jesus as πρωτότοκος which have introduced this new community as a distinct socio-cultural group.

The resurrection caused a shift from the rule of the law (Rom.5:20-21; 6:14) to the rule of Grace of God. Through the grace of God a universal and plural society is created in contrast to the previous Jewish societies (Rom.2:1-4:25) and Greek societies (Rom.1:18ff). For the believers, the resurrection of Christ marks a new era. It is an eschatological event. This "hope" that "we will be raised" also is a driving force of the new community of believers.

"Hope is then not merely a subjective or a psychological process which may indicate that suffering might psychologically be the cause of "hope". Rather, Paul presupposes the attitude of "hope" already in Romans 5:2 so that what he is portraying to his audience is an

objective experience which is common to Christians as a result of their attitude of “hope”.

6.23 *Chapter 5*

In Chapter 5, the function of Romans 5 in the argument of Romans 1-8 was outlined using the model of Freytag (1863) as interpretative tool to determine how Romans 5 fits in with Paul’s larger situation..

Firstly, it was found that Paul foregrounds the language of reconciliation by creating a conceptual realm of hostility which is exchanged for a peaceful relationship. In Romans 1:18, Paul refers to the wrath of God which refers to divine hostility. Paul further elaborates that the relationship between God and human beings is that of being enemies because of humanity’s sin. Hence, God is the offended party and human beings are the offenders (Rom.5:10).

Secondly, Paul emphasises four phrases to illustrate the work of Christ in this process of reconciliation: “by his blood” (Rom.5:9); “through it [his blood]” (Rom.5:9); “through the death of his son” (Rom.5:10); “by his life” (Rom.5:10). Paul highlights the death of Christ as a sacrificial death. It was through this sacrificial death that God accomplished his purpose with humanity. Paul stresses that God has reconciled humanity to himself.

Thirdly, in a climactic way Paul links justification and glorification through reconciliation. Justification overcomes the legal sphere laid out in Romans 1-4, since reconciliation assumes legal harmony. Thus salvation which is first mentioned in Romans 1:16 and later developed in Romans 6-8 is already predicted. Thus the metaphor of reconciliation switches the legal terminology to the personal and eschatological. The

use of this metaphor of reconciliation also indicates a language switch from the second person and third persons in Romans 1-4 to the use of the first person in Romans 6-8.

Fourthly, Reconciliation also provides premise for hope and triumph (Rom.5:11). These themes of hope and triumph are developed in Romans 8:31,33,35,37,38-39.

Thus, following Freytag's pyramid, the structural significance of Romans 5:1-11 is seen as the highpoint or vortex of the paradigm. Just as Romans 5:12-25 describes a series of concise parallel assertions about Adam and Christ, so in Romans 5:9-11, Paul switches to the third person stressing the work of Christ in both these passages. But in Romans 5:9-11 the work of Christ is portrayed to counter and actually overwhelm the work of Adam in the following section - the original human who, according to Paul was instrumental in causing the condition of sin and death. Paul uses the examples of Adam and Christ to highlight the concept of reconciliation: Adam was responsible for shattering the intimate relationship that existed between God and Man in Eden; and Jesus provides the means for overcoming the mutual hostility that existed between God and humanity and subsequently restores peace between the two parties. This comparison which Paul makes is disproportionate since Christ's life and death exceeds Adam's actions.

Then, apart from "justification" in terms of how it is both related to resurrection (Rom.4:25) and Jesus' sacrificial death (Rom.5:9f), the context for "hope" in Romans 5:1-11 is that of the "peace" with God, the "reconciliation" with God, the disappearance of "enmity" with God. Not only the metaphor of "justification" (from courts of law and trial) but also that of "reconciliation" from the realm of the treaty or covenant, is central

to understanding “hope” in Romans.

Since, as Paul has shown in Romans 1:18-32, humanity at enmity with God is subject to all kinds of vile actions against God but also one another, reconciliation, by implication inverts this whole complex. Socially speaking, this means that “reconciliation” with God - to be restored to “peace” with God - means reconciliation to fellow humanity on all those counts in Romans where it is shown at enmity with one another. If this argument is accepted, then it likewise means that the “grace” in which the believer now “stands”, to “fill up with rejoicing” and not least, to do so “in hope of the glory of God” means that these are the realities which also characterise the believer’s actual conduct - even in the face of suffering - and that of the believing community as part of the new creation of which Christ is the πρωτότοκος - a new, reconciled community - with God and one another. And, concerning the world, if the believer or the new community does suffer at the hands of others or in general, together with creation in the general distress that all creation finds itself in, then, hope is that which is focused on the final revelation of the “glory” of God.

6.3 *The Rationale, Procedure and Content of “Hope” in Romans 5:1-11*

After these explicatory analyses of “Hope” in Romans, the questions arise as to the rationale (why), procedure (how) and content (what) of “Hope” in Romans 5:1-11.

6.31 *The Rationale for “Hope” in Romans 5:1-11*

Why would Romans give such a prominent place to “Hope”?

Firstly, why would, after having referred to “justification by faith”, “peace toward God”,

“faith into this grace in which we stand”, Romans states: “and we fill up with rejoicing in hope of the glory of God”?

On the second important place, why would Romans, through its *gradatio*, move through “rejoicing in tribulations-*knowing*-tribulation works out patience-patience proven character” to end in “proven character hope”?

In the context of the title of this thesis, the answer to both these questions must impact on social reality.

From the research, it is evident that the first nexus forms part of a theological argument and the second, part of a character-argument in the context of real-life hardship and tribulation.

The *theological argument* proceeds from the assumptions that, if God has acted in the resurrection of Christ thereby 1) justifying the believer - providing “justification by faith” - 2) eliminating enmity between God and humanity by giving access to “peace toward God” and 3) through faith, providing access “into this grace in which we stand”, then, the argument seems to have significance in time or historical context. It argues that since God’s recent past action through Christ has provided the realities in which the believers now share, then, looking towards the future, this future is not bleak or incomprehensible but to be rejoiced in, because God will act again. This future action will comprise of the revelation of the “glory of God”. The social significance of this rationale is that these statements are all in the first person plural, making all who have faith in this grace, to equally share in what God has accomplished in Christ, to equally

“stand” in this grace - meaning to also embody this “peace” and “grace” in their conduct - and to equally be filled up with rejoicing in the hope of the future revelation of the glory of God. On this score, there is no difference between Jew or Gentile.

Further, in contrast to Adam’s sin, one could state that this is universalised to encompass all believers irrespective of whatever distinctions people socially make. If it is further so, that where sin abounds, “grace much more abounded”; and also, that if sin “ruled in death”, grace in actual fact “rule through righteousness” (Rom.5:20f), then, social life - at least from the perspective of those who universally have faith in Christ - is universally characterised by the practicing of grace. This social argument means that, in the face of “sin”, one cannot “stand” in grace without having it abound; and also, one cannot be freed from the “rule” of sin and death and not simultaneously let grace “rule through righteousness”.

Even more, and now returning to the eschatological point, one cannot confront the future in the sure faith of what God has accomplished in the past - the realisation of the promises to the patriarchs and in the covenant - without, equally, rejoicing in the promise of the future revelation of the glory of God. If this is so, then, socially, the future promise of God’s “glory” is already revealed in the new community where Christ is first (Rom.8:29), but all others equal.

The *character argument* proceeds through its *gradatio*, “rejoicing in tribulations-knowing-tribulation works out patience-patience proven character” to end in “proven character hope”. The verb “to know” used here, shows that the way in which the believer confronts tribulation arises from knowledge, that, because this statement is in the first

person plural too, it is shared and practiced by all believers equally. Socially this means the cultivation of patience, character and hope. Since this character argument is aimed to confront real-life challenges, the social aspect is that the hope which is spoken about here is not the eschatological hope, but that of changes to the better in real-life contexts. If this building of character through patience and hope for improvement in real-life conditions are shared and practiced by all believers, then it also signals the collective dedication or will to have such conditions improve for the better.

6.32 *The Procedure of “Hope” in Romans 5:1-11*

The answer to the question as to the procedure or how, of hope, arises from the previous point. In *theological context*, hope derives from the knowledge of what God has done in Jesus Christ in the past, in a present standing in grace and future expectation of the “glory of God”. It further manifests in “rejoicing” in the present and this rejoicing in the present, derives its impulse from the expectation of the “glory of God”. As such, this hope is not something which can be observed empirically (Rom.8:24f). This, concerning the theological argument.

As in the next, the “how” is especially informed by the collective nature of its practice.

For the character argument, hope (that current circumstances can change) derives from perseverance in the face of tribulation while cultivating patience. Apart from character building, this hope, since it is collective, also expects that tribulations will change. Even though this hope is important, since - we may infer - it can be observed empirically, it is of a secondary nature to the theologically-informed hope.

6.33 *The Content of “Hope” in Romans 5:1-11*

The content of hope is, theologically, that it is *on the one hand* informed by the justification which God accomplished in both the sacrificial death of Jesus and his resurrection (Rom.4:25;5:9f) (past). Through faith, it gave access to peace, grace and reconciliation (present). This is what has been established between God and humanity but also between those people who stand in this grace and practice it. *On the other hand*, in rejoicing, it opens toward the glory of God (future). Ultimately, this hope is informed by its expectation of the revelation of the “glory of God”. In this, universally, creation expects it too (Rom.5:2;8:21).

Theologically, this raises the question of the nature of the “glory” Romans speaks about. This is the content of hope.

From the counter-determining contexts for “glory” (in the Old Testament) the following semantic features are evident: (triumph) (observable manifestation in nature or in ceremony) (praise) (overwhelming presence) (worship) (holiness) (to dwell with the Lord) (expectations of God’s future overwhelming presence) (God’s universal presence) (faithful desire that it endures for ever)

a glory as (triumph): this could be the triumph in battle over enemies of either God or a leader (Deborah) or the believing Israelite - e.g. triumph over Pharaoh and his host/ over Sisera/ enemies; this image is drawn from the general Semitic notion which regards God as warrior (see e.g. Ex.14:4,17f;Jdg.4:9;Pss24:8;79:9;106:5;Isa41:16); this feature of “glory” can also be stated in general (Ps.24:8;291 are examples).

- b glory as (observable manifestation in nature or in ceremony): the observation of the glory of God in cloud, in fire, in a storm, in the consuming of sacrifices or also as it accompanies God's interaction with a human being - in oracles, for example (see e.g. Ex.16:7,10;24:16f;Lv.9:24; see also Pss.29:3).
- c glory is also that which is given to God in (praise): [for his wonderful deeds or steadfast love and faithfulness] (Josh.7:19; and many references in the Psalms, e.g. Pss.64:10;71:8;105:3;115:1).
- d glory as indication of (God's overwhelming presence) is also attested frequently: e.g. as it manifests in the temple or Zion (e.g. see Pss.63:2;102:16)
- e glory as eliciting (worship) and (holiness): (Pss.29:2;105:3;Isa.6:3)
- f glory as indication of the death of the believing Israelite and then his or her (dwelling with the Lord).
- g the expectation of the (future overwhelming presence) or (universal presence) of God's glory: that it will fill the whole earth, the land of Israel, give strength to the people or be universally present and be so acknowledged (see e.g. Pss.72:19;85:9;89:17;96:3; 97:6;102:15;Isa.40:5;66:19)
- h the faithful desire for the Lord's glory to (endure for ever) (Pss.104:31).

In Romans, the semantic features associated with glory parcel out between those related

to God and those to the believer.

- a For God: (immortality) - 1:23;2:7; (excluding of sin) - 2:23; (resurrection power) - 6:4; (glory's future revelation in the believer) - 8:18; (incomparable to present sufferings) - 8:18; (all things are from, through and to him) - 11:36; (divine wisdom) - 16:27; (mercy for Gentiles) - 15:9.

Socially, God's glory is all-encompassing of people as well as creation. It also implies a radical renewal which excludes sin and suffering, signaling absolute harmony. Since God's glory implies immortality, it applies similarly to all believers. And, because it is associated with God's wisdom, the wisdom of the world is radically relativised.

- b For the believer certain attitudes and activities allow a sharing in the glory of God: (patient well-doing) - 2:7; (seeking God's honour) - 2:7; (doing good) - 2:19; (seeking peace) - 2:19; (being truthful) - 3:7; (faith) - 4:20; (trust) - 4:20; (hope) - 5:2; (walk in newness of life) - 6:4; (hospitality) - 15:7; (unity among believers) - 15:6; (collective suffering, as fellow sons/ heirs with Christ) - 8:17.

In seeking the glory of God, the general descriptions of the believers' conduct, socially implies no harm or participation in harmful life towards self and others but rather only positive, life-enhancing and caring activity.

So, what is the content of hope? Theologically, "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God" indicates the expectation of the arrival of God's immortal, renewing universal presence - something which excludes sin and suffering but not Gentiles. The materially real hope

which proven character and patience work for, is that of a reality which will through the social processes of character building, do away with sin and tribulation. Why? It implies a collective patience in well-doing; doing good; seeking of peace; a being truthful; and showing of hospitality. These activities come about through the seeking of God's honour in faith, trust and hope. In practice, it implies a walking in newness of life, which among others, will result in the creation of unity among believers. The social aspect again comes to the fore: all those who practice this, are, in the way in which they collectively suffer but also confront suffering collectively, fellow sons/ heirs with Christ.

Are these interpretations justified?

Paul's argument on sin and "God's wrath" derives from the fact that, as revealed "from Heaven", the Gentiles are captivated in "ungodliness" and "unrighteousness" (Rom.1:18-2:1ff). For the Jew, he argues that the Law is not and cannot be kept, and that Jews, likewise, cannot be in a "just" relationship with God (Rom.2:17-3:20). Theologically but also in real, material religious and life practices, both Jew and Gentile are at enmity with God. And, socially, this enmity manifests in all the acts of injustice and harm Paul mentions in Romans 1:18-3:20. If, according to the gospel Paul proclaims, the relationship with God is restored on God's initiative, then, socially, the conduct or activities of believers also has a healing effect on society. In reverse, the implication of Paul's initial arguments (Rom.1:18-3:20), then means that the believers - who stand in grace and rejoice in hope; but also, through patient perseverance in tribulation build character - collectively act in accordance with the peace and grace in which they share. In other words, if enmity is resolved in God's action through Christ, then the peace, grace and hope it resulted in, similarly impact on social reality - the believers' relations with

self and other.

The content of hope is then theologically focused on the future revelation of God's glory and in the present, on the kind of conduct which not only builds character but will also effect transformation of circumstances of tribulation for the better.

6.4 *Contextualising "Hope" in Romans*

To explicate the possible cognitively transforming effects the argument on hope could have had in the context of the Roman church, two perspectives are necessary: 1) an explication of the collective assumptions of the (Gentile and Jewish) Christians in Rome which, according to "old information" in the text, can be assumed as shared information between the readership and the author, or at least that information which the author presumes to be old or known information; and 2) an explication of the "new information" in the text which is supposed to have had cognitively transforming effects.

6.41 *Assumed Common Information*

From the text, it appears as if the information which Romans assumes as a body of assumptions in terms of which the various perspectives (new information) on hope were supposed to impact and effect cognitive change, are five-fold: 1) that "tribulations" and "sufferings" are not used in apocalyptic context indicating the nearness of the end, but that they have assumptions coming from the real-life and material experiences of oppression Jews and Christians experienced at the hands of authorities; 2) that, in such circumstances, and in order to evade classification together with Jews in Rome, Gentile Christians could have fallen prey to dissociating themselves from "Jewishness" such as the law; 3) that Jews remained steadfast in the allegiance to the law; 4) that allegiance to Christianity could have

been floundering due to a lack in a comprehensive understanding of its message; 5) that, under the pressure of “suffering”, the possibility of any change in the causes of hardship and challenge seemed remote.

Assumed in these perspectives, would be that Christian faith does not impact on reality; that Gentile Christians can be faithful to God without the covenant promises; that Jewish faithfulness to the law removes one from the possibility to also contribute to the social upheavals the people experienced; that the Christian message as advocated by Paul was insufficiently understood; and that Christian faith cannot impact on changing the conditions of hardship under which the people lived.

The question now is to identify that new information from Paul’s argument which would impact on these assumptions.

6.42 *Hope and New Information*

Christian faith does not impact on reality - “tribulations”; “sufferings”

From Romans 1:8-17, we can say that the known or old information comes from especially Paul’s statement that he is “not ashamed of the gospel of Christ” and that he sees the gospel as “power of God to everyone believing, both to the Jew first and, and to Greek” (Rom.1:16). The assumptions in terms of which Romans wants to create contextual effects, are that there are those - presumably in Rome - who are indeed “ashamed” of the gospel or if not ashamed, then, they do not appreciate the gospel as “power of God”, or that it is so for Jew first and also for Greek. If this is accepted, then we can say that such people do not appreciate the impact the gospel has on reality or what Paul later identifies as “tribulations” and “sufferings”.

In this context, we may understand Paul's assertion that "your faith is spoken of in the whole world" (Rom.1:8) as saying that this, as shared information, may be true, but that there is also a lack here, i.e. in the face of assuming that there is some shame in the gospel or that at least, it is not seen as the "power of God" that it is for both Jew and Greek. This is new information in terms of which Paul wishes to develop his whole argument - to show how this is indeed the case and that it does indeed impact on material and social reality.

It is especially, following his argumentative explanation of the gospel - both in terms of Gentile-Christian and Jewish(-Christian) understanding - that he comes with his new information to address this issue. As explained above, this comprises both the theological and the reality argument in Romans 4:24f - 5:4. As also explained, the contextual effects come on both levels.

For the first, if faith has given access to justification and grace, this also means that believers should live in terms of this peace they have with God, and the transcending of enmity this implies; they should "stand" in this grace and "fill up with rejoicing" or "boast" in hope of the glory of God. As also explained, it is this which would socially and materially impact on how they "live" within this peace, grace and hope.

Secondly, in the *gradatio* argument, the "knowing" that tribulation works out patience and patience proven character could be seen as shared information from common Graeco-Roman culture - even maybe, that this attitude would bring about hope that conditions may change. However, even though Paul employs this common wisdom, the fact that he uses it in his theological argumentation, means that it is new information - i.e. in a new context of understanding. The newness derives especially from the fact that he says that they should

“rejoice/ boast in tribulations”, would be new. This paradoxical statement has a context - it must be interpreted in terms of the climax of the new information in the theological argument in Romans 5:2.

This then provides two perspectives on how believers collectively and universally - not only for Greeks nor only for Gentiles - need not be ashamed of the gospel, but see it as a “power of God”, not only as to how it impacts socially on understanding the believing community but, how it impacts on reality.

In addition, as already stated above (second last par. under 6.33) this attitude also leads to an inversion or reversal of the argument concerning how people’s lives without God, those still at enmity of God, have materially and socially destructive effects in society, community, towards self and towards other . The closest approximation of this reversal, where it is argued explicitly, is found in Romans 12:1-21.

Gentile Christians can be faithful to God without the covenant promises

One of the clearest statements that this may have been the case, is found in Romans 11:18. The assumption is that (Gentile) Christians boast in themselves (and their church) while not taking into consideration the tradition, the covenant promises or the “root” which supports them! To counter this view, Paul, at length repudiates it in Romans 9 - 11. It is also this view that Paul repudiates with his notion of boasting in the “glory of God” and the boasting in tribulations as explained in the previous section above.

Another way to look at this view is to also articulate the arguments of Paul on stating the “Jew first and also Greek”. He recognises the pre-eminence of Israel and the Israelite

tradition, and requires that Gentiles do the same, but then without the requirements of keeping the law and having to be circumcised - as he also at length repudiates in his argument concerning the Jews. Why? Because not only do these practices not restore the relationship with God, they are excluded by faith - as not only the argument on Abraham shows, but also that now on the gospel, as it has been brought into being through Christ by God.

Since Greek speaking Christians would also be the receivers of Paul's letter, the argument against Jewish pre-eminence (on law and circumcision), would also have contextual effects on this main misunderstanding among Christians from Gentile background. As such, Paul's argument on Abraham for example also had educative effects in Gentile Christian understanding.

One of Paul's main arguments, however, concerns his attention to the "wrath" of God and the judgement that believers from Gentile background presumably aim at fellow Gentiles (Rom.1:18 and 2:1ff). The assumption is that Christians from Gentile background would confirm all Paul's views against Gentiles in Romans 1:18-32, that there could have been some who in actual effect judged Gentiles in the way and along the same lines as Paul has been arguing in this section. The new information is that, by using the same argumentative strategy as against the Jews - that by judging others, they judged themselves - he prevents such persons to ignore the fact that 1) they will be judged too (Rom.2:3). More importantly, and this is the point, Paul 2) draws on that whole Israelite tradition which speaks of God's attitude toward humanity. These are referred to in Romans 2:4 - "riches of his kindness, and the forbearance, and the long-suffering, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?" The attitudes of God then becomes that which need to be replicated by

the believer. As such, they must not be “self-seeking” and disobedient of the truth, and stop to “obey unrighteousness, indication and wrath” (Rom.2:8).

Jewish faithfulness to the law

For both Gentile and Jewish Christian, it is important to recognise the superiority of the Jew - that Israel has been entrusted with the oracles of God (Rom.3:2). However, this is not chance for boasting but for a different attitude.

Similar to the critique of Gentile believers - that they should not “boast” in being apart from the Israelite traditions - Paul uses the same argument against Jewish Christians. The (Jewish) boasting should not be in whether one has a relation with God through law or works (Rom.2:17,23;4:2). Rather, this kind of boasting is excluded on the principle of faith (Rom.3:27). And again, similar to countering Gentile boasting, Romans 5:1-4 create contextual effects also in Jewish Christian people holding these views - i.e. on the material impact of the gospel in terms of the boasting in “the hope of the glory of God” and the rejoicing in tribulations with its *gradatio* argument, culminating in hope.

Added to these, are Paul’s other two great arguments. In the first, he confirms the goodness of the law in covenant context but not where it is used to shelter a “hard heart” - which runs sporadically throughout Romans (3:21-4:25; also in chapters 7 and 8). Amongst facts referred to already - such Paul’s positive appreciation of law in Romans 7 and 8 but also his argument that the law brings in sin because it lays down precepts which humanity cannot but break - the argument is already launched in Romans 2:17-24. Here Paul says that the Jew 1) teach others but , not teach self; 2) preach not to steal, but do they steal?; 3) tell people not to commit adultery but do they commit adultery?; 4) tell others to hate idols

but do they commit sacrilege?; 5) boast in the Law but do they dishonour God through the breaking of the Law? This kind of Jewish behaviour results in the blaspheming of the Name of God among the nations. In this argument, Paul shows how the most sacred for the Jew - the name of God - is violated.

Paul's second argument is his stringent argument against circumcision in favour of faith as demonstrated from his Abraham argument (Rom.4:1-25). The kind of circumcision required - for the Gentile as for the Jew, is that which is inward, of the heart, in spirit, not in letter. Whereas the latter leads to boasting in self and praise from "from men" the circumcision of the heart, means praise from God (Rom.2:25-29).

Concerning the Gentile believer, since the Jewish Christians would also be receivers of Romans, they would learn about how the Gentiles too, can, as "heirs" partake in the fulfilment of the covenant promises.

Christianity insufficiently understood

The contextual effects which Paul's arguments have, is also educative in the context of where Christianity was insufficiently understood. This is the context in terms of which the new information outlined above must be ultimately understood to create contextual effects - on the Gentile Christian judgement and boasting; Jewish Christian boasting (in law and circumcision), but ultimately, that of the gospel as God as agent has created and established it through Christ. It is on this score - after having refuted misunderstandings, that Paul most forcefully puts forward his argument on faith (!) which gives access to peace, grace and hope. It is this point which he then has worked out further in Romans 6,7 and 8.

As already argued in chapter 4, the important element to undercut misunderstandings, is especially his universalising of the gospel message. This is present in his arguments that all (both Jew and Greek) are enmity with God and have sinned - the Jews too, because they are unable to return to a just relationship with God through the law; his Abraham argument on faith; his Adam argument - the first human being but who, through sin has contaminated all humanity; his argument that Jewish Christians may be sons, yes, but that Gentiles are “heirs”; and finally in his argument that all creation not only suffers but also looks forward to the final revelation of God’s glory and his children. The universalising of sin or its contamination throughout creation creates the gap to argue that God has, through Christ, created a new possibility of establishing a just relationship with humanity, that this relationship gives access to the peace, grace and hope in the glory of God, and make both Jews (“sons”) and Gentiles (“heirs”) - through faith in Christ - the children of God. It is as such, that Christ is the “first-born” of this new community and that nothing can separate the believer from God’s love (Rom.8:31-39).

Christian faith cannot impact on changing the conditions of hardship

Is it then possible that the gospel as “power” of God can impact on hardship, suffering and tribulation? Paul’s whole argument seems to say yes. *On the one hand*, hardship and suffering is there - even the whole of creation is subject to it. But, the believers are “called” (Rom.1:6,7), meaning that they are called out from within these tribulations to be (re)newed covenant community of faith. As such, both believers from Gentile and Jewish background do not have anything in which to boast. They are therefore not to separate themselves off from one another. Socially, they are all “brethren” with Christ as “first-born”. If they, together would “stand” in the peace, grace, and hope which God has established, then their practising of this peace, grace and hope - as it builds character -

would creatively impact on material reality - through what Paul has explicitly stated in Romans 12:1-21.

6.5 Conclusion

In this conclusion to my last chapter, two more things need to be done. The first is to explicate the use of the theory overviewed in the second chapter as to how it was employed methodologically in the research and the second, to briefly draw together the research.

6.51 Theory and Method Explication

Throughout the thesis, I have refrained from limiting the research to one-dimensional conceptual and therefore discursive understanding. My main reason is that such “jargonising” would limit the research to, if not one-dimensional consciousness, then to multi-disciplinary consciousness, which, from the various truth perspectives each discourse provides, results in the same. (My intention was different - to let the text speak and provide the evidence in all its various nuances.) This is so, even though the thesis did follow this approach - pre-empting a true inter-disciplinary or integrated disciplinary theorising - such a theorising, however, could not be followed, because, even though it has been referred to by many as the desired way to go, it is only now arising.

Against this background, this last section will only point to how the theorising in chapter 2 has been employed. Similar to the various theories covered, it falls out in 9 sections (sections 2.2-2.10) - Formalism and Structuralism, Semiotic Theory, Reader-related and Deconstructive theories, Relevance Theory, Socio-semiotic Theory, Social Scientific Criticism, Metaphor Theory and Freytag’s five-part theory of the ‘Tragic Pyramid’. In overviewing how the theorising has been used, I also overview their interlinking.

6.511 *Formalism, Structuralism and Relevance Theory*

The three notions from formalism and structuralism used, are those of the de-automised or de-familiarising use of language in communication, the communication theory of texts and the notion of language as signs forming part of a cultural code.

The first was used in working with the surface structure of the text, the various rhetorical devices identified and the distinction between old, known or shared information and new information. Structuration was evident in the distinction between Romans' salutation, introduction, and the two-part progression up to Romans 5:1ff. The introduction refers to Paul's aims in writing Romans and culminated in the stating of the main theme of Romans in 1:17. The two-part progression divided into the addressing of the Gentiles and the presumed Gentile believers' judging of such behaviour on the one hand and the Jews and the presumed claims on law-abiding behaviour and circumcision arising from within Israelite salvation history. Further, if these views are regarded as familiar or naturalised or shared information, then Paul's views aiming at creating contextual effects in this body of assumptions are the de-familiarising information aiming to effect cognitive transformation to a new cognitive environment and a changed understanding of the issues addressed. Having done so up to Romans 5, the next 4 chapters develop Paul's own understanding of the gospel more specifically.

As far as communication is concerned, the previous paragraph shows the focus on the text and that which is communicated. As far as the receivers are concerned, I have identified two different kinds of readers or - if we accept that Paul's epistle would have been read in congregational contexts with people listening - two different kinds of listeners: that of Gentile and Jewish believers. Each of these came from a certain background with distinct

cultural codes generally speaking.

On the one hand, Paul's message focused on both these different kinds of people, but, if we also accept that the congregation(s) in Rome was (were) "mixed", then Gentile believers would be exposed to Paul's argument against certain Jewish Christian pre-conceptions and vice versa. This dynamic in itself would have had transformative contextual effects in opening up better understanding between the two different groups. In addition, especially where Paul's argumentative strategies are replicated in both contexts, it would also likewise open up both groups of contextual assumptions for Paul's unifying argument on the gospel as it relates to faith and hope.

6.512 *Semiotic Theory and Metaphor Analysis*

The distinction between sign and concept or signifier and signified was used especially in the metaphor analyses or the identification of the various semantic features which could be related to the various signifiers dealt with - those of "hope" and "glory" for example. These signifieds come from the immediate context but also from the rest of Romans and then from the Old Testament and other texts from the Israelite heritage. This demonstrated not only the plurality of meaning but also the intertextual nature of texts as Kristeva has shown.

The importance of this approach is shown especially where people in the modern world do not have naturalised conceptual understanding of concepts such as "glory" for example. It is especially for this reason that semiotics plays an important role - not least in showing that language is essentially social as the later Wittgenstein has argued.

Further, similar to the assumptions which people hold and which form cognitive "context"

in Relevance Theory, the interpretant identified by Peirce or aesthetic object by Mukarovsky, is essentially that form in which the message is structured for communicative purposes. On the distinction between qualisign, sinsign and legisign but also icon, index and symbol, the Gentile or Jewish conduct Paul criticises and the conduct and attitudes he advocates can be regarded as qualisigns; sinsigns are the signs expressing Paul's exclamations; the legisigns are the general rules which Paul deals with in the structuration of Gentile and Jewish but then also in collective Christian conduct; icons are present in the analogies Paul draws; indices are present in the causality concepts and symbols, where the relationship between signifiers and signifieds are culturally naturalised or entrenched.

Finally, the encyclopedic knowledge on which Romans mainly draws for its main arguments on hope and faith are mainly three-fold. For faith, and countering the tendency to see law and circumcision as paramount, Romans draws on the Abraham narratives. The main point here is that Abraham, through faith, followed the call of God. Thus, so the argument runs, faith comes first and circumcision and law only came later. For hope, the encyclopedic knowledge comes, firstly from the glory of God as variously expressed in Israelite literature, but now tied in with faith, which gives access to peace (reconciliation) and grace. The second source is the general Graeco-Roman wisdom concerning the character-building effects of patient suffering.

6.513 *Romans - a Closed or Open Text?*

Concerning the distinction between closed and open, it all depends on the codes the reader have available when reading or listening to a reading. If the recipients knew Paul's interpretation of the gospel well, they would have experienced the text as closed but open to the degree that it did in fact created new additional insights. This would have been the

same as someone looking at a Superman or James Bond movie where the code is known - e.g. that the hero never dies despite the greatest opposition - and only the characters and kinds of opposition change.

For someone who did not have any previous access to either Paul's own version of the gospel, nor to the views expressed in his description of the Gentiles in Romans 1, nor to those of Jews, the text would be open. As such, the interpretations could vary, would allow for understandings quite contrary to those intended by the rhetoric or even would spark interpretations of which it would be difficult to show that they are derived from the text.

In terms of Paul's critique of judgement (by Gentiles) in Romans 2 - of which one can surmise that Romans 1:18ff is stated as shared information - and also his assumption of a large number of assumptions about Israelite religion, one must say that the text - for the Roman audience would have been more closed than open. Also in terms of how Paul describes the gospel - as not allowing for the pre-eminence of law and circumcision for example - the text would be closed. In Barthes' understanding, the text would be "readerly".

In view of Paul's own arguments, and also how the believer would live out faith and hope empirically, however, the text would have been quite open - a "writerly" text.

6.514 *The Implied Reader and Deconstruction*

The implied reader of Romans could be of two kinds - coming from a Gentile or Jewish background. The way in which Paul addresses those from Gentile background appears as if they were already Christian believers and that they could have criticised not only Jews

but also their own fellow Gentiles. This, one can surmise from the argument against judgement in Romans 2. For these implied readers, the assumption is too that they needed some education or instruction concerning the Israelite tradition from which they come.

From the sections in which Paul's diatribe is with imaginary (an) Jew(s), it can be that he is (they are) either a Jew proper or a believer from Jewish origins. If the first is the case, then the implied reader would have been able to access the symbolism in Paul's argument quite easily, but, that it would have been difficult to break with the strong views on law and circumcision. If the second is the case, then Paul's interpretation of law within covenant context would have been well appreciated as a way in which, after having become a Christian, the law could still be appreciated and adhered to. On both these counts and also how the argument could also have educative impact on the other in both Gentile and Jewish context, the aesthetic object is consecutively structured to allow for a developing argument on various angles. As such, one can say that the argument moves from Gentile context, to Jewish context to Paul's interpretation of the gospel, through the second Adam typology (Gentile) to Christian again and finally to Jewish in chapters 9-11.

From deconstruction perspective, Paul uses a large number of binary oppositions, restricting the creative and more varied interpretation which he could have allowed. Also, the way in which he deals with Judaism as it relates to law and circumcision, can be argued to be in a deconstructive sense, because he develops arguments which de-theologises it. These strategies opens, however, the gap for him to develop his own interpretation of the gospel in its universalising sense. On faith and hope: faith is characterised by "presence"

and hope, the sense is that it characterises both a present absence and a future presence - the revelation of the glory of God.

6.515 *Socio-semiotic Theory*

Social semiotics have been used especially in the study of Romans' context of situation and the various assumptions coming from Gentile and Jewish contexts but also as to how the social significance of hope as advocated by Paul, could be interpreted.

Further, the field of discourse referred to the description of the different kinds of events in Romans - of which three are the arguments from Abraham (the event of belief before circumcision and law); Adam (the contamination of sin); and Christ (God's act of justification). The tenor of the discourse emerged in the different roles characters took up - e.g. Abraham, Adam, God, Christ, but also Paul's fictive interlocutor(s) in his diatribes. The mode of discourse, again, focused on especially the argumentative or rhetorical function of the language employed and the presumed contextual effects it was supposed to have.

6.516 *Rhetorical Criticism and Freytag's Model*

It was shown - especially in relation to Relevance Theory - what the presumed rhetoric was that was supposed to have cognitively transformative effects. This was especially shown with regard to *gradatio*, *inclusio* and parallelisms but also in the structuration of the text. Freytag's model allowed for the interpretation of Romans 5 as the highpoint of the text under discussion.

6.52 *Hope in the Social Context of the Epistle to the Romans*

After his salutation, Paul says in his introduction that he wishes to “impart some spiritual gift” to the Romans in order to “establish” them; that he wishes to also have some “fruit” also among the Romans; that he sees himself - with the gospel he proclaims - as “debtor” to both Greeks and Barbarians, wise and foolish; and that he wished to “preach the gospel” also to them in Rome (Rom.1:11-15). These strong statements culminated in his introduction, in his assertion that he has no “shame” in the gospel, that he sees it as a “power” of God to everyone believing, both to Jew first and the Greek and that the main theme is that the “just” - those who have a right relationship with God - should live through faith (Rom.1:16-17) and, as we have seen not by anything else - Gentile “judgement”, the “law” or “circumcision”. This is Paul’s main theme as he states himself explicitly.

However, this thesis has focused on “hope” in the social context of Romans.

In this concluding chapter, I have firstly overviewed the results of the research into this topic. I have also indicated what the rationale, procedure and content of “hope” are in Romans 5:1-11 and contextualised this hope in Romans. As argued, “hope” opens onto the future revelation of the glory of God, but also on how joy or a “boasting” in tribulations opens up onto the transformation of social and material conditions creating suffering among people. If Paul has argued for the unity of Gentile believers and Jewish believers, and if he still had to concede that creation itself is still under the influence of the brokenness in reality, then it is the unified and collective Christian “hope” which not only remains focused on God’s final revelation and restoration of creation, but also on how - by having a restored peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ, and through this faith, to “stand” in grace - the believers of all backgrounds can collectively rejoice in this future

hope but also have hope deriving from the paradoxical rejoicing in tribulations. The latter comes from the “knowing” that tribulation works out patience; and patience proven character; and proven character hope. If this is engaged in collectively in faith beyond all the differences human beings create amongst themselves, and even those differences which resulted in salvation history, in Israel’s pre-eminence, then it is not only faith but this two-sided collective hope, which transcend all difference, confront tribulation joyously and effect changes in the conditions of impossibility of justice, peace and grace - not only in relation with God, but also with self and other.

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SUMMARY

The topic of this thesis, *Hope in the Social Context of the Epistle to the Romans*, asks the question as to “why” and “how” the theme of “hope” has been so prominent in Romans, especially in Romans 5:1-11. Implicit in this topic is part of the answer - that this can be gleaned from the *social context* of not only Greek- but also Hebrew-speaking believers living in Rome at the time of Paul’s writing. This was before the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 70/71CE. The rationale for this theme was located in the social and cognitive effects of the Edict of Caesar Claudius in 54CE which banned all Jews from Rome. In this context, it needs to be remembered that Christians were still seen as a sect within Judaism. As to the procedure of hope, it was indicated that it not only derived from signifieds of this notion from canonical texts within Israelite religion and culture but also non-canonical texts, for example, from Graeco-Roman understandings of how suffering due to exploitation and banishment cultivates character. As such, it was shown that “hope” in this text not only has a futurist perspective. Rather, it also has one that derived from dealing with current materially and socially relevant ones - that of transforming understanding from dejection to that of the firm belief that the transforming of current predicaments can only arise from faith in the past actions of God in Christ, the present reality these actions resulted in and the future possibilities they opened up. Nine different perspectives were used for the theory and methodology - insights coming from Russian formalism, Prague structuralism, Peirce’s theorising of Semiotics, Reader-related and Deconstructive theories, Relevance Theory, Socio-semiotic Theory, Social Scientific Criticism, Metaphor Theory and Freytag’s five-part theory of the ‘Tragic Pyramid’ as expounded in *Die Symphonie der Evangelien: Eine Zusammenstellung der achten Bestandtheile der vier evangelischen Urkundin*.