THE MOTIF OF HASTENING THE LORD'S COMING: 2 PETER 3:1-13
AND ITS ALLEGED PARALLELS AND BACKGROUND

by

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SOLI DEO GLORIA!
SUMMARY

The motif of hastening the Lord's coming: 2 Peter 3:1-13 and its alleged parallels and background is a study of an aspect of 2 Peter's message and the problems related to that aspect. The study consists of seven chapters. Chapter one is an orientative survey of 2 Peter research defining and describing the nature and scope of the problems which are investigated in later chapters, as well as indicating the importance of the study and its general outline. In chapter two, broad hermeneutical issues which influence the investigation in chapters three, four, five and six are highlighted. Chapter three investigates the use and meanings of σπεδω derivatives in the New Testament and finds out that apart from 2 Peter, those concerned are generally not explicitly used in association with Christ's Parousia. In chapter four, relevant sections of 2 Peter are exegeted to determine this motif's role and meaning within the message of 2 Peter. Chapter four's investigation finds out that this salient motif in 2 Peter emphasises the Christian community's role of being God's important partner in the achievement of the eschatological promises associated with Christ's Parousia. Chapter five then studies alleged parallels of this motif in the New Testament outside of 2 Peter and finds out that the ideas, which 2 Peter expressed through this motif are echoed within most of the passages. In chapter six the religious background of 2 Peter is investigated and it is discovered that ideas expressed through this motif in 2 Peter appear to be generally in discontinuity with those contained in the investigated backgrounds. The final chapter highlights the contemporary relevance of the study with reference to (i) New Testament study in general, (ii) 2 Peter research in particular; and (iii) the calling and responsibilities of the church in the context of today's problems.
"Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat." (2 Peter 3:11-12 New International Version).

The present thesis is an investigation into some of the problems arising from the underlined words and it is accordingly entitled: The motif of hastening the Lord's coming: 2 Peter 3:1-13 and its alleged parallels and background. The title's first part is in the thesis also formulated as: The motif of hastening the coming of the day of God, which is closer to the words of 2 Peter 3:12. This motif is then referred to as: 2 Peter's hastening motif throughout most of the thesis.

It is hoped that this brief preface will suffice in ensuring a smooth reading of the entire thesis.
CHAPTER 1
ORIENTATION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the investigation in this chapter are:
(i) to demonstrate the importance and possibility of this study today;
(ii) to define the scope and purposes of the investigation; as well as
(iii) to describe the study's layout and general framework.

This demonstration, definition and description are done by:
(i) surveying previous contributions on matters related to the problems being investigated in the present study; and
(ii) submitting an account of the investigation's organizational structure.

1.2. SURVEY OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH INTO THIS MOTIF

This survey is in two parts. The first and largest part is an assessment of research on 2 Peter in general; while the second one makes remarks which are more relevant specifically to the motif under investigation. It is in the second part that the scope and the problems being investigated are defined. The importance of the present inquiry is indicated in both parts.

1.2.1. Remarks about New Testament scholarship contributions concerning 2 Peter
The general remarks and survey in this section focus on the issues which have characterized discussions of 2 Peter throughout history. Three other recent surveys have been undertaken by Lombard (1983), Bauckham (1988b), and Pearson (1989). It was considered necessary to complement these surveys because none of them indicates the
historical development of discussions relating to 2 Peter during different periods, nor do they strive to indicate the relations between the different periods. Lombard's survey is more statistical because of the goal it aimed to achieve; Bauckham's is more topical; while Pearson's is more typical because it surveys the works according to their types. The three surveys have characteristics which the present one lacks. On the other hand they too are deficient in the aspects which the present survey aims to make apparent. It would be very difficult to conduct a survey which is equally statistical, topical, typical and at the same time to be historical.

The present survey is also not exhaustive. Short articles and works which are considered duplicative in the same period are not mentioned. They are taken into consideration in the other chapters when the matters that they raise are relevant to the issues being discussed. The purpose is to indicate the direction of 2 Peter research in general so that the importance and need for studies such as the present one may be visible.

1.2.1.1. 2 Peter: A neglected book within New Testament scholarship

Bauckham (1988b:3713) observes that, comparatively speaking, "2 Peter has always been one of the most neglected books in New Testament Scholarship". He is of the opinion that this neglect has "probably increased in recent times" (1988b:3713).


1.2.1.2. Causes of 2 Peter's neglect

Most of the scholars observing the neglect of 2 Peter in New Testament scholarship do not make any suggestions with regard to the reasons for this development. Dunham (1983:40) rightly rules out "lack of interesting problems" as a legitimate cause, but he does not advance alternatives to account for the phenomenon.

Lombard (1983:82) correctly regards this neglect to be strange and amazing in view of
its persistence even during times when New Testament scholarship was preoccupied with discussions which could easily have drawn the attention of New Testament scholars to 2 Peter and Jude. He (1983:82) seems to suggest that the domination of New Testament research by issues like the Leben Jesu Forschung contributed towards this development.

Bauckham (1988b:3713), on the other hand, seems to be convinced that the cause of 2 Peter's neglect is the "widely accepted assumption that 2 Peter is the latest book in the New Testament canon and theologically one of the least valuable".

The marginalizing of 2 Peter in New Testament scholarship is best accounted for by a multiplicity of factors. These factors would, in addition to those suggested by Lombard and Bauckham, include the following:

(i) practical conditions in most churches as well as in institutions which promote New Testament research. Examples of these practical factors are: the preaching calendar which in most churches is not planned to ensure the use of all New Testament books regularly; and the research and teaching which in most theological seminaries and universities are not organized to ensure consistent attention regarding all the sections of the New Testament field of study.

(ii) the effect of the perennial debate concerning the authorship and authenticity of 2 Peter.

1.2.1.3. The nature and extent of this neglect
The nature and extent of this neglect become apparent when New Testament scholarship discussions about 2 Peter are surveyed. The investigation in this section therefore takes the form of a historical survey of these deliberations. The purpose of the survey is to describe the issues which characterize New Testament scholarly discussions of 2 Peter throughout history. The history of these discussions is in this survey divided into two phases. Taking the contribution of Ernst Käsemann in 1952 as initiating 2 Peter discussions into a new chapter, the investigation identifies two main phases which are the phase preceding the Second World War and the phase after the Second World War.
1.2.1.3.1. 2 Peter in New Testament scholarship discussions before the Second World War

The work of the Apostolic Fathers can be seen as the beginnings of New Testament Study (Kümmel 1973:13; Bruce 1977:22). This historical survey of 2 Peter discussions within New Testament scholarship therefore also has to take the initial deliberations of the Apostolic fathers into account.

1.2.1.3.1.1. Discussions of 2 Peter before the Middle Ages

2 Peter was the subject of intense discussions during the third and fourth centuries A.D. The evidence for these discussions is primarily the testimony of Jerome [347-420] who records that Peter wrote:

"... two epistles which are catholic, the second of which, on account of its difference from the first in style, is considered by many not to be by him"


There is also some evidence that the discussions, doubts and disputes concerning 2 Peter, to which the statement of Jerome bears witness, were already in existence during the time of Dionysius of Alexandria [bishop, ca 274-365]; and that these earlier disagreements about 2 Peter are the background for it being placed among the category of the so-called disputed books in the classification of New Testament books preserved by Eusebius when he wrote his history around 324AD (Westcott 1896:429,430; Bigg 1961:200; Warfield 1973:49,50). The context of these discussions was the last stage in the process of canonization, a process involving the five stages of composition, use, collection, selection and ratification (Johnson 1986:531; Gamble 1989:202,203). The final stage dealt with the question whether a book was to be included or excluded from what finally became the New Testament canon. Jerome's words, cited above, indicate that the discussions about 2 Peter included a comparison of its style with that of 1 Peter. What is important to note in this section of the present investigation is that the discussions regarding 2 Peter during this period concentrated on the issues concerning 2 Peter's authorship and authenticity. The context and framework which influenced the discussions constituted the ratification stage in the process of canonization.
1.2.1.3.1.2. 2 Peter during the Middle Ages

In the Middle Ages the decisions of the Councils which ultimately ratified 2 Peter for inclusion in the New Testament canon were accepted, and the church’s traditions about 2 Peter were not questioned. These traditions, known as the Glossa Ordinaria, chiefly consisted of Jerome’s introductory notes to 2 Peter (Bruce 1977:29). This attitude of the Medieval scholars concerning scripture seems sufficient to account for that period’s making no special contribution regarding New Testament scholarship discussions about 2 Peter. The attitude of the Middle Ages was the result of an approach to Scripture which has been well described by Souter (1965:181) in the following words:

"Throughout the Middle Ages the Church held to the Canon as it had become fixed in the early years of the fifth century. It did so because it was the finding of the Church."

Küimmel (1973:19) also agrees with this evaluation of the Middle Ages’ contribution regarding New Testament Study.

1.2.1.3.1.3. Discussions of 2 Peter during the sixteenth century reformation

The sixteenth century reformation was accompanied, if not also partly assisted, by the Renaissance Movement which through its influence on the so-called Humanists brought about a remarkable interest in the Greek text of the New Testament (McNally 1976:67,68; Bruce 1977:29,30). This was certainly a signal that scholars wanted more than the Vulgate translation which was considered sufficient yesteryear. The significance of this becomes apparent from Erasmus’ action when he made a new Latin translation and published it alongside the Greek text together with his Annotations which even dared to differ with those of Jerome. This was a significant challenge to part of the church’s traditions, and was perceived by some as an action undermining the authority of the Vulgate as well as the church’s traditions because Erasmus had "in the Annotations ... showed the problems created by the Vulgate rendering, and gave reasons for his own translation where it differed from the Vulgate ..." (Hall 1990:71).

The emerging new approach of the period set the Bible apart from the church tradition,
placed it above that tradition and championed the possibility of understanding the Bible even without the help of the church's tradition (Kümmel 1973:21,22).

The new attitude regarding Scripture and tradition found its clearest expression in the following statements of Martin Luther:

"Those things which have been delivered to us by God in the Sacred Scriptures must be sharply distinguished from those that have been invented by men in the Church, it matters not how eminent they be for saintliness and scholarship. The teachings of the Fathers are useful only to lead us to Scriptures, as they were led, and then we must hold to the Scriptures alone" (Kerr 1966:12,14).

These are just some of Luther's statements which prompted Jeroslav Pelikan (1959:83), editor of Luther's Works, to write:

"... the foundation of Luther's distinction between Scripture and tradition becomes apparent ... it was one thing to distinguish between Scripture and tradition as different parts of a single system of authority; it was a vastly different thing to distinguish between them as two separate systems of authority."

The two approaches clashed head-on at Worms when Luther was pressed by Von Eck who demanded that Luther interpret the Scriptures "in accordance, not with his own ideas, but with those of the saints" (Pelikan 1959:111).

This new attitude brought more scrutiny to bear on 2 Peter. The issues about its authorship and authenticity were revived and became more prominent again as "Erasmus, Cajetan, Luther, even Calvin, spoke doubtfully of its genuineness" (Warfield 1973:79; cf. Zahn 1977:283).

The discussions were therefore once more dominated by the very same issues which
characterized 2 Peter deliberations during the period before the Middle Ages. The discussions also broadened up to include the relationship between 2 Peter and Jude. Another important aspect in the discussions is that although they (i.e. 2 Peter and Jude) were considered part of the canon they seem to have been distinguished from other books in terms of value or weight. This becomes clear from the way in which Luther (1960:397-98) introduced Jude when he stated:

"Concerning the epistle of St Jude, no one can deny that it is an extract or copy of St Peter's second epistle, so very like it are all the words. He also speaks of the apostles like a disciple who comes long after them [Jude 17] and cites sayings and incidents that are found nowhere else in the Scriptures [Jude 9,14]. This moved the ancient fathers to exclude this epistle from the main body of the Scripture. Moreover the Apostle Jude did not go to Greek-speaking lands, but to Persia as it is said, so that he did not write Greek. Therefore although I value this book, it is an epistle that need not be counted among the chief books which are supposed to lay the foundations of faith."

The way in which Luther distinguished among the New Testament books would surely affect practical usage as people were likely to concentrate more on the so-called "chief books which are supposed to lay the foundation of faith".

The presence of a certain teaching in a book was therefore now starting to be used as a yardstick determining attitudes towards it.

1.2.1.3.1.4. 2 Peter during the first half of the seventeenth century

There is some evidence that 2 Peter was the subject of some discussions during the first half of the seventeenth century. The evidence of the deliberations is the notes of Hugo Grotius which were issued between 1641 and 1650. We also have to note again that the same issues of 2 Peter's authorship and authenticity were raised. Grotius (Kümmel 1973:37), however, broadens the discussions to include evaluating 2 Peter on the basis of what he thought could not have been written before 70 AD. He therefore
mentions all the previous arguments against 2 Peter's authenticity and then supplements them by arguing that since Peter died before the Roman destruction of the Jewish temple in 70 A.D. and since no Christian expected the end of the world before such an event, then Peter cannot have written a letter in which the readers are advised about their concerns regarding the delay of the world's end because such a need and problem could only have existed after 70 A.D. (Kümmel 1973:37).

Grotius then went on to suggest that 2 Peter was most probably an authentic letter of Simeon, the Bishop of Jerusalem after James' death; and that other people wishing to make the letter more impressive and more popular added 'Peter' and 'apostle' in 2 Peter 1:1, and that they also added 'our beloved brother' to Paul's name in 2 Peter 3:15 (Bigg 1961:319; Kümmel 1973:37; Zahn 1977:284; Bruce 1977:36).

1.2.1.3.1.5. Discussions of 2 Peter during the eighteenth century

Johann David Michaelis [1717-91], Johann Salomo Semler [1725-91], and Johann Gottfried Herder [1744-1803] are some of the eighteenth century scholars who discussed 2 Peter in their writings. Michaelis and Semler are particularly well-known for their contributions in the development of the historical-critical study of the New Testament (Kümmel 1973:62,68; Bruce 1977:37). Both of them consciously adopted a historical approach to the Bible. Their views with regard to 2 Peter, however, diverged. Semler declared 2 Peter and Jude to be "pseudonymous forgeries of the second century; Jude he held to be an epitome of 2 Peter" (Zahn 1977:284); while Michaelis regarded 2 Peter to be authentic although he viewed Jude to be probably a forgery by some person who borrowed the chief part of his material from 2 Peter (Kümmel 1973:70-3; Zahn 1977:284). Herder regarded both 2 Peter and Jude to be authentic but became the first scholar to argue for the position that 2 Peter depends on Jude, contrary to the view that was dominant until then.

Since these matters appear to have been the chief content of 2 Peter discussions during the eighteenth century, it can therefore be concluded that the discussions were not very different in nature from those of previous periods. It must be noted, however, that the relationship of 2 Peter to Jude and the concept of 'forgery' can be perceived as featuring
more prominently in the discussions than in previous periods. The main issues were still 2 Peter's authorship and authenticity.

1.2.1.3.1.6. 2 Peter during the nineteenth century

The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed the rise of the so-called Tübingen School of thought under the leadership of Ferdinand Christian Baur [1792-1860]. It was a significant event which added new dimensions, not only to New Testament study in general, but also to discussions concerning 2 Peter. Most New Testament scholars consider Baur to have been greatly influenced by Hegel's philosophy "which saw the historical process developing in a dialectical pattern of thesis, antithesis and synthesis" (Bruce 1977:42; cf. Kümmel 1973:127; and Neill 1964:21). The marriage between Hegel's philosophy and the historical method in Baur's thought seems to have in a sense implied some abandonment of the historical-critical method. Neill's (1964:27) evaluation of Baur therefore seems appropriate when he writes:

"It is in the field of its presuppositions, which in themselves have nothing to do with critical or historical method, that the whole great structure of the work of Baur comes to grief. Again and again, when the presuppositions are exercising their unfortunate influence, critical method is for the time being abandoned ... It is impossible for any of us to work without presuppositions ... what is important is that we should ourselves be aware of what our presuppositions are, and that we should make allowance for the distorting influence that they are likely to have on work which professes to be critical and unprejudiced."

Baur used the Hegelian scheme of thesis, antithesis and synthesis to interpret early Christian history and concluded that at the earliest phase of it there were two groups in conflict with each other, which two groups were then reconciled during the second century (Kümmel 1973:130).

He then presumed that the books in the New Testament could be classified in accordance with the development of thesis, antithesis and synthesis (Neill 1964:24).
Baur's approach was to have far-reaching implications for New Testament scholarship in practice. It implied that those books which like 2 Peter reveal a mediating attitude rather than the sort of conflict which was supposed to have characterized first century Christianity were most likely to be regarded as second century productions (Kümmel 1973:130). It is this obvious implication in Baur's theory that most probably inspired scholars like Joseph Barber Lightfoot [1828-89] to closely study the whole corpus of Christian non-canonical literature with the purpose of determining if they in some way cite those in the New Testament canon. Their presumptions were that if document A cites document B and A's date is known, then B can be presumed to antedate A (Neill 1964:39).

It is owing to this development that the discussions of 2 Peter's authorship and authenticity during the second half of the nineteenth century became a search and demonstration of citations and allusions to it in early Christianity's non-canonical literature. Abbot (1882:152,153) maintained that 2 Peter does not appear to have been used and known until the time of Clement of Alexandria, around 200 AD. Farrar (1882:401-23; 1888:58-59) and Warfield (1883) entered the debate by indicating what they considered as citations from and allusions to 2 Peter. It must be observed that this search and demonstration of citations was still an aspect of the debate around 2 Peter's authorship and authenticity. The fruit of these investigations are reflected and preserved in Zahn's "Introduction to the New Testament" and especially in Bigg's introduction to his commentary on 2 Peter.

1.2.1.3.1.7. 2 Peter during the pre-Second World War period of the twentieth century
The period of the twentieth century before the Second World War does not seem to have made any new special direct contributions with regard to 2 Peter discussions in New Testament scholarship. This period, however, witnessed the rise of new approaches which would make their impact felt in 2 Peter discussions after the Second World War. It is therefore judged appropriate that these approaches be briefly surveyed in this inquiry as well.

The new viewpoints which emerged were a result of modifications and refinements of the
historical-critical method. It became clear towards the end of the nineteenth century that there were merits in maintaining, as the Tübingen School had insisted, that the "books of the New Testament are to be understood within the framework of the history of primitive Christianity" (Kümmel 1973:174). The problem with the position of the Tübingen School, however, was the particular description or presentation which that School suggested. The valid points of the Tübingen School were accepted, but the search for other conceptions of the history of primitive Christianity was continued.

Albrecht Ritschl maintained that early Catholicism [broadly speaking: second century Christianity] was not to be conceived as being the result of a conciliation process between the Jewish and Gentile Christianities of the first century, nor as having been influenced by Jewish Christianity. It was, in his viewpoint, best understood as "gentile Christianity with wide appeal", a Christianity which was not even significantly influenced by Paul, that was the root of early Catholicism (Kümmel 1973:162).

Adolf Harnack was even more explicit in insisting that early Christianity was deeply influenced by the Hellenistic culture of its time of origin (Rumscheidt 1989:110).

He therefore rejected the contrasting of Paulinism with Jewish Christianity as well as the identification of Paulinism with Gentile Christianity (Kümmel 1973:180). According to Harnack, the contrast between broad Jewish Christianity (which includes Paulinism) and early Catholicism are most evident when their eschatological outlooks are compared with each other. He regarded the eschatological outlook of Jewish Christianity as being characterized by having "the hope of Christ's speedy return" as a "most important article" in its Christology (Kümmel 1973:180). He was criticized by, among others, Zahn for seeming to remove all continuity between Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity.

Otto Pfleiderer refined Harnack's positions and started representing primitive Christianity "consistently as the product of a development in connection with the religions of its time" (Kümmel 1973:207). He was therefore emphasizing the influence of both Judaism and Hellenism, including even that of Hellenistic cults and religious forms such as the Eleusinian mysteries, on Christianity. This view which characterize the so-called 'History
of Religions School' viewed the New Testament as being basically syncretistic. It was expressed by Herman Gunkel (1910:35) as follows:

"Unsere These ist für das Folgende, dass das Christentum, aus dem synkretistischen Judentum geboren, starke synkretische Züge aufweist. Das Urchristentum gleicht einem Strome, der aus zwei grossen Quellflüssen zusammengeflossen ist: der eine ist spezifisch israelitisch, er entsspringt im A.T., der andere aber fliesst durch das Judentum hindurch von fremden orientalischen Religion her. Hierzu kommt dann im Abendlande noch der griechische Faktor."

It is because of this development that scholars like Johannes Weiss started emphasizing the "historical connection of Jesus and early Christianity with late Judaism" (Kümmel 1973:226). Weiss emphasized the influence of late Jewish apocalypticism on the message of Jesus Christ about the kingdom of God. He arrived at this viewpoint as a result of the historical approach which he viewed as the methodology which works with the premise that:

"a historically somewhat later phenomenon is the necessary outcome of its environment ... there is no such thing as an 'origin' in the sense of an entirely new creation, ... the 'new'... is always in large measure a 'regrouping' of older elements" (Kümmel 1973:276).

These issues and views continued to be discussed until the Second World War. Criticisms from scholars like Barth who insisted on the need for a more theological understanding of the New Testament helped to highlight some hermeneutical problems to which attention was also given in due course. It is not necessarily for that particular part of the development to be surveyed in this inquiry; but what should be observed in this section is that while these issues and viewpoints were being developed, their implications for books like 2 Peter were not being taken into consideration. It is therefore understandable that when noting this phenomenon Lombard (1983:82) wrote:
"Dit is eienaardig en selfs bevreemend dat die besondere aandag aan die eskatologie sedert Johannes Weiss se epogmakende boek in 1892 nie groter toespitsing op die twee Briewe (i.e. 2 Peter & Jude) ten gevolg gehad het nie."

1.2.1.3.1.8. Conclusions
This survey of 2 Peter discussions until the Second World War seems to justify the conclusion that these deliberations were primarily about 2 Peter's authorship and authenticity. Other problems which were discussed, although within the context of the debate about its authorship and authenticity, are:

(i) 2 Peter's relationship to 1 Peter. The relationship is primarily studied to determine if their styles could be of the same author.
(ii) What criteria were used for its acceptance in the canon?
(iii) The concept of pseudonymity or forgery also featured in discussions.
(iv) 2 Peter's relationship with Jude.
(v) The problem concerning its date of composition.
(vi) Its so-called conciliatory purpose as confirmation and evidence of second century Christianity.
(vii) Citations from and allusions to it in the writings of the apostolic fathers.
(viii) Its eschatology and whether or not its author cherished an ideal of the imminent return of Christ.

These are some of the problems which were discussed. They were, however, discussed within the context of the debate about its authorship and authenticity, a debate which kept raging until the Second World War.

1.2.1.3.2. 2 Peter in New Testament scholarship discussions after the Second World War
The essay of Ernst Käsemann has been very influential in provoking and setting the agenda for post-Second World War discussions of 2 Peter within New Testament scholarship. This influence of Käsemann's essay is recognized by, among others, Neyrey (1980a:407); and Bauckham (1988b:3728). The investigation in this section surveys the contribution of different scholars.
1.2.1.3.2.1. **Käsemann**

Käsemann's contribution is to a great extent a participation in the debate about the authorship and authenticity of 2 Peter. The evidence of this participation is in that he raises most of the matters which had characterized the debate in the periods preceding his contribution. For instance, he makes statements such as the following:

"From all that has been said so far, it emerges that the epistle is a piece of documentation of the process of demarcation between right belief and heterodoxy; ... it is the latest in date of all New Testament documents and in any event not written by the Apostle Peter ... Similarly, we do not need to undertake any accurate attempt at dating, but can content ourselves with the general assumption that we can settle for the middle of the second century. ... Chapter 2 is, without any doubt, partly an extension and partly a revision of Jude ..." (1964:172,173).

He (1964:176) even raises the issue of 2 Peter being written as a will and connects it to that of pseudonymy.

It is also important to observe that his discussion was not only a repetition of the old arguments in the long-raging debate about the authorship and authenticity of 2 Peter. There is, in Käsemann's discussion, an important broadening of the debate to include new matters and especially to include the use of a new framework. The new framework which Käsemann uses to raise the old problems afresh is the one developed by the discussions which took place towards the end of the nineteenth century and during the early decades of the twentieth century. They are described in section 1.2.1.3.1.7 above. It was also observed (in 1.2.1.3.1.7 above) that when the new approaches were being developed scholars of the time did not seem to have applied these new approaches to 2 Peter. The importance of Käsemann in 2 Peter research therefore lies in that he became the first scholar to attempt an investigation of 2 Peter utilizing the new framework of the history of early Christianity.

The new framework involves the representation of early Christianity's history as being
made up of two parts. The first part, usually known as 'primitive Christianity', is then contrasted with the second part, which is usually known by terms such as 'early Catholicism' or 'incipient Catholicism' (Bruce 1977:50; Martin 1978:380). The second part is then conceived of as having had a type of Christianity which differed significantly from that of 'primitive Christianity'. The Christianity of early Catholicism is usually viewed as having been characterized by traits like:

(i) the fading of the Parousia hope;
(ii) increasing institutionalization, and
(iii) the crystallization of the faith into set forms, as well as
(iv) the fixing of the canon (Harrington 1973:98; Marshall 1974:223; Martin 1978:280-1; and Dunn 1990:344). Documents which seem to have these traits are then summarily regarded as having originated in the second century.

Käsemann clearly uses the concept of 'early Catholicism' in his study of 2 Peter. This is apparent in statements like:

"... the second epistle of Peter is from beginning to end a document expressing an early Catholic viewpoint and is perhaps the most dubious writing in the canon" (1964:169).

He also seems to see many traits of early Catholicism in 2 Peter. The most important of these are:

(i) The viewpoint that schisms or heresies were unknown in the hallowed days of Christian origins and that, on the contrary, they are "manifestations of decay" (170).
(ii) The failure of the writer to clearly reveal "direct knowledge of those who are in conflict with the primitive Christian eschatology. This corresponds to the tactics employed by the sub-apostolic age in the fight against heretics" (170).
(iii) The presence of a defined canon of Scripture. He expresses this as follows:

"... it is particularly illuminating to find that the writer is familiar with a, if not the, canon of Scripture which coincides to a considerable extent with the one we know ..." (172).
(iv) The epistle's "conception of the apostolate and tradition" (173). He comments on this trait as follows:

"The conception of an apostle has therefore changed. The messenger of the gospel has become the guarantor of the tradition, the witness of the resurrection has become the witness of the historia sacra, the bearer of the eschatological action of God has become a pillar of the institution which dispenses salvation, the man who is subject to the eschatological temptation has become the man who brings securitas" (176,177).

(v) The lack of Christological orientation to its eschatology (178).

(vi) The fact that the epistle finds it necessary to defend against the rejection of the primitive Christian hope; but defends it in such a way that it does not become the central point. He writes:

"... eschatology may be the theme of the epistle but we are struck by the fact that it is not the central point of the theology propounded therein. This is another difference between the writer and primitive Christianity, the history and theology of which can be comprehended and described only in terms of eschatology" (183).

In this way Käsemann maintains that while the author of 2 Peter sets out to defend primitive eschatology, his conception of primitive eschatology was so poor that he ended up asserting a half-hearted and only partly eschatological teaching. He expresses this clearly when stating:

"... we can see that II Peter has lost all understanding of this 'He comes in triumph'; it is determined by the expectation of something impersonal - the divine nature ... This is to abandon the peculiar theme of the primitive Christian eschatology and to re-establish that form of apocalyptic which Jews and Greeks also treasure and
preach ... A non-christologically orientated eschatology can only lead to a Christology which is only half-heartedly and partly eschatological..." (183).

(vii) The ethical teaching of the letter. He criticizes it as follows:

"The same is true of the ethics of the epistle. After what we said above, we need not go into detail. There is no longer any link with justification. This means that the nova oboedientia is no longer seen as primitive Christianity saw it - as life under the sign of the Resurrection. Let us concede that here, too, there is still some reference to eschatology. But now the point of it is to provide a basis for a doctrine of rewards and punishments. The man who struggles for virtue wins for himself the promised prize. In the place of the obedience of faith, effected in us by the Spirit, the new Christian morality appears. But it is new only in the sense that it is countersigned by a new authority. For both in content and in structure it is very little different from what was possible and, indeed, already available in any form of Judaized Hellenism" (184).

These citations demonstrate the nature of the issues that were being raised by Käsemann. They reveal that even in the new matters that Käsemann was raising, he was in a sense continuing the discussion and the debate about the authorship and authenticity of 2 Peter. The new framework and the new matters raised by him become no more than a new angle from which he continues the debate. Käsemann was not just maintaining that 2 Peter is not authentic simply on the basis of the traditional arguments which usually mainly centered around introductory matters, but he was arguing that it is non-authentic also because its message in all its facets does not correspond with what he judges to be the authentic message of the primitive Christian community. It is for this reason that Käsemann's essay has rightly been regarded as a "full scale attack on 2 Peter" (Bauckham 1988b:3730). The acceptance of Käsemann's thesis would justify 2 Peter's neglect and indeed continue to marginalize it further; for who would care about preaching and
teaching a non-authentic message when an authentic one is readily available! Käsemann's essay seems also to have been a deliberate attempt to draw the interest of scholars towards 2 Peter. His essay was in a sense compelling New Testament scholarship discussions of 2 Peter to take a new turn, because the allegations of Käsemann concerning 2 Peter had to be verified or refuted, but the only satisfactory way in which this could be accomplished would no longer be just the reiteration of the old traditional arguments alone; because the matters raised by Käsemann demanded that what he termed "dutiful treatment" of 2 Peter be put aside in exchange for closer scrutiny of it.

1.2.1.3.2.2. **Green's contribution**
Green's contribution is by a monograph (1960) and a popular commentary which is in its second edition (1987). His discussion in the monograph is chiefly a defence of 2 Peter's authenticity. He does this by examining some of the arguments which have been advanced against 2 Peter. Most of the arguments examined are, however, old ones. It is only in the commentary (1987:26-8) that he does deal with some of Käsemann's interpretations and finds them not convincing. What must be noted in this section is simply that his discussion is a form of participation in the debate about the epistle's authenticity and related matters.

1.2.1.3.2.3. **Robinson (1976)**
Robinson's study concerns itself primarily with the issue of dating 2 Peter. The issues of dating, authorship and authenticity in the case of 2 Peter, however, are so intertwined that his discussion also is dominated by this long-raging debate. He takes issue with many of Käsemann's interpretations, for instance, when he maintains that the dualism in 2 Peter is not "material and metaphysical but moral and eschatological"; that "your apostles" in 2 Peter 3:2 can as well mean "those of the apostles particularly associated with you"; and that therefore "need not imply the end of the apostolic age". He then judges the case for 2 Peter being pseudonymous as not yet established, stating:

"There is an appetite for pseudonymity that grows by what it feeds on ... If you believe it is everywhere, you cease to argue for it anywhere. Perrin
writes: 'pseudonymity is almost a way of life in the world of the New Testament and also in the New Testament itself. Certainly it is among New Testament scholars!' (Robinson:175,179,186)

The point that is made in this section is simply that in Robinson's discussion, the debate about 2 Peter's authenticity also dominates.

1.2.1.3.2.4. Fornberg's contribution (1977)
Fornberg's study primarily concerns 2 Peter's setting, and also deals with some of the issues raised by Käsemann. Fornberg does not, for instance, regard the view which contrasts a so-called 'early Catholicism' with a 'primitive Christianity' as helpful in studying 2 Peter. He considers it as an "artificial category which cannot do justice to a document such as 2 Peter" (Fornberg 1977:4,5). He explains the use of Hellenistic terms and categories in 2 Peter as due to a communication process whereby the same message is being proclaimed in Hellenistic terms. He therefore disagrees with the notion that the use of those terms implies a change in the message and argues in turn that it is those terms which in fact are to some extent undergoing a change, when he states:

"When Greek terms were used in an alien cultural environment they could lose their original associations and acquire new meanings" (Fornberg 1977:3).

He regards the "Hellenism" in 2 Peter not as something that necessarily imply the presence of an early Catholicism during the second century. He in fact suggests that the setting of 2 Peter seems most appropriate in the first century at a time when the passing away of 'the fathers' referred to in 2 Peter 3:4 could still be expected to create a problem (Fornberg 1977:65). The debate about 2 Peter's authenticity is therefore present in Fornberg's study even though it is not directly dominant.

1.2.1.3.2.5. Neyrey (1980)
Neyrey's study on "The Form and Background of the Polemic in 2 Peter" (1980a) examines 2 Peter in an effort to respond to some of Käsemann's allegations against the
letter. Thus he writes:

"It is my contention that many of Käsemann's criticisms are misplaced because his analysis did not attempt to understand 2 Peter in its own historical context" (Neyrey 1980a:407).

Neyrey's main contribution is the demonstration of possible parallels to the form of the argument in 2 Peter. He views 2 Peter's polemic as very much akin to the polemic that one would find in the broad Hellenistic period when it was necessary to defend against the standpoints of Epicureans. He sums up the thrust of his argument in response to Käsemann's views as follows:

"This investigation of the apology of 2 Peter suggests several correctives to Käsemann's critique. The arguments there are not disconnected and embarrassingly assembled; ... The presumed lack of Christological focus does not stem from the ineptitude of an "early Catholic" writer; the criticism is misplaced since the polemic confronting 2 Peter was a specific attack on theodicy, not Christology: the issue was divine judgement in general, not Christ's in particular. Hence it would be inappropriate to find a Pauline eschatology presented, for that is not what is called for in the debate in 2 Peter. The issue is theological. The focus of the doctrine of retribution is hardly anthropocentric, for both polemic and apology are concerned with retribution as a proper act of God. When we investigate the debate in 2 Peter in terms of its proper historical context, the criticisms of Käsemann are shown to be misplaced" (Neyrey 1980a:431,432).

The debate about the authenticity of 2 Peter in Neyrey's study is something peripheral as he concentrates on the nature of the argument in 2 Peter and takes issue with Käsemann's points of view only to emphasize that they seem to be based on a misunderstanding of the nature of the argument.
1.2.1.3.2.6. Bauckham’s contribution

Bauckham is one of today’s New Testament scholars who seem to have already made an enormous contribution with reference to research on 2 Peter. His major contributions are: "The Delay of the Parousia" (1980); "Jude, 2 Peter" (1983) which is becoming a popular commentary; "Pseudo-Apostolic Letters" (1988a); and 2 Peter: An Account of Research" (1988b).

In "The Delay of the Parousia" (1980), Bauckham maintains that the question of delay was already a burning issue in the Judaism of the time when Christianity originated and that the way in which the problem of the delay of the Parousia is handled in 2 Peter is in many ways similar with the manner in which that same problem was being dealt with in Judaism. Thus he writes:

"Early Christianity was both continuous and discontinuous with first-century Judaism. Its theology shared many features of contemporary Jewish thought, though these were given a distinctively Christian character by their relationship to Christianity’s unique faith in Jesus Christ. ... in some respects the problem of the delay of the Parousia was the same problem of eschatological delay which had long confronted Jewish apocalyptic eschatology; ..."

and

"... the author of 2 Peter, then, met the problem of delay as posed by the 'scoffers' from the resources of the Jewish apocalyptic tradition. His arguments were not novel arguments hastily contrived to meet the unexpected crisis of delay. They were arguments familiar in contemporary Jewish circles where the problem of delay was part and parcel of the apocalyptic tradition" (1980:3,27).

Bauckham’s commentary takes issue with Käsemann’s viewpoints on many relevant passages. He agrees with Käsemann that 2 Peter is pseudonymous but Bauckham’s
concept of pseudonymity with respect to 2 Peter differs significantly with that of Käsemann. Bauckham regards the pseudonymity in 2 Peter as a literary fictional genre combined with the letter format to enable the author to communicate with those who are far from him in terms of both space and time. He explains as follows:

"... the combination of genres in this case created a genre with a unique communicative capacity: a testamentary letter could communicate at a distance in space (like all letters) and also at a distance in time, for in a written testament it is possible explicitly to address not only those who will read it immediately but also those who will read it after the testator's death ...") (1983:133).

Bauckham has been criticized for his conception of pseudonymity (Green 1987:34-8); but it must be observed that in spite of his view of 2 Peter as a pseudonymous document, Bauckham considers it to be defending an eschatology which belongs to the primitive Christian community, and that it is a defence of that eschatology not in the second century but in the first century. We find many statements directed at Käsemann's viewpoints throughout the commentary; for example, when he writes:

"Second Peter's response to heresy is not the 'early Catholic' response of insistence on institutional authority and credal orthodoxy. Nor does the author respond to the delay of the Parousia in the way that 'early Catholicism' is supposed to have responded, by highlighting Christology or ecclesiology in compensation for the inevitable loss of the imminent expectation. On the contrary, he reasserts the primitive eschatological perspective. It is plain that the label 'early Catholic' is no help in understanding 2 Peter" (1983:153).

Bauckham's contribution in "Pseudo Apostolic Letters" is that he attempts to determine some objective criteria whereby a letter's pseudonymity may be ascertained. He endeavours to accomplish this by comparing pseudepigraphal letters. He continues to connect the use of a testament genre in a letter as most likely an indication for the
presence of pseudonymity. He, however, seems to still leave the door open for the possibility of a non-pseudepigraphal use of the testament genre (1988a:489).

Bauckham's "2 Peter; An Account of Research" (1988b) is a topical survey in which the different points of view on most major 2 Peter issues are assessed. In it he still finds space to respond to some of Käsemann's positions.

Bauckham's argument seems also in a sense to mark the end of a chapter in that his contributions extensively deal with Käsemann's viewpoints in a manner that would no longer justify a study aimed at verifying or refuting some of Käsemann's views today. It is understandable therefore that Bauckham's discussion is at many points a participation in the debate around 2 Peter's authenticity.

1.2.1.3.2.7. Smith (1985)

Smith also regards the author of 2 Peter as having used a testament genre. His position, however, differs from that of Bauckham. Smith considers 2 Peter to be a second century pseudonymous document that uses the figure of Peter in controversy with other Christians simply because Peter's figure was rated highly. He even suggests that the first letter to which reference is made in 2 Peter 3:1 is not 1 Peter but rather Jude which the author wrote to combat views of some Christians, which views the author regarded as heretical, in the second century; and that when it became apparent that the first letter (i.e. Jude) did not produce the desired effect, he wrote again but then this time invoking the authority of Peter and became successful in his objectives. The second letter then is considered by Smith to be the canonical 2 Peter (1985:78). His discussion is still dominated by the issues around the authorship and authenticity of 2 Peter. He also seems to still use the dated categories of the Tübingen School and regards 2 Peter as montanistic and not in any way a defence of apostolic teaching on eschatology and then states:

"The suspicion is therefore that 2 Peter is not quite the orthodox document which it is so often held to be ..." (Smith 1985:100).
1.2.1.3.2.8. **Watson's contribution (1988a)**

Watson's study is an attempt at providing a complete rhetorical analysis of 2 Peter using "the Greco-Roman system of rhetoric" (Watson 1988a:7). This seems appropriate in the context of the revival in rhetorical analysis in New Testament Study; a revival that has been traced back to around 1970 (Mack 1990:12). Watson's study is not dominated by the discussion around 2 Peter's authorship and authenticity; and it is also not a direct response to Käsemann's views except in the indirect manner that its implications make it difficult today to still follow Käsemann in maintaining that the individual arguments in 2 Peter are disconnected.

1.2.1.3.2.9. **Conclusions**

This survey of New Testament scholarship discussions concerning 2 Peter in the post-Second World War period seems to warrant the following concluding observations:

(i) The discussion of 2 Peter was to a great extent influenced by Käsemann's study. His essay provoked and set the agenda for most discussions of 2 Peter during this period.

(ii) The issues raised by Käsemann's essay appear to have received adequate attention especially as the major studies on 2 Peter during this period indicated that most of Käsemann's allegations about 2 Peter seem misplaced.

(iii) The discussion of 2 Peter continued to focus on the broad issues around its authorship and authenticity. Käsemann's essay was also a form of participation in this long-raging debate. It is within this context that Leite (1971:143) stated:

"It is unfortunate that every study of Second Peter has to begin with a review of the perennial debate regarding the authorship and authenticity of this particular letter, because after centuries of debate the issue is still far from settled."

(iv) Matters which received attention within the contexts of responding to Käsemann's
essay and the broader debate concerning 2 Peter's authorship and authenticity, primarily are the following:
(a) The relevance of the concept "early Catholicism" in studying 2 Peter was argued frequently.
(b) The concept of pseudonymity also featured prominently in the discussions.
(c) 2 Peter's relationship with Jude and 1 Peter continued to be deliberated on.
(d) Literary genres appropriate to 2 Peter, for example, the discussions around the testament genre were exhaustively discussed.
(e) The identification of the false teaching as well as the false teachers who are being opposed in 2 Peter was discussed.
(f) 2 Peter's setting was analysed.
(g) The dating of 2 Peter was debated.
(h) The nature of the argument in 2 Peter was deliberated on.
(i) A Rhetorical analysis of 2 Peter was conducted.

1.2.1.3.3. Concluding remarks concerning the nature and extent of 2 Peter's neglect in New Testament scholarship

The investigation in section 1.2.1.3. makes some revelations concerning the nature and extent of 2 Peter's neglect in New Testament scholarship apparent. Two of these revelations which deserve singling out here are:
(i) Although the neglect of 2 Peter implies that there have been few works on it, its real nature and extent seem primarily to relate to a lack of works which are more diverse, in view of the fact that most of the works were done as part of the debate on its authorship and authenticity.
(ii) There is not only a need for work that is done outside the context of these issues which have tended to dominate 2 Peter discussions; but there also seems to be a distinct want in 2 Peter research for works that focus on specific aspects of the message which the author of 2 Peter seems to have been eager to communicate. Most of the works deal with general matters and therefore tend to be duplicative.
1.2.1.4. **Concluding remarks about New Testament scholarship works on 2 Peter and the importance of the present study**

This section of the study notes the neglect of 2 Peter in New Testament scholarship as well as to account for it. The investigation also probes the nature and extent of this neglect. The following concluding remarks now seem appropriate:

(i) The issues around 2 Peter's authorship and authenticity seem to have been well debated, perhaps even too much so. The debate will no doubt continue. There seems to be no pressing need at present, however, for undertaking a study on these same issues.

(ii) The issues raised by Kasemann's essay seem to have been thoroughly dealt with so that there seems to be no great need today to undertake a study on those issues.

(iii) The nature of the two debates, that is, the broad one on the issues about the authorship and authenticity of 2 Peter, and its continuation in the debates around the issues raised by Kasemann's essay; were however, of such a nature that some aspects of 2 Peter's ideas could not receive attention. These are problems which do not seem to have a direct bearing on the questions that were being debated. The motif of hastening the coming of the day of God seems to be one of these specific aspects of 2 Peter's ideas which could not receive attention apparently because of having no immediate relationship with those issues which were central to the matters that were being deliberated on. The irony of the matter seems to be that without these type of studies which take up specific problems in 2 Peter, the other broad issues hardly ever get concluded with finality. The importance of the present study is therefore that it takes up a problem which did not receive much attention within the context of the debates that have dominated studies on 2 Peter.
1.2.2. Statement of the problem: Remarks about the New Testament scholarship's treatment of 2 Peter's hastening motif

The aims of this second part of the survey are:

(i) to define the scope of the present investigation; and
(ii) to describe the problems which are the subject of this inquiry more precisely; as well as
(iii) to furnish further grounds for the importance of the investigation.

This is achieved by surveying the way in which previous New Testament scholarship appears to have treated the motif of hastening the coming of the day of God in 2 Peter.

1.2.2.1. Dissertations and monographs on this motif

Research failed to find any dissertation or monograph specifically written on the motif. This is not surprising in view of the present survey's results already established (see section 1.2.3. above). Fornberg's work (1977) has a chapter on the eschatology of 2 Peter, but he discusses other problems and does not seem to get into the problems connected to this motif. Kasemann's essay (1964:180) only makes a passing remark to it while discussing the ethical teaching of 2 Peter.

1.2.2.2. The treatment of this motif in "Theologies of the New Testament"

The theologies of the New Testament also seem to be generally taciturn on this motif. The ones inspected include the following: Stauffer (1955), Stagg (1962), Schelke (1974), Ladd (1975), Guthrie (1981), Kümmel (1983) and Morris (1986). This inspection reveals that there is no reference to the problems of this motif in these works except a few sentences in Ladd's book. Ladd's section on 2 Peter includes a short explanation of 2 Peter 3:12 which reads as follows:

"The Parousia can be hastened by proper Christian conduct. The universal proclamation of the gospel must precede the end, and will hasten its coming" (1975:606).

The silence of most "theologies of the New Testament" is not surprising in view of the fact that most of them seem to be very reductionistic (Fuller 1989:571-3).
1.2.2.3. The treatment of this motif in "New Testament ethics"


1.2.2.4. Treatments of the motif in works on eschatology

Many works which treat the New Testament teaching about the end time or Christ's Parousia were found to concentrate on other aspects of the teaching and failing to mention this motif. Examples of these are: Barton (1962), Robinson (1979b), and Travis (1982). There are a few that devote small paragraphs to the motif and thereby also indicate the problems connected to the concept of hastening the coming of the day of God. Examples are: Moore (1966:154-5), and Matter (1980:128-9).

1.2.2.5. The treatment of 2 Peter's hastening motif by commentators

The commentaries on 2 Peter best illustrate the problems connected to this motif. All the commentaries on 2 Peter are compelled to deal with the motif to some extent especially because it seems very conspicuous in 2 Peter 3:12 where the clause προσδοκώντας καὶ σπεδοντας τὴν παρουσίαν ... appears. The different comments on these words reveal that most commentaries actually treat the motif without reference to the overall teaching and argument of 2 Peter. They, however, do try to pay attention to the immediate context. It is certainly due to considerations of space that commentators can be expected not to write much about it. Inspection of most commentaries reveals that there are four main problems which demand investigation. These problems are:

(i) whether or not the use and meaning of σπεδοντας in 2 Peter 3:12 is unique within the New Testament. This issue involves the question about the most appropriate way of rendering σπεδοντας in 2 Peter 3:12;

(ii) the role and meaning of the motif of hastening the coming of the day of God within the message of 2 Peter;
(iii) the question of whether or not such a motif is present in other books of the New Testament outside 2 Peter; and

(iv) the question of religious backgrounds which possess ideas analogous to the motif of hastening the coming of the day of God as employed by 2 Peter.

Some of the comments that commentators have made on 2 Peter 3:12 and which accordingly illustrate these four problems concerning 2 Peter's hastening motif are:

(i) Greijdanus (1929:345) discusses the translation problem around σπεύδοντας and then alludes to the difficulties about the meaning of 2 Peter's hastening motif by writing:

"Daarbij komt de vraag of wij's Heeren toekomst verhaasten kunnen. Objektief kan dat niet. Noch ons gebed noch onze Godvruchtigheid kan de komst van den dag des Heeren verhaasten. Gods raadsbesluit verandert niet alleen niet, maar ook moeten eerst alle uitverkorenen toegebracht zijn, voordat die dag aanbreken kan."

(ii) Leaney (1967:135) hints to the problem concerning the uniqueness of 2 Peter's hastening motif within New Testament theology when he comments:

"Only here in the whole of the New Testament is there a certain instance of any teaching that men can work to hasten on the day of God. The only possible exception to this statement is in Acts 3:19."

(iii) Bauckham (1983:325) raises the question concerning the appropriate religious background for 2 Peter's hastening motif when he discusses the translation of σπεύδοντας and then states:

"the Jewish background is decisive in favor of 'hastening'."

These citations illustrate the problems which commentators seem to experience when they come to 2 Peter 3:12.
1.2.2.6. Importance and scope of the investigation

The problems noted in section 1.2.2.5. above furnish further grounds for the need and importance of the present study. The importance of the investigation also lies in that it might be a way of enriching New Testament exegesis, theology and ethics in the light of the way these branches of New Testament study appear to have handled this motif so far (cf.1.2.2.2. and 1.2.2.3. above). There are also, apart from these considerations, practical pastoral problems which can be furnished as grounds for the importance of the investigation. Example of a practical pastoral problem is a Bible study group seeking clarity on this aspect of 2 Peter's message. However, the main ground is the fact that there seems to have been no monograph or dissertation specifically written on the problems concerning this salient motif in 2 Peter's eschatology.

The present investigation deals therefore with a seeming paradox in 2 Peter's message. The author of 2 Peter speaks about the 'promise' of His coming and that the day of the Lord is therefore surely coming like a thief but then also in the same document and context speak of his audience's hastening that same promised surely coming day. The scope of the investigation is the four problems identified and described in section 1.2.2.5. above.

1.2.2.7. Concluding Remarks

The survey in this section once more supports the observation of Dunham (1983:40; cf. section 1.2.1.2. above) that the neglect of 2 Peter is most certainly not due to "lack of interesting problems". The problems connected to this motif surely seem great but interesting and appealing.

1.3. THE INVESTIGATION'S LAYOUT AND PROCEDURE

This part of the inquiry aims at describing the investigation's general outline. The four problems associated with the motif of hastening the coming of the day of God in 2 Peter (see section 1.2.2.5 above) are investigated by

(i) undertaking a word study about the use and meanings of \( \sigma \pi \varepsilon \delta \omega \) derivatives in the
New Testament (chapter three);
(ii) exegetically studying relevant sections of 2 Peter (chapter four);
(iii) surveying New Testament passages suspected of containing ideas analogous to those which 2 Peter expresses through the motif of hastening the coming of the day of God (chapter five); and 
(iv) examining certain religious backgrounds such as Zoroastrianism and Rabbinic Judaism which are suspected of containing ideas which are analogous to those in the motif of hastening the coming of the day of God as employed by 2 Peter (chapter six).

This arrangement of the thesis means that, although the relevant sections of 2 Peter - especially 3:1-13 - can also be studied after and against the backdrop of the issues involving the religious backgrounds and other New Testament passages, the present inquiry studies the relevant New Testament passages where parallels allegedly occur and possible religious backgrounds after and in the light of an exegesis of 2 Peter's relevant sections. Such an approach appears preferable because the appropriateness of the relevant religious backgrounds and passages is itself also a matter to be investigated and demonstrated rather than to be merely assumed.

The word study, exegesis, survey and examination in chapters three, four, five and six respectively, are approached with expectations and attitudes which are nurtured within the context of reflecting upon broad relevant hermeneutical issues. These hermeneutical issues are highlighted in chapter two. The progression and unity of the study are enhanced as follows: The results of chapter three are important for chapters four and five, while chapter four's results are cardinal for chapters five and six. The final chapter (i.e. chapter seven) briefly highlights the contemporary relevance of the study and of the message which 2 Peter expresses through its motif of hastening the coming of the day of God.
CHAPTER 2
SOME FUNDAMENTAL METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES PERTAINING TO THE STUDY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of this inquiry has been demarcated as the four problems which are related and concern the motif of hastening the coming of the day of God in 2 Peter (see section 1.2.2.5 above). Chapter one also indicated that the present inquiry into these problems envisages the following tasks:

(i) a word study about \(\sigma\pi\varepsilon\delta\omega\) derivatives within the New Testament;
(ii) an exegetical study of 2 Peter's sections;
(iii) a survey of New Testament passages which are suspected of containing ideas analogous to those which 2 Peter expresses through the motif of hastening the coming of the day of God; and
(iv) an examination of some religious backgrounds which are suspected of having analogous ideas (see section 1.3.1 above).

The demarcation of these problems, and the envisaged tasks in particular, involves several methodological issues which are therefore fundamental to the inquiry. These issues are therefore a cardinal part of the study and are accordingly highlighted in the present chapter.

2.2. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES WHICH ARE ESPECIALLY PERTINENT TO THE WORD STUDY IN CHAPTER THREE

There are various methods of conducting word studies available to New Testament scholars today. This variety of methods accounts for, and manifests itself in, the differences among dictionaries which were and are compiled to assist in New Testament
study (Louw 1985b:109). The availability of different methods implies that the use of a particular method involves a selection which is often determined by the scope, nature and purposes of the specific word study (Crounch 1986:226).

The method used in chapter three has been chosen taking into consideration:
(i) some major trends which have become apparent during the history of New Testament scholarship with reference to methods of word study;
(ii) some important linguistic insights concerning the nature of words; and
(iii) some common pitfalls already identified by New Testament scholarship as dangerous areas which every word study method should seek to avoid.

These three methodological areas which concern New Testament word studies are briefly explored in this part with the aim of accounting for the method of word study which is used in chapter three.

2.2.1. Major trends in the history and development of New Testament Greek word study methods

The importance of studying New Testament Greek words in order to ascertain their meanings has always been maintained by New Testament scholars even when they have been most critical of certain word studies (Barr 1961:5,6; Thiselton 1977:84; Carson 1984:25,66; and Louw 1985b:78,79). This importance primarily arises from the continuous needs for understanding, translating and interpreting the New Testament (Nida 1972a:85; Fountain 1983:45-48; Fry 1990:327). The different methods of translation and interpretation often involve some stages during which words are studied or at least presuppose the results of such studies. The significance of studying principles and methods appropriate for word studies derives from this context. It appears, therefore, to be no exaggeration when Silva (1983:31) maintains that:

"... just as the establishment of the correct text ... is a fundamental step in Biblical interpretation, so lexicology takes priority in the exegetical process"

2.2.1.1. Interest in word study methods during the Patristic period and the Middle Ages

The interest in methods of word study was alive during the period of the apostolic and
church fathers as well as during the Middle Ages. For example, Augustine [354-430] in Book 2 of his 'On Christian Instruction', advised concerning word study methods as follows:

"Obviously, an unknown word or an unknown expression causes the reader to be perplexed. If these come from foreign languages, we must ask about them from men who use those languages, or learn the languages, if we have time and ability, or study a comparison of the various translators ..." (Augustine 1945:78-9).

The predominant methods of understanding and interpreting the Bible were Antiochene which was primarily historical and literal, and Alexandrian which was more allegorical (Wood 1958:50-61; Bruce 1977:24-9; Hughes 1987:93-106). The allegorical method which had been popularized by Alexandrian scholars such as Origen [185-254] finally won the contest for supremacy over the literal method which was championed by Antiochene scholars such as Theodore of Mopsuestia [350-428] (Smalley 1964:13,14; Brown 1987:170,174). The development which led to the dominance of the allegorical method during the Middle Ages did not entirely extinguish interest in word study methods because even the allegorical method was understood to presuppose the literal meaning. This understanding of the allegorical method seems apparent in Thomas Aquinas [1225-74] who, for example in part 1 of his 'Summa Theologica' which was written around 1265, when defending the legitimacy of the allegorical method, wrote:

"The author of Holy Writ is God, in whose power it is to signify His meaning, not by word only ..., but also by things themselves. So, whereas in every other science things are signified by word, this science has the property, that the things signified by the words have themselves also a signification. Therefore that first signification whereby words signify things belongs to the first sense, the historical or literal. That signification whereby things signified by words have themselves also a signification is called the spiritual sense which is based on the literal, and presupposes it ..." (Aquinas 1952:9-10).
In spite of the live interest in word studies and word study methods during the Patristic period and the Middle Ages, the scientific study of New Testament words and word study methods seems only to have begun emerging at the beginning of the sixteenth century. There are three major forces which seem to have facilitated this major change. These forces are:

(i) The literary pursuits of the humanists. Although humanism antedates the fifteenth century, its contributions were gradual in their impact and became a major force during that century. Its impact, together with that of the other two major forces, contributed to effect major changes in word studies from the first half of the sixteenth century. Brown (1987:177-8) ably sums up the specific contributions of humanism in this regard as follows:

"In Biblical interpretation humanism's main contributions included (1) the revival of interest in old manuscripts, and (2) the revival of Hebrew and Greek in the West, with the resulting interest in Biblical philology."

(ii) The introduction of the printing press. The contribution of printing in facilitating change during the sixteenth century is widely recognized by scholars (Cole 1972:93; Brown 1987:178,179). Its specific contributions in this regard included (1) enabling the humanist scholars to work faster and easier in their literary pursuits; (2) enabling easier access to insights of fellow scholars; (3) Making mass production of the Bible possible.

(iii) The sixteenth century Reformation movement. The reformers strongly championed the translation of the bible into the vernacular languages and challenged traditional interpretations at many points (Brown 1987:179). They also, especially Calvin, became critical of the allegorical method (Wood 1958:91-4; Bruce 1977:32,33).

The combination of these three major forces did not only result in the publication of edited Greek New Testaments, but also led to the making of the first dictionary which
was specifically intended for the New Testament. This first dictionary was "a Greek-Latin glossary ... in the first volume of the Complutensian Polyglot of 1522" (Bauer et al 1979:v). This work was chiefly the result of the work led by Cardinal Jiménez de Cisneros (Hall 1990:1-51).

2.2.1.2. Trends in word study methods after 1522

The period between 1522 and the present has witnessed the publication of many other dictionaries specifically intended for New Testament study. Every new dictionary often represents an advance in the method of word study, organization of content, and at times even in content. New dictionaries also build on previous lexicons both in matters of method and content by preserving what the lexicographer considers as good aspects in preceding lexicons, while also attempting to better what the lexicographer sees as their weaknesses (Silva 1983:137,138). The relationship between the earlier and later dictionaries is therefore often both continuous as well as discontinuous. This relationship may at times be continuous to the extent as to make possible the classification of these dictionaries into certain broad traditions (Horsley 1989:75). With regard to the development of New Testament word study methods, the period between 1522 and the present has also witnessed the publication of some significant scholarly contributions which are recognized as having affected the directions along which New Testament word study methods evolved. The principles and methods enunciated in such contributions usually find expression in new dictionaries or in revisions of old ones. The dates of three major contributions in the field of New Testament word study methods make it possible to distinguish the following four major phases in the development of New Testament Greek word study methods from 1522 to our times:

(i) The period between 1522 and 1791;
(ii) The period from 1791 to around 1890;
(iii) The period between 1890 and 1961; and
(iv) the post-1961 period.

This investigation briefly considers these major phases so as to discover and make apparent the different shifts and emphases, in the development of New Testament word study methods, which characterize each phase as well as the period as a whole.
2.2.1.2.1. The period between 1522 and 1791

The availability of the Greek New Testament to many scholars and the task of making many vernacular translations stimulated more word studies during the period between 1522 and 1791. The method of interpretation during the Reformation and post-Reformation period emphasized the literal sense in a way which implied some word study. This change affected both Protestant and Roman Catholic scholars (Bruce 1977:34).

Matthias Flacius Illricus [1520-75], Joachim Camerarius [1500-74], Luis de Alcazar [1554-1613], Johan Jakob Wettstein [1693-1754], and Johan Albrecht Bengel [1687-1752] are some of the scholars who made important contributions to the study of New Testament words during this period (Kümmel 1973:27-30; 31-3; 47-48; 49-50; Bruce 1977:34-36).

Some of the dictionaries compiled during this period are: Georg Pasor's 'Lexicon Graecolatinum in Novum Testamentum' [1619]; Edward Leigh's 'Critica Sacra' [1639]; and 'Dictionariom Novi Testamenti' [1640] by Ludovicus Lucius (Bauer et al 1979:v). In their word study methods, the scholars of this period seem to have relied heavily on etymology, the use of the word in other New Testament passages and the analogy of faith. This was pointed out by Johan Friedrich Fischer in his 'Prolusiones de Vitiis Lexicorum Novi Testamenti' [1791]. Through this work, Fischer actually sought to change the current New Testament word study methods by criticizing those methods which were prominent during the period between 1522 and 1791. Arndt and Gingrich sum up the defects which Fischer identified and sought to rectify as:

"... neglect of the smaller words whose frequent use makes them extremely difficult to analyze and classify; the inclusion of too few or too many meanings; lack of logical arrangement; and insufficient attention to the background of New Testament words in Hebrew, the LXX, and secular Greek ..." (Bauer et al 1979:v).

It is especially the last-mentioned defect which is most important with regard to an evaluation of the word study methods which predominated during the period between 1522 and 1791. This "insufficient attention to the background of New Testament words..."
in Hebrew, the LXX, and secular Greek' which Fischer noted in respect of word study methods during this period was only one aspect or part of an overall approach which tended to be ahistorical in its view of the New Testament and which at times even demanded that the meaning of words and passages should be interpreted in accordance with the so-called 'analogia fidei' (Küimmel 1973:29,30).

2.2.1.2.2. The period from 1791 to around 1890

The criticisms of Fischer introduced new emphases in New Testament word study methods. It is the period in which scholars sought to rectify the defect of 'insufficient attention to the background of New Testament words in Hebrew, the LXX, and secular Greek'. Fischer's views were typical of the nineteenth century as more and more scholars sought to interpret the New Testament historically (Küimmel 1793:108-19). The demand for a more thorough historical interpretation implied that New Testament words should be interpreted or explained primarily by their use in other texts outside the New Testament. Such a development was basically in accordance with the dominance of comparative philology during the nineteenth century (Thiselton 1977:80).

This historical and comparative method of word study was evolutionary in thrust. It manifested itself even in dictionaries which were not specifically designed for New Testament study. A good example of this is Liddel & Scott's, A GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON [1843-First edition].

Comparing the Greek of the New Testament with that of the LXX and of secular classical literary Greek works led scholars to divergent views about New Testament Greek. Some did not see many differences, while others saw the differences as substantial. Among the latter group, there were those who regarded New Testament Greek as unique (McKnight 1965:87). Scholars like Schleiermacher, for example, taught the doctrine of "the language-molding power of Christianity" (Cremer 1962:iv). It is within this context that R Rothe could in 1868 even speak of New Testament Greek as "a language of the Holy Ghost" (Moulton & Milligan 1952:xi).

The methods of word study which these views promoted relied heavily on the LXX. It
was partly due to this approach that E Hatch [1835-1889] initiated with his concordance to the LXX.


All these dictionaries manifest the comparative historical methods of word study which were current during the Aufklärung. The works of Wilke, Grimm and Thayer represent the same tradition in that they attempt to include all New Testament Greek words, and also because the works of Grimm and Thayer are actually later enlargements and translations of Wilke’s work. Cremer’s work, however, deliberately excluded other New Testament words because it was motivated by the doctrine of ‘the language-molding power of Christianity’. It deals only with those New Testament words which Cremer considered to be of ‘a biblico-theological import’ (Cremer 1962:iv). With regard to the many New Testament words which did not qualify for inclusion in Cremer’s work, i.e. words like the ςπεδω derivatives, Cremer (1962:iv) considered the lexicons of classical Greek to be sufficient.

Cremer’s work was, in this respect, more theological in methodological orientation; and became the parent of the theological dictionaries which would be created after its image (Martin 1965:2).

The emphases which distinguish the period between 1791 and 1890 from the previous ones may be summed up as follows:

(a) It witnessed the introduction of the historical and comparative methods in the study of New Testament words.

(b) It also saw the beginning of the theologically orientated method of studying New Testament words.
All these emphases basically involved a diachronic approach which interprets the New Testament and studies New Testament words as well as language in general "from the point of view of its historical evolution over a period of time" (Thiselton 1977:80).

2.2.1.2.3. The period between 1890 and 1961

The non-literary Egyptian papyri started to be published around 1890 (McKnight 1965:88; Bauer et al 1979:v). This was a significant event in the history and development of New Testament word study methods. The availability of the papyri made it possible to compare their Greek with that of the New Testament; and they were, therefore, relevant with regard to the issue concerning the uniqueness of New Testament Greek. The scholar who seems to have been the first to see their relevancy and to insist on their utilization in studying New Testament Greek words is Deissmann [1866-1937]. This special contribution of Deissmann is widely acknowledged within New Testament scholarship (Moulton & Milligan 1952:xi; Martin 1965:4; McKnight 1965:88; Kümmel 1973:218-20; Silva 1980:198-200; Horsley G. 1984:393). Deissmann (1988 reprint: 176) maintained that "the notion of the specifically peculiar character of New Testament Greek" was no longer tenable because the discovered materials undermined the justification for the linguistic isolation of the New Testament.

G. Horsley (1984:393) aptly describes the basic thrust of Deissmann's contribution in this regard as having been to show that the language of the Greek Bible reflected contemporary Koine.

These new emphases were typical of what Kümmel (1973:221) calls a more

"... consistently historical view of the New Testament, which without qualification set its language and thought world into its time ..."

With regard to New Testament word studies, scholars were urged to seek and find parallels; that is, word phrases and constructions which to a certain extent correspond in the papyri and other non-literary remains of the Graeco-Roman period with the purpose of using their finds as interpretative tools in explaining the meaning of New Testament
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words. The methods which the new emphases promoted continued to be chiefly
diachronic in their general thrust. The polemic about the uniqueness of New Testament
Greek, however, continued to be acute and the differences among some dictionaries
which were compiled during that period are due to certain aspects of that debate.

Some of the dictionaries compiled during that period are: E. Preuschen's Greek-German
Lexicon [1910]; and its revision and enlargement by W. Bauer [1928]. Bauer gave it a
new form in his dictionary of 1937. This 1937 dictionary then passed through several
revisions and is commonly known as BAGD today because of it finally having become
the work of W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker (Bauer et al
1979:v,vi). The tradition represented by this dictionary made substantial use of the non­
literary remains of the Graeco-Roman period in its word studies. Another dictionary
which consciously sought to embody the new emphases is that by J. H. Moulton and
GREEK TESTAMENT: illustrated from the papyri and other non-literary sources'clearly reveal that it was primarily made from results of New Testament word studies
conducted in accordance with the new emphases which were affecting word study
methods during that time. Those who were not entirely convinced about the legitimacy
of the new emphases continued to use and publish the dictionaries from the previous
period. The publication of Kittel's 'Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament'
[1933, hereafter referred to as TWNT] was basically to continue the Cremer tradition in
its way of handling the material from the papyri (TWNT BAND 1 1933:v; Kümmel
1973:360). TWNT did take note of the Graeco-Roman non-literary materials but used
them with the purpose of indicating that those words acquired new meanings within the
New Testament documents. Kittel explains this aspect of TWNT as follows:

"In dem „Theologischen Wörterbuch zum neuen Testament" sollen alle
Vokabeln des neuen Testaments behandelt werden, denen irgendeine
religiöse und theologische Bestimmung anhaftet. Die Zahl ist gegenüber
Cremer-Kögel stark vermehrt. So sind eine große Anzahl alttestamentlicher
Eigennamen aufgenommen worden, deren Personen Gegenstand
theologischer Deutung sind ...; ferner alle theologisch wichtigeren
Präpositionen ... und Zahlworte ..." (Kittel 1933. In TWNT Band 1:V).

The emphases characterizing the period between 1890 and 1961 as far as word study methods are concerned may be summed up as follows:

(a) The dominant methods continued to be even more historical as well as comparative, and were therefore diachronic in nature.

(b) There was a greater tendency to use the papyri and the other non-literary remains of the Graeco-Roman period. The Qumran Scrolls [1947] were also used in this way when they were discovered (Drane 1977:120).

(c) There was also a stronger development, in certain circles, toward the direction started by Cremer, a direction that involved studying New Testament words theologically.

2.2.1.2.4. The post-1961 period


Barr (1961:248) sharply criticized the tradition which upheld the doctrine of 'the language molding-power of Christianity' as follows:

"... either as a theologian or as a linguist, ..., one must in all seriousness and reverence question whether the activity of the Holy Spirit can legitimately be listed among the causes of semantic change ... That the Christians were vital people in some sense and that their life formed a new social body with special traditions and practices, and with special linguistic usages, need not be doubted. It may well be true that Deissmann underestimated this fact and failed to appreciate the growth of technical usages within Jewish-Christian tradition and the way in which normal semantic values and appositions were used in the special material of that tradition. None of this
justifies us in taking the phrase 'creative vitality', which would be commonly and characteristically understood in a theological sense as a characteristic of the faith in its effect on men and their life, and assuming that it can also be applied to semantic change in language"

Turning to the specific issue of whether or not New Testament words carry theological meaning on their own Barr (1961:249-50) expressed himself as follows:

"I must repeat one of the main points of my argument, namely, that the new content of the Jewish-Christian tradition and of the Christian gospel was expressed linguistically in sentence form (actually of course in complexes larger than sentences, but in any case not smaller); that the content of these sentences was something largely foreign to the Hellenistic ethos (precisely how largely foreign, it is beyond my purpose to discuss); but that for the formulation of these sentences Greek words could often be employed in the same semantic function as they normally had in the usage of Hellenistic speakers."

These citations indicate that Barr was, in many respects, quite severe in his criticism of the tradition 'founded' by Cremer. Since TWNT represented many aspects of that tradition, it came under fire from Barr (Erickson 1980:35-7).

Barr (1961:114, 115) also criticized the practice of ascertaining meanings of words etymologically and his criticism is, in this connection, clearly also directed at certain aspects of the historical approach in word study methods.

It is with this type of criticism that the post-1961 period began, and it is important that they be understood against the background of the previous period. The criticisms were of a continuous nature and what precisely they entailed became clearer with the passage of time. Continuing them, Nida for example, spells out clearly the fact that aspects of the historical approach were included under the criticisms which were directed at 'etymologization'. He expresses this as follows:
"Etymologies, whether arrived at by historical documentation or by comparative analysis, are all very interesting and may provide significant clues to meaning, but they are no guarantee whatsoever that the historical influence is a factor in the people's actual use of such linguistic units. Valid lexicography must depend in the ultimate analysis upon patterns of co-occurrence in actual discourse" (1972a:85).

It is clear from these criticisms of the post-1961 period that the discontinuity which they helped to forge between the present and the preceding period as far as New Testament word study methods are concerned has primarily the result of the preference for the synchronic approach (which involves studying words descriptively), over the diachronic approach. The discontinuity which this effected was and did not entail the total abandonment of 'etymologization' (Taber 1976:802; Thiselton 1977:80-5; Erickson 1980:54; Silva 1983:37,38). This development was mainly due to the influence of Ferdinand De Saussure's 'Course in General Linguistics' [eng. Tr. 1960].


The main tendencies of the post-1961 period as far as New Testament word study methods are concerned may be summed up as follows:

(a) The synchronic approach is emphasized as a matter of priority over and against the diachronic approach.

(b) Traditions which had evolved during the preceding periods are also continued together with the new emphases or alongside the new.
(c) There is also a stronger awareness of the need to study New Testament words by generally recognized methods and procedures of language study and of new theories of general linguistics.

2.2.1.2.5. **Concluding observations**

The investigation into the history and development of New Testament word study methods highlights the following matters:

(a) It is extremely important to carefully evaluate appeals which commentaries make to lexicons because the meanings and definitions of words which are found in lexicons are themselves the results of word studies which were made in accordance with certain word study methods and linguistic theories. Van Bruggen (1986:69) expresses this matter in the following words:

"Het woordenboek is in principe het resultaat van het lezen van zeer vele teksprodukties ... Dit betekent dat het woordenboek niet geraadpleegd moet worden als een lijst van betekenissen, die als het ware al bestond voordat het woord in gebruik kwam. Het woordenboek is in feite een nevenprodukt van veel exegese: door de woorden in hun contexten te lezen en te begrijpen kwam de lexicograaf tot zijn woordbetekenissen"

Silva (1983:137-8) also calls attention to this aspect of lexicons.

(b) Most old dictionaries were often just expanded or enlarged when new emphases in word study methods emerged during latter periods. On the other hand most new dictionaries did not usually make a total break with old word study methods even when these were being criticized at the very times of their origin. The result of this development has led to New Testament lexicons being "mixed bags" (Louw 1985b:116) not only in content but also in the methods which they manifest.

(c) The post-1961 period, emphasizes the need to handle New Testament Greek words in accordance with generally accepted linguistic principles. Some linguistic insights which need to be taken into consideration in choosing a method for studying New Testament Greek words are accordingly surveyed hereunder (see section 2.2.2.
2.2.2. Some important linguistic insights concerning words

Contemporary linguists recognize the reality of both universals and variants in their study of the language phenomenon (Lehmann 1972:18; Langacker 1973:246-7; Parker 1986:114-8; Lyons 1987:13; Hawkins 1988:3,4). These universals and variants respectively account for similarities and differences among languages (Finegan & Besnier 1989:245-7). The universals are formulated on the basis of results established by research in some particular languages. It is the nature of such inductive reasoning and study that it does not furnish persuasive support for its conclusions (Meyer & Pauw 1985:13). At least some contemporary linguists seem to be sufficiently aware of this aspect concerning their formulation of universals (Finegan & Besnier 1989:246-7).

Linguistics, being the study of the phenomenon of language, which includes words, has formulated certain universal characteristics about words. These characteristics which concern words in general seem relevant with regard to New Testament Greek words as well. It is within this context that Yoder (1982:29) wrote:

"... the words in the Bible don't "mean" in a way different than words "mean" in ordinary languages"

This perspective has implications for New Testament word study methods. The present section of this investigation therefore briefly surveys some of these general principles about words in order to account for the method used in chapter three in terms of general linguistic insights as well.

2.2.2.1. The distinction between content and function words

Contemporary linguists also distinguish between content and function words (Lyons 1987:115-8; Finegan & Besnier 1989:176). Content words are principally nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. They are recognized to have meaning "... in that they refer to concrete objects and abstract concepts and convey information about the feelings and attitudes of language users" (Finegan & Besnier 1989:176).
Function words are chiefly articles, prepositions and conjunctions. These "... have little precise lexical meaning, but ... have great importance in signalling relationships among the meaningful words with which they appear" (Black 1988:98).

Black (1988:98) further illustrates the distinction and relationship between content and function words with an image borrowed from the building process when he states:

"If structure words are the mortar of language, content words are the bricks that provide the substance of a sentence"

The distinction between content and function or structure words enables linguists to differentiate between lexical and structural meanings, as well as between lexical and sentence semantics (Parker 1986:166; Atkinson, Kilby & Roca 1988:188-9; Black 1988:97-100; Finegan & Besnier 1989:178-9). The lexical and structural meanings may respectively and roughly be described as being meanings of individual words and meanings of a linguistic well organized group of words. Louw (1982:52) certainly hints at these meanings when he writes:

"... meaning operates on different levels: on the levels of the word, the sentence, and the whole context"

Lexical semantics inquires into the meanings of individual words, while sentence semantics studies the meanings of sentences. This distinction between content and function words is also the foundation of the sentence analysis method known as Immediate Constituent Analysis [ICA] (Black 1988:100).

The distinction between content words and function words is also important with regard to the definition of the linear relationships between words which appear together in a meaningful lingual utterance. These linear relationships are also called syntagmatic relations (Thiselton 1977:82).

The significance of this distinction for word study methods appear to be the following:
(a) It confirms the legitimacy and possibility of studying the meanings of words on the basis of their linear relationships.

(b) It is an insight which may be helpful in assisting word studies not to confuse the meaning of a sentence for that of the word. This is possible because the distinction helps to emphasize the fact that the meanings of the whole is not simply the sum of the meanings of its individual constituent parts (Louw 1982:67; Black 1988:97).

2.2.2.2. The linguistic concept of semantic sets

Linguists also emphasize the fact that words may be grouped into semantic sets (Parker 1986:31; Bierwisch 1987:168-72; Atkinson, Kilby & Roca 1988:195-6). This characteristic of words implies that "words can be classified into sets according to their meaning" (Finegan & Besnier 1989:179).

The classification of words into semantic sets involves the identification of the semantic relationships which exists between words on the basis of general semantic categories or domains. These relationships, which are vertical, are known as paradigmatic relationships (Thiselton 1977:82).

The broadest sets of meanings already identified by linguists are those of Objects, Events, Abstracts, and Relationals (Vorster 1974:32; Black 1988:128). These broad sets are then subdivided into smaller sets which are in turn also split several times as long as they are divisible. Thus in the broad set of words with meaning referring to Objects there will be found, among others, words which refer to things like Animals, Plants and Artifacts. An independent set of words referring to Animals can then be extracted from such a broad set. This class of Animals may in turn also be divided further in that one may still extract, for example, another one whose elements are words referring to animals that crawl as distinguished from those that fly. When the meaning of a particular word is entirely included in that of another, then the relationship between the two words is known as hyponymy (Parker 1986:33-4; Finegan & Besnier 1989:180-1).

The thrill of identifying semantic sets into which the meanings of particular words belong
lies in the complexity of the whole exercise as many words may have to be classified into various sets at the same levels.

The significance of semantic sets with regard to word study methods appear to be the following:

(a) It confirms the legitimacy and possibility of studying the meanings of words on the basis of their vertical or paradigmatic relations.

(b) The concept of semantic sets may be very useful in precisely indicating the distinctive meanings of words whose semantic fields are hard to differentiate. It appears therefore to be especially useful when translations have to be made (Vorster 1974:29).

2.2.2.3. Polysemy, Synonymy, Antonymy and Homonymy

The linguistic concepts of polysemy, synonymy, antonymy and homonymy seem to apply across language diversities, and they also appear to have certain implications for word study methods.

Polysemy refers to the ability of one word to 'refer to' or 'mean' different things when used in different contexts. Synonymy, on the other hand, refers to the ability which different words have to substitute each other in certain contexts even when they surely would not substitute each other in all contexts (Black 1988:125; Finegan & Besnier 1989:183, 187). The concept of polysemy further implies that the same word may have to be translated by different words when it is used in a variety of contexts; while that of synonymy implies that different words may be rendered by the same word in the receptor language when those words are synonymous in the relevant context.

Antonymy refers to the relationship between two words which contradict each other in one or more aspects of their meanings. Parker (1986:35), for example, describes antonyms as follows:

"Two words are antonyms if their meanings differ only in the value for a single semantic feature. The following pairs are all antonyms: dead and
alive, above and below, hot and cold, fat and skinny. The meanings of the members of each pair are presumably identical, except for opposite values of some semantic feature"

Homonymy concerns the phenomenon of different words sharing the same form but which differ in meanings. It is therefore not the same phenomenon as that of polysemy (Ullmann 1974:5; Taber 1976:802; Finegan & Besnier 1989:187-8).

Some of the implications which these concepts have with regard to word study methods are:
(a) A word study may focus on establishing the presence of any of these relationships between certain words.
(b) These concepts underline the importance of context with regard to the definition of words' meanings which are relevant in a given passage.
(c) A study whose objectives is to investigate most of these relationships has to adopt a method which considers both the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of the words it studies and it has to do this with regard to a variety of contexts.

2.2.2.4. The general and secondary meanings of words

There is a sense in which words may be viewed as having general and secondary meanings (Ullmann 1974:1,2). The general meaning is the sense in which the word is used in most contexts. It is therefore not a meaning which should be presupposed to be always present whenever the word is used. Such a distinction between the general and secondary meanings of a particular word may only be established after all the contexts in which the word is used have been surveyed (Taber 1976:803; Louw 1982:33,34; Black 1988:124).

The distinction between general and secondary meanings of words also underlines the importance of studying words in their contexts. It also implies that the method of a word study may be inductive and comparative.
2.2.2.5. The concept of semantic change

Linguists also note that the phenomenon of words changing their meanings takes place across languages (Ullmann 1974:10-20). Some of the factors responsible for the phenomenon of semantic change are: (i) Semantic Innovation; (ii) Semantic Conservatism; and (iii) Semantic Borrowing (Silva 1983:74). Semantic change may result in vagueness and ambiguity with regard to the meanings of certain words (Ullmann 1974:20).

The phenomenon of semantic change has implications for word study methods. Some of the implications are:

(a) It confirms the legitimacy and possibility of word studies which investigate the aspects which are involved in the historical evolution of words and their meanings.

(b) The diachronic approach seems to be the most suitable when semantic changes have to be investigated (Black 1988:137).

2.2.2.6. Conclusions

There are many other significant general linguistic characteristics and phenomena concerning words which may also have implications for word study methods, and which have not been included in this investigation. The investigation in this section is therefore not intended to be exhaustive. The aim is rather to reveal the general linguistic principles which influence and inform the selection of the word study method utilized in chapter three. In conclusion the investigation also seems to warrant the following observations:

(a) There are many aspects of the meanings of words which may be isolated for study. This fact argues for the legitimacy of a variety of dictionaries in terms of content.

(b) There are various legitimate word study methods. Choosing one method from among them does not therefore necessarily entail that the others are wrong or illegitimate methods. The choice of method depends on the nature, scope and purposes of the particular word study. It is a matter of selecting the appropriate method for the specific goals of the study.

(c) Most of the methods hinted at during the course of the investigation emphasize or presuppose the study of words within the particular contexts in which they are
used.

2.2.3. Some pitfalls which New Testament word study methods should seek to avoid

This investigation has (in section 2.2.1 above) demonstrated that the history of studying New Testament Greek words stretches as far back as the Patristic period. New Testament scholarship has accordingly amassed a wealth of experience which contemporary New Testament word studies may utilize. Part of this wealth has been the identification of some common pitfalls which can serve as signposts when New Testament Greek word studies are embarked on. Most of these pitfalls were identified with the help of general linguistic principles of which some have been surveyed (see section 2.2.2 above). The importance of these pitfalls would seem to justify the inclusion of a brief survey, in the present section, of those pitfalls which are considered in the selection of the method which is followed in chapter three.

2.2.3.1. The pitfall of etymologies

Etymology is one of the oldest methods which has been used by New Testament scholars in their study of New Testament Greek words (Louw 1982:25). Etymologies may be purely morphological in nature; but as pointed out in section 2.2.1.2.4 when surveying the major trends of the post-1961 period, it may also be in the form of historical documentation. Some of the reasons why etymologies may sometimes be helpful are: (i) The presence of many compound words in New Testament Greek; and (ii) The presence of some rare words within the New Testament (Louw 1982:25-8; Greenlee 1983:ix; Silva 1983:42; Black 1988:91-4).

The way in which word studies which utilize etymology may escape giving incorrect meanings to words appear to be that of maintaining the priority of the particular context when the meanings of words are investigated. Burkill (1989:42) expresses the general viewpoint of contemporary scholarship regarding this matter with the following words:

"the meaning of a word in a particular context cannot be determined solely on the basis of its roots"
2.2.3.2. The pitfall of illegitimate totality transfer

The historical and comparative method of studying New Testament Greek words has also become popular and well established within New Testament scholarship especially since the important contribution of Fischer in 1791. It is still a very useful method as was already indicated (see sections 2.2.2.4 and 2.2.2.5 above). New Testament scholars have, however, especially since Barr, become alert to a pitfall which is closely associated with the method, and which is commonly known as 'illegitimate totality transfer'. Scholars fall into this particular pitfall when the general linguistic principle of polysemy (described above in 2.2.2.3) is forgotten. Black (1988:125) offers a useful description of 'illegitimate totality transfer' when he writes:

"This occurs when the various meanings of a word in different contexts are gathered together and then presumed to be present in any single context"

The uncritical use of dictionaries and commentaries which were made at times when New Testament scholars were not sufficiently alert to this pitfall may be a subtle form through which 'totality transferred' meanings continue to be given credence today. This pitfall is also a reality when New Testament Greek words are studied by recourse to Hebrew words via the LXX (Silva 1983:60-2).

2.2.3.3. The pitfall of confusing words with concepts

The theological method of studying New Testament Greek words has also become popular and well established within New Testament scholarship especially since the publication of Cremer's 'Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek' during the nineteenth century. The method is still useful today. Thus Louw (1985b:73) writes:

"A theological orientation is fine in itself, but since such an orientation deals with concepts it should not be confused with a lexicographical orientation which deals primarily with lexical items in the framework of linguistic semantics"

Contemporary New Testament scholarship has therefore identified a pitfall which is
especially associated with the theological method of word study and it is generally known as 'confusing words with concepts' (Erickson 1980:101-7; Silva 1983:26,27; Louw 1985b:101-7; Black 1988:123-4).

New Testament scholars fall into this pitfall when they do not adequately distinguish the meaning of a word from that of its context or sentence. This error also occurs when an entire doctrine or concept is expected to be contained in a single word.

2.2.3.4. The pitfall of 'verbal parallelomania'
Carson, in his 'Exegetical Fallacies', draws attention to the pitfall of 'verbal parallelomania' (1984:43). It is especially connected with the method of studying New Testament Greek words by seeking verbal parallels in the wider literature of the Graeco-Roman period and then to use them to 'illuminate' the words within the New Testament. It was made clear (see section 2.2.1.2.3 above) that this method gained great momentum when New Testament scholars started using the Egyptian papyri. It is still a popular and useful method today. However, the problem is that a word or phrase may not always have the same meaning wherever it is found. The linguistic principles described in 2.2.2.3 and 2.2.2.4 above are relevant in this regard and taking due cognisance of them would certainly promote the appropriate care which is required or necessary when handling verbal parallels as well as other related materials.

2.2.3.5. The componential analysis pitfall
Componential analysis is the method which seeks to explain the meanings of words by establishing the features which distinguish their meanings from those of other related words (Nida 1975:32).

This investigation has, in 2.2.2.2 and 2.2.2.3 above, indicated that the concept of semantic sets which componential analysis utilizes in this manner is a useful one when, for example, antonyms and synonyms have to be established and studied. The method of componential analysis, however, conceals several pitfalls which New Testament scholars such as Silva (1983:132-5) and Carson (1984:50-3) have drawn attention to. The most important pitfall connected to this method and which seems directly relevant in this
investigation is that of presuming the presence or relevancy of features of a word's meanings while they are not relevant for a particular context. For example, in one context the relevant features of the word 'man' may be those that distinguish it from 'woman'; while in another context only those features which distinguish it from 'child' may be relevant. The pitfall becomes even more fraught with danger when the complexity indicated in section 2.2.2.2 is taken into account. The options for words with which 'man' may be distinguished are almost infinite, while only one or very few of these may be relevant in a given passage. Presuming that all the features of a word's meanings are relevant in all occurrences of that particular word may lead to eisegesis which may be as unsatisfactory as that of totality transfers.

2.2.3.6. Conclusions

The investigation in this section has been a survey of merely a sample of pitfalls which New Testament word study methods should seek to avoid. Those surveyed serve to account for the method used in chapter three also in terms of New Testament scholarship's experience over many years. The methods which are closely connected with the pitfalls just surveyed are not wrong in themselves; nor are the methods which are not so closely associated with these pitfalls automatically immune to them. The uncritical use of helpful resources such as dictionaries and commentaries may lead to the infection of those methods not associated with the above-mentioned pitfalls.

2.2.4. General characterization of the method followed in chapter three

The investigation in 2.2.1. through 2.2.3. above has confirmed the availability of many methods which can be followed by contemporary New Testament scholars when they study New Testament Greek words. The investigation has also emphasized the need and importance of studying words within the context in which they are used. The choice of a particular method chiefly depends on factors such as the scope, nature and purposes of a particular study.

The nature of chapter three's word study is that of an inductive survey which takes all occurrences of σπέδω derivatives within the New Testament into consideration. The purpose is to be able to ascertain their meanings within the New Testament, that is in
those New Testament passages in which they are used. This procedure appears, furthermore, suitable in enabling the present study to establish which occurrences of these words are related, peripheral or even irrelevant with regard to the present inquiry's subject. Such an inductive survey does not seem to be in conflict with general linguistic principles about words, and it is definitely a helpful method with regard to the avoidance of many word study pitfalls which have been identified by New Testament scholars.

2.3. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES WHICH ARE ESPECIALLY PERTINENT TO CHAPTER FOUR


"Today, more than at any other period in the history of interpreting the Bible, the number of approaches or methods is proliferating".

The use of different exegetical methods partly accounts for the variety of meanings which exegetes using different methods sometimes assign to the same text. When taking note of this phenomenon, Poythress (1979a:114) aptly stated:

"Thus the type of analysis of texts, as well as the types of 'meaning', are proliferating".

The recognition of the fact that exegetical methods sometimes exercise a decisive influence upon the meanings which are arrived at by exegetes has been and continues to be one of the most important factors that stimulate New Testament scholarship discussions about exegetical methods. These discussions include, as part of their very varied agenda, issues concerning (i) the classification of the proliferating exegetical
methods; and (ii) the integration and co-existence of these methods. These two methodological areas which concern New Testament interpretation are briefly explored in this part so as to be able to give an account for the exegetical method which is used in chapter four.

2.3.1. The classification of New Testament exegetical methods

New Testament scholars employ different categories in attempting to classify the various methods at their disposal. Such classifications are made after the identification of some common denominators among the exegetical methods which are grouped together and are therefore a useful window into some of the insights of New Testament scholars about these methods. Some of these classifications are briefly surveyed in this section with the purpose of illustrating some of the relevant issues involved. This survey is primarily descriptive in its orientation.

2.3.1.1. Classification according to certain traditions

Exegetical methods are sometimes classified along the traditions with which they are somewhat associated. These traditions may be institutional, ecclesiastical, theological, national, and even philosophical.

The use of the ancient schools of Antioch and Alexandria in classifying contemporary exegetical methods into the two corresponding categories of Antiochene and Alexandrian is an example of classifications which are based on traditions of institutions. A recent example of a scholar employing the Antiochene/Alexandrian categories in this way is B.F.Meyer (1989:45-9). The use of these categories entails that the methods which emphasize the literal sense are regarded as Antiochene, while those which emphasize the symbolic and allegorical sense are regarded as Alexandrian.

Evidence of classifications based on ecclesiastical and theological traditions (including theological trends) are found widely spread in the literature on Biblical interpretation. Books such as: PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION (Ramm 1970), FEMINIST INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE (Russell 1985), and BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS AND BLACK THEOLOGY (Mosala 1989) imply such a
This type of classification may also be illustrated by the publication: THE BIBLE IN THE CHURCHES (Harrington 1985) which contains contributions by D.J.Harrington, G.R.Osborne, and J.A.Burgess. The essays of these scholars are respectively entitled: "Catholic Interpretation of Scripture", "Evangelical Interpretation of Scripture", and Lutheran Interpretation of Scripture". In the concluding chapter of the same book, Harrington (1985:146) observes some points of convergence but also of considerable divergence.

Statements such as the following:

"German New Testament scholarship has, with few exceptions, worked within a Lutheran (or, in some cases, Reformed) framework, especially in the interpretation of Paul" (Houlden 1989:406);

and

"French structuralism has its roots in Russian formalism and Prague functionalism, where the autonomy of the text is emphasized with regard to its structure and function" (Snyman 1991:87);

imply classifications of exegetical methods along nationalities. Such classifications can also be illustrated by referring to C.R.Mercer's treatise entitled: NORMAN PERRIN'S INTERPRETATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, FROM 'EXEGETICAL METHOD' TO 'HERMENEUTICAL PROCESS' (1986) which was issued as "Studies in American Biblical Hermeneutics 2". The writer of the preface to the book, C.Mabee, who is also its editor, argues for national or cultural contextualization in exegetical methods and considers Perrin's work as capable of promoting such a process (Mercer 1986:ix-x).

The propagation of such contextualizations boosts the practice of classifying exegetical methods along national/regional/cultural lines.
The practice of classifying exegetical methods along philosophical traditions which are somewhat associated with them is also widely attested to. Such classifications are possible because many New Testament scholars relied and continue to depend on various philosophical traditions in formulating their exegetical methods. Thiselton, while admitting his reliance on Wittgenstein, points out that Bultmann also borrowed from Heidegger, and then explains and justifies such a reliance as follows:

"... our concern is only to borrow ... certain conceptual tools for the various tasks which we shall undertake in formulating hermeneutical theory and in expounding the text of the New Testament. To make constructive use of a particular philosopher's conceptual tools is not necessarily to subscribe to his view of the world. Even the New Testament writers themselves were willing to borrow concepts from the Graeco-Roman world around them in order to expound their distinctively Christian message" (1980:9-10).

The essays of R.C. Sproul, J.I. Parker, and M.E. Erickson, respectively entitled: "A response to Philosophical Presuppositions affecting Biblical Interpretations", "A response to The New Hermeneutic", and "Presuppositions of Non-Evangelical Hermeneutics" (in Radmacher & Preus 1984: HERMENEUTICS, INERRANCY, AND THE BIBLE) are further attestations to classifications of exegetical methods in terms of philosophical traditions with which they are related. R.C. Sproul (1984:520), for example, suggests:

"In broad terms what has happened in Biblical studies and hermeneutics in the past two centuries may be viewed as a postscript to Kant."

2.3.1.2. Historically orientated classifications

Scholars sometimes classify exegetical methods along historical categories. The essay of R.C. Sproul (to which reference has already just been made in 2.3.1.1. above) is not only an example of classifications which are based on philosophical traditions; but it is also an instance of historically orientated classifications. One of the distinctive features of such classifications is the use of the 'pre-x', 'x' and 'post-x' formula. Sproul's essay classifies exegetical methods on the basis of the history of philosophy, using Kant as its
point of reference. He accordingly considers the Pre-Kantian Scholars' methods as broadly having been influenced by the philosophical trends which led to Kant; while he regards the methods of those during the Post-Kantian period as generally reflecting the philosophical trends which he understands as responses to Kant's Philosophy.

It must be emphasized that in this type of classifications, the set of elements which may act as substitutes for 'x' in the 'pre-x', 'x', and 'post-x' formula is almost unlimited. One such interesting historical classification is that which substitutes the 'x' with a particular exegetical approach or method. A relevant example of such a classification is the use of 'pre-critical', 'critical' and 'post-critical' in essays such as "Op weg na 'n post-kritiese Nuwe Testamentiiese wetenskap" (Vorster 1987), where the word 'critical' is used to refer to the historical-critical method. The word 'critical' may be used in a neutral sense when referring to certain exegetical methods as Hayes & Holladay suggests (1988:26). Its use within the historical-critical method has, however, not been always that neutral. Brown can accordingly be considered to be correct to draw attention to the fact that the use of this word within the historical-critical method was often accompanied by methodological pride (Brown 1989b:200).

The use of the word 'critical' in the formula 'pre-x', 'x', and 'post-x' in historical classifications like Vorster's does not, however, appear evaluative, but seems primarily to perform the function of signalling the entrance of shifts and new emphases within the field of exegetical methods. It therefore indicates that the historical-critical method appears to have had its heyday and that new fashions of exegetical methods are today clamouring for attention.

2.3.1.3. Classifications according to features of New Testament texts

Exegetical methods are sometimes classified according to the features of New Testament texts. The delineation of the features which may form the basis of such classifications is of course problematic. Many scholars, however, would concur to a large extent with the broad delineation which Lategan (1985:5) suggests when he states:

"... in the case of Biblical material the text exhibits three closely related
features, namely, a historical, a structural, and a theological aspect".

The classification of exegetical methods along these features implies that a particular exegesis may be more historical, or structural, or theological; and that it can thus be classified accordingly. Classifications which are based on these features are implied by book titles such as: STRUCTURAL EXEGESIS FOR NEW TESTAMENT CRITICS (Patte 1990b). One of the limitations of the historical-critical method in the past appears to have been its overemphasis of the historical aspect; while being incapable of balancing such an emphasis with an equal attention to other aspects (Vorster 1984:119; Swanepoel 1990:194). This problem is also connected to the issue whether or not all the New Testament texts manifest these features in an equal way. This issue cannot be considered peripheral in view of the neglect of certain New Testament books during the period when the historical-critical method reigned supreme within New Testament scholarship.

The issue of whether or not all New Testament texts display the three features to the same extent seems to be the background of classifications of exegetical methods on the basis of more particular distinctive features. Thus the essay "Hermeneutics and common sense: an exploratory essay on the hermeneutics of the epistles" (Fee 1980) is an example of such classifications. Vorster (1990:107) seems also to imply the same type of classification when arguing for "an interactional model for the analysis of letters".

2.3.1.4. **Classifications according to logical orientation**

Exegetical methods are sometimes also classified according to their logical orientation. This entails their being classified as either deductive or inductive. An inductive exegesis studies particular or specific texts with the objective of formulating some general features applicable to such texts in general; while a deductive one takes its point of departure from certain premises or general features in its study of particular or specific texts. Patte uses these categories in his classification of five broad types of semio-structural exegesis (1990a:39-46). The importance of classifying exegetical methods on the basis of their logical orientation has become more pressing within the debate surrounding the role and legitimacy of pre-understandings in the exegetical procedure. This can be illustrated by Patte’s argument in defense of the deductive approaches against the attacks of those
represented in his first type of semio-structural exegesis categories, and which are referred to by him as, 'Exegesis Focused on Text-Specific Structures'. He expresses himself as follows about their objections:

"The proponents of this approach have strong reservations vis-a-vis the deductive methodologies and the semio-structural exegesis that propose to analyze a text on the basis of a semio-structural theory. They suspect these methodologies of projecting onto the text something foreign to it, as though their own approach were free of presuppositions! In fact, these exegetes read the text with preunderstandings about the nature of the relevant textual systems or processes and of the pertinent textual features" (1990a:40).

2.3.1.5. **Classifications which are based on the communication model**

Contemporary scholars such as Barton (1984:23), Lategan (1984:3), Croatto (1987:11), and Prinsloo (1988:196) make use of the communication model to classify exegetical methods. Such classifications presuppose that the three cardinal elements characterizing a communication situation, namely, those of SPEAKER, SPEECH, and AUDIENCE, respectively correspond to those of ORIGIN, TEXT, and READER in the case of ancient graphic texts. Exegetical methods are then classified into these three categories in accordance with the element which they are perceived to be emphasizing. P.J.Hartin & J.H.Petzer employ such a classification in their organization and grouping of the essays in TEXT AND INTERPRETATION (1991) along the three categories of SENDER, TEXT and RECEPTOR.

2.3.1.6. **Conclusions and Transitional remarks**

The survey of classifications of exegetical methods which is presented in sections 2.3.1.1. through 2.3.1.5. above, although brief and not exhaustive, confirms the wide variety of exegetical methods existing within New Testament scholarship even during this very ecumenical and internationalist last decade of the twentieth century.

The survey also indicates the reductive nature of such classifications. Each classification tends to highlight one aspect of a method while the other aspects are not brought to the
surface. It is therefore important to take many types of classifications into account when a fuller picture of the issues involved is desired. Some of the most important issues which the survey of the five broad types of classifications highlights may be summed up as follows:

(a) The classifications based on traditions highlight the role of all sorts of traditions in exegesis, and thereby also emphasize the need for any method to properly define its attitude to tradition.

(b) Those classifications which are historically orientated highlight the dynamic nature of New Testament interpretation, and thereby emphasize the need to take contemporary developments into consideration when formulating or adopting an exegetical method. Failure to do so may lead to unnecessary casualties as the pitfalls already identified by the broad New Testament scholarship are ignored.

(c) The classifications which are based on features of New Testament books especially highlight the different aspects which every method should take into consideration, and they thus also emphasize that methods which focus on one aspect need to acknowledge their need to be complemented by others.

(d) Those classifications that are logically orientated highlight the need to be logically accountable, and they thereby also emphasize the need for any method to be consistent and to avoid self-contradictions. Exegetical conclusions are accordingly to be logically accountable.

(e) The last category in our brief survey, namely, those approaches which classify exegetical methods in accordance with the communication model, highlight the relationship between the author, the text and the reader. In the case of ancient graphic texts such as the New Testament texts, this type of classifications emphasizes the challenges and dangers with which the contemporary reader is confronted. The author and the original recipients of New Testament texts are no longer present to correct the reader's misunderstandings. At the same time, this
type of classification emphasizes the need for the reader to be restricted by linguistic and historical considerations (textual context), as well as the importance of viewing any attempt to understand the New Testament texts as a joint enterprise implying the need for accountability to past and contemporary readers of the same texts.

It can therefore be maintained, in the light of such insights, that although not exhaustive, this survey appears broad enough to illustrate the issues involved in our choice of the method which is used in chapter four. The survey further appears to be capable of providing the necessary background for the brief exploration of the issues concerning the integration and co-existence of these varied exegetical methods in 2.3.2. hereunder.

2.3.2. **The integration and co-existence of exegetical methods**

The different types of classifying exegetical methods indicate, to a certain extent that the issues concerning the integration and co-existence of exegetical methods are approached in various ways within New Testament scholarship. These approaches seem to manifest three broad stances, namely,

(i) the non-integration co-existence stance;
(ii) the comprehensive integration co-existence stance; and
(iii) the critical partial integration co-existence stance.

This section of the investigation briefly explores these three stances in relation to the illustrative classifications in 2.3.1. above, and does so with the purpose of giving an account of the exegetical method employed in chapter four. The exploration is primarily evaluative in its orientation.

2.3.2.1. **The non-integration co-existence stance**

The different classifications of exegetical methods presented under 2.3.1. above illustrate the reality and possibility of choosing one method and to then remain committed in maintaining it against the others, especially against those with which the particular method is contrasted within the relevant classification.
It is possible, for example, to prefer a Catholic over against a Lutheran way of interpreting the Bible; or to choose a feminist way of interpreting the Bible with a similar attitude. When such a course is followed, the non-integration co-existence stance is being adopted. The concept of non-integration co-existence as used in this context therefore refers to the attitude of dogmatically viewing a particular method as completely mature, not in need of any change, and as being self-sufficient. Such an attitude does not necessarily involve an attitude of confrontation with regard to the other methods because it may go hand in hand with notions of the separate co-existence of methods. This stance, however, seems to involve some form of stagnation because it appears to be founded on views which maintain that the last word has already been spoken in the matters concerning exegetical methods and therefore imply a denial of the dynamic nature of New Testament interpretation. Such a stance is also an attitude which seems closed and stagnant. It is a stance that may lead, as Lategan (1985:5) correctly observes:

"... in some cases to a methodological stalemate and even a breakdown in scholarly communication".

The strong points of the non-integration co-existence stance appear to be its ability to provide some stability, security, and direction with regard to the work of exegesis because it usually emphasizes continuity with some past tradition and therefore safeguards unity within a particular community by emphasizing the principle of viewing exegesis as a joint enterprise particularly stressing this principle with respect to corporateness with past readers of the text.

2.3.2.2. The comprehensive integration co-existence stance

The opposite of the attitude described in 2.3.2.1. above can be designated by the concept of comprehensive integration co-existence. It is a stance which seeks to accommodate every exegetical procedure that appears on the scene. This stance seems to be possible only when the contradictions among the different methods are ignored. Such a stance may, for example, involve the blurring of the distinction between exegesis and eisegesis when comprehensive integration co-existence has to be achieved between methods which over-emphasize the reader as the giver of meaning and those which emphasize the text
as being not amenable to any type of interpretation. Using the model of the musical text and the performer, Scroggs (1988:25-6) recently expressed the apparent impossibility of such a stance from the point of view of those who regard the text as not amenable to all sorts of interpretations with the following words:

"The performer interprets the musical text out of that tradition to which the text belongs. No one performer will play a given piece quite like any other interpreter. Yet, as all musicians know, certain interpretations are rejected as not being adequate to the text. One just does not play Debussy as one plays Bach. Musical traditions are, of course, not carved in stone, and in different historical periods Debussy will be played differently. Yet the text ultimately stands in judgement over the interpreter. A musician who tries to force an inappropriate perspective on a text finds the text stubborn and unyielding. Sooner or later the extravagances will be recognized and discarded".

The comprehensive integration co-existence stance may be illustrated by reference to the different readings of Luke 12:35-48 which were published in Neotestamentica 22 (1988). If an exegete would attempt studying Luke 12:35-48 by using all the methods reflected in all the contributions in that issue of Neotestamentica 22 and then proceed to consider all the 'meanings' arrived at by those readings as being dimensions of 'the complete meaning' of Luke 12:25-48, then such an approach would be a typical example of what is meant here by the comprehensive stance. The adoption of such a stance seems also to imply, to some extent, the silencing of inter-methodological critical conversations and may therefore lead to relativism which in turn ultimately implies that the exegete may never be sure about the meaning of a particular text. Such an attitude of relativism is generally regarded as unacceptable by contemporary New Testament scholars; for example, Combrink (1988:190), Thiselton (1988:149), Scroggs (1988:25), and Poythress (1988a:38).

The strong points of the comprehensive stance appear to be its emphasis on the need to complement old methods with new ones. It emphasizes the co-existence of all methods
and is sometimes able to link this attitude up with views that regard the different methods as acceptable ways of handling texts from different but necessary perspectives.

2.3.2.3. The stance of critical partial integration co-existence

The stance which seeks to avoid the weaknesses of the two stances just evaluated while striving to utilize their strong points is that which may be referred to by the concept of critical partial integration co-existence. It involves viewing the proliferation of exegetical methods as being, in many respects, somehow related to certain deficiencies of existing methods. Such a stance implies taking the criticisms of newer methods seriously, and presupposes the presence of the perception that these criticisms may require modifications and adjustments within an old method. It therefore preserves the strong points of the non-integration co-existence stance by emphasizing self-examination aimed at detecting deficiencies within the methods that have been adopted. At the same time, it maintains some continuity with the past by introducing the required emphases or modifications within an old or already adopted method. The stance of critical partial integration co-existence also avoids the stagnation which continually threatens the non-integration co-existence stance by its readiness to modify an old method. Its readiness and tendency to engage other camps in serious inter-methodological dialogues imply the capacity to avoid methodological stalemates and breakdowns of scholarly communication.

The stance of critical partial integration co-existence also avoids the confusion that accompany the comprehensive stance because it promotes a co-existence which differs from that propagated by relativism. It also avoids the silencing of inter-methodological criticisms, a feature that escapes the comprehensive stance. It can therefore lead to progress in the development of the exegetical method. It should be noted here that when this stance perceives the deficiencies within the adopted method to be those involving the introduction of some new steps which were nonexistent in the particular method, this stance attempts to introduce them. The strong points of the comprehensive stance, namely those concerning the feature of complementarity are utilized. Such a stance is expressed by Vorster (1991:40) when, while reflecting on whether or not the historical-critical method still has a future, he states:
"Historical criticism has come to stay. What changes are our insights into the nature of literature, history and historiography".

Thiselton expresses the same attitude, while reflecting on the manner in which Evangelicals should make advances in the field of exegetical methodology. He (1988:150) suggests that: "theological tradition stands in constant need of reform, and reform must be carried out in accordance with Scripture. ... critical questioning about our own tradition must entail some kind of positive understanding of inputs from other traditions."

### 2.3.2.4. Conclusion

Our evaluative exploration of the three broad possible stances concerning the issues about the integration and co-existence of the proliferating exegetical methods suggests that the stance of critical partial integration co-existence is the one most preferable. It would appear that the historical-critical method was in the past helped to reach its great popularity by such a stance. The history of its evolution is an account of modifications, adjustments and even introductions of new steps until many contemporary scholars evaluate it as a method or method(s) (Hayes & Holladay 1988:29; Prinsloo 1988:196; Meyer B 1989:32 and Botha 1991a:277).

The historical-critical method appears to have lost some of its power and popularity (Vorster 1987). The reasons behind its demise are not yet very clear; but one of them is certainly its lost ability to modify itself like it did on several occasions in the past. The tendency to view it as "methods" rather than a method may delay its awaited revival; since such a tendency is sometimes accompanied by an unwillingness to modify and adapt an old method in accordance with new insights along the lines suggested by the stance of critical partial integration co-existence. It is also possible that other methods may demonstrate real ability to exercise this same essential stance which is important for the survival of an exegetical method today. Any other method that adopts such a stance would certainly be on its road to fame.

### 2.3.3. General characterization of the method followed in chapter four

The investigation in 2.3.1. and 2.3.2. above confirmed the availability of many exegetical
methods, and pointed out the necessary stance with which a method should be chosen or developed. The investigation further noted that this essential stance may be claimed by any method, except those whose advocates are currently demonstrating some unwillingness to operate with such a paradigm. In these circumstances the method adopted for the present exegetical study may be broadly characterized by calling it the grammatical-historical method, which is also known as the historical philological method.

There is one major problem connected to the grammatical-historical method, namely, its history. It became the dominant method towards the end of the Middle Ages and gained great momentum in popularity through the contributions of the sixteenth century reformers (Prinsloo 1988:197; Meyer B. 1989:31). Its demise during the eighteenth century appears to have been occasioned by the lack of ability of its advocates during that period, who failed to adopt the critical stance described in 2.3.2.3. above. This inability was especially displayed by those of its advocates who were within the movement that is commonly known as the Protestant Orthodoxy. Scholars within this movement generally adopted the wrong stance described under 2.3.2.1. above at the time when the historical consciousness was rising (Fryer 1987:46; Meyer B. 1989:27,31). During that time the grammatical-historical method tended to be exercised in a primarily a-historical manner (Swanepoel 1990:192); and that was happening at the very time when the needs of the day demanded its modification by seriously taking a proper historical perspective on Bible books. This inability led to the rise of the historical-critical method alongside the grammatical-historical method during the last decades of the eighteenth century.

The grammatical-historical method slowly recovered from its a-historical liability and started its course towards some revival; and this was achieved chiefly by adopting many insights of the historical-critical method. The evidence of its new shape today is clear from the way in which some of its contemporary advocates, such as Martin (1977), describe and practice it. Recently, it has even been referred to as the GRAMMATICAL-LITERARY-HISTORICAL-THEOLOGICAL-CANONICAL EXEGESIS (Klooster 1984:470). Such a name is descriptive of the nature of the modifications it underwent. Its use in the present investigation does not, however, imply that the other methods (especially the historical-critical method) cannot be employed. The scope and nature of
the study are also influential in our choice.

The exegetical study in chapter four relates to the determination of the meaning of the hastening motif in 2 Peter. This is closely connected to the theological aspects of 2 Peter. One criticism directed towards the historical-critical method during this century has been its inability to modify itself so that it can be able to handle this aspect of New Testament books more efficiently. The problem or limitation of the historical-critical method in this regard has recently been noted by scholars such as Combrink (1983:3,5), Vorster (1984:119), Prinsloo (1988:203,204), De Villiers (1989:121,122), Brown (1989:199), Swanepoel (1990:194). It has been often characterized by the study of the historical aspects for their own sakes; and even during the days of its marriage with various forms of structural analysis; the tendency of these structural methods to study the structural features for their own sakes implied a non-enriching loose form of co-existence and therefore the marriage was not a success with regard to enabling the historical-critical method to handle the theological features of New Testament books more efficiently. These are factors which seem to mitigate against the historical-critical method; and since its good aspects may be harmonized within the grammatical-historical method all indications seemed to recommend the latter method in spite of the problems associated with it.

The scope of the study focuses in particular on the role and meaning of the hastening motif within the message of 2 Peter. Issues about its historical and structural features will only receive attention when it is necessary for understanding the message of 2 Peter. The procedure of the study is as follows: The study focuses on and takes its point of departure in 2 Peter 3:1-13; and moves to other parts of the letter after attempting to ascertain the hastening motif's role and meaning in relation to the passage where it seems most conspicuous.
2.4. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES WHICH ARE ESPECIALLY RELEVANT FOR CHAPTER FIVE

New Testament scholarship discussions about the relationships of the different New Testament books' messages, teachings and viewpoints have and continue to include a wide variety of interesting methodological issues as part of their agenda. These discussions about the theological relationships among New Testament books generally have become more acute within the context of reflections concerning the history, nature, task and possibility of Biblical and/or New Testament theology. The methodological issues which dominate these discussions are accordingly often included in prolegomena on New Testament theology. They appear within this context, for example, in Ladd (1975:13-33), Hasel (1978:72-170), Goppelt (1981:251-81), Kümmel (1983:13-9, 322-33), Morris (1986:9-18), and Price (1987:3-18).

Two of the issues which are often attended to in such discussions are:
(i) the justification of the search for theological relationships among New Testament books; and
(ii) the appropriate methods of highlighting and explaining these relationships.

This part of the investigation briefly explores these two methodological areas in as far as they are relevant with regard to the motivation of the method which is followed in chapter five.

2.4.1. The justification of the search for theological relationships among New Testament books

One of the many positive contributions of the historical-critical method to New Testament interpretation is the emphasis on the distinctiveness of each New Testament book. This contribution of the historical-critical method is recognized by, among others, Benson (1973:97), Hasel (1978:29-30, 141-3), and Kümmel (1983:15,16). Mildenberger (1975:395) aptly expresses this contribution of the historical-critical method as follows:

"... in the case of historical criticism, ..., it can hardly be otherwise. The
more we understand a particular book of the Bible in terms of its historical setting, the more difficult it is to discover correlations with other texts. When viewed historically, the distinctive character of each book steps so much into the foreground that by contrast the unity of scripture practically disappears.

The emphasis on the theological distinctiveness of each New Testament book has, as the words just cited from Mildenberger also suggest, been sometimes perceived and presented as incompatible with the unity of New Testament books. Charlot (1970:90), for example, argues for such a theory of the theological disunity of the New Testament.

There are, on the other hand, also many New Testament scholars who maintain the unity of the New Testament, while not throwing the theological distinctiveness of its component parts overboard. Morris (1986:15-6) has, for example, expressed himself in favour of such an approach.

The debate around the theological unity and/or diversity of the New Testament raises the issue concerning the justification of searching for relationships among the New Testament books. A number of grounds are often advanced as justifications for such an exercise in studying the New Testament. The present section of the investigation briefly describes some of these grounds with the purpose of accounting for the method which is used in chapter five.

2.4.1.1. The debate around the theological unity and/or diversity of the New Testament

The debate concerning the theological unity and/or diversity of the New Testament books is one of the grounds which makes the search for theological relationships among New Testament books necessary. This is the case because New Testament scholars' viewpoints about the unity and/or diversity within the New Testament have to be treated as scholarly suggestions. Such suggestions are very often not mere guesswork, but conclusions which presuppose some study involving the exercise of comparing New Testament books while searching for some theological relationships among them. These
suggestions may be confirmed or disconfirmed by a process which often also involves some steps of searching for theological similarities and differences among New Testament books.

This debate appears to have been, for instance, a major stimulation for the study of J.D.J. Dunn entitled UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT [1990 - second edition]. Dunn himself hints that this debate functioned as one of the major factors which occasioned his study when he accounts for its origin in terms of his participation in discussions which were partly due to Walter Bauer's book entitled ORTHODOXY AND HERESY IN EARLIEST CHRISTIANITY [1971] (Dunn 1990:xi,3-5). The study of Dunn accordingly also involves the exercise of searching for relationships within the New Testament books because he explicitly states:

"... my concern ... has been more to explore the commonality of themes and beliefs and practices and trends running through and across documents, rather than particular documents as such." (Dunn 1991:xvii).

2.4.1.2. The quest for the historical context

One of the grounds for the justification of searching for theological relationships among New Testament texts appears to be the quest for the historical contexts within which they were written. This aspect of New Testament study seems essential today in view of the character of New Testament books as ancient texts. Vorster (1991:15) draws attention to this matter as follows:

"The New Testament is a collection of ancient books, each of them written at a different time ... Different purposes, different sociological contexts, different authors, and different recipients were responsible for the form in which we now have these writings. ... they moreover serve as sources for the discovery of the past, including the recovery of persons, events and thought processes."

The reconstruction of the New Testament's historical context, which this quest leads to,
involves the exercise of comparing all the information in all the available relevant documents which have a bearing on the issues and events on which the New Testament books express themselves. Marshall (1977:127) also refers to this holistic aspect of the task.

The requirement that the historical study of the New Testament should take all the relevant available information at its disposal into consideration means that the very nature of such a study is itself also a premise and justification for the practice of searching for theological relationships among New Testament books when studying them. This aspect of the historical study of the New Testament appears to have been one of the major stimulants for both the Old and the New Quests for "the historical Jesus". These Quests are appropriate examples of this aspect because they very clearly involved using the information which is found within the different New Testament books in attempting the reconstruction of certain portrayals of Jesus' character and life, but portraits which were not necessarily continuous with those in any of the New Testament's books. (Ladd 1971:50,51).

2.4.1.3. The association of the New Testament with the Christian community
The association of the New Testament with the Christian community is also often advanced as one of the grounds which justifies the search for theological relationships among the New Testament books. Some of the forms in which this particular ground is used within such a context, and which this section of the investigation accordingly briefly takes note of, are:

(i) the possession and concurrent use of more than one New Testament book by the Christian community;
(ii) the process of canonizing New Testament books; and
(iii) the continuation of the New Testament's teachings in the contemporary church.

2.4.1.3.1. The possession and concurrent use of plural New Testament books within the Christian community
There are enough indications within the New Testament books themselves that some of their writers were conscious of the use of their works and those of their colleagues
concurrently within the wider Christian community during their days. Indeed, the evidence seems to indicate that these authors actually encouraged such a development. Thus the Corinthians and the Thessalonians received more than one letter from Paul; the Colossians and the Laodiceans are urged to share letters; and 2 Peter presupposes its recipients to be aware or even in possession of other letters; while Revelation is addressed to the seven churches of Asia (1 Cor.1:2; 5:9; 2 Cor. 1:1; 10:10, 11; Col 4:16; 1 Thess.1:1; 2 Thess.1:1; 2 Pet.1:12-15; 3:1-2,15-16; Rev.1:4). Luke also seems to have been aware of this phenomenon (Luke 1:1-4). Such a phenomenon certainly implied that the particular Christian communities had to use all these documents in seeking guidance from them concerning matters of faith and conduct, and this search also surely involved identifying theological relationships among the documents at their disposal. This whole process could have been in many respects akin to that which audiences exercise when relating the messages which they receive at different assemblies and occasions. Indeed, there appears to be some indications within the New Testament books that the process of establishing relationships among the documents could have been in some respects similar to that which took place concerning the "messages" or "instructions" that were received at their assemblies on the one hand, and such "messages" and these documents on the other hand. This phenomenon seems to be suggested and implied by the fact that many of the New Testament books' writers constantly link their works with the messages and traditions which had already been received by the communities. Thus Matthew 28:19-20 and John 14:25-26 seem to link the teaching of the apostles to that already given by Jesus; while passages such as 1 Corinthians 11:2,23; Galatians 1:6-9; Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2; and 2 Peter 3:1-2 refer to the messages and traditions which the recipients are supposed to have received already.

This phenomenon of the possession and concurrent use of more than one New Testament book by Christian communities continued during the whole period before the process of their canonization was completed. Its continuation is acknowledged and documented by New Testament scholars such as Schelke (1969:209-14), Löhse (1981:17-23), and Metzger (1987:39-73). The investigation of Hagner (1973:283,286) also appear to be convincing in demonstrating that the apostolic fathers such as Clement of Rome manifest their acquaintance with many New Testament books by their allusions to them. This does not
imply, however, that every particular local Christian community knew and used all the New Testament books that were available because some of the books were disputed for a long time most probably as a result of their regional circulation (Hagner 1973:337).

The concurrent use of many New Testament books by the Christian community before the process of their canonization was completed is advanced by some scholars as justification for searching for theological relationships among them during their contemporary study (Martin 1979:151; Goldingay 1987:26-8). Morris (1986:16,17) has within this context, for instance, stated:

"For all their differences the writers of the New Testament books were all recognized as Christians, as were the many other believers who did not write books. ... It will be our task to look for the theological truth behind the various ways of expressing it".

2.4.1.3.2. The association of the New Testament with the Christian community in the process of canonization

Another relevant aspect of the ground concerning the association of the New Testament with the Christian community is that which manifests itself in the process of canonization's last steps during the fourth century A.D. These steps were hastened by the challenges of certain second and third century unorthodox groups and leaders such as Marcion (Koester 1965:316-7; Knox 1980:165-7; Löhse 1981:20; Childs 1984:19; Gaffin 1988:166). The precise contribution of these groups and of especially Marcion in hastening this process is described by Hagner (1973: 344-5).

The canonization of New Testament books implies, among other things, that these writings were, at least in the opinion of the ecumenical church council and leaders deliberating on the matter, theologically related and that they were to continue being treated as such within most of the major churches which were represented at these councils. Thus their canonization has been understood as affirmation of their theological unity while being a process that also clearly marked out the boundaries of acceptable diversity, that is a diversity compatible with and not jeopardizing their unity (Dunn
Some New Testament scholars have perceived this aspect as a justification of the search for theological relationships among these books in New Testament study (Guthrie 1981:42; Morris 1986:16).

2.4.1.3.3. The continuity of the New Testament's message in the church

The last relevant aspect of the association of the New Testament with the Christian community which is briefly considered in this section is that concerning the continuity of the New Testament's message in the faith and life of the church today. Many contemporary churches aspire to be continuous with the apostolic church. The history of the church indicates that this aspiration has been present within most branches of the Christian church through all the centuries of her existence. These aspirations have put some pressure on the church to seek the justification of all aspects of her faith and practices in the New Testament as a whole. The history of the church also seems to demonstrate that the church may at certain stages view her teachings and practices as being based on the New Testament while later closer examinations may reveal the contrary and thus entail the amendment of earlier viewpoints and convictions. The sixteenth century reformation movement and the seventeenth century pietism are in some respects good examples of critical assessments of the church's apostolicity in this regard (Gaffin 1975-76:281-3; Fuller 1978:201). This aspect of the relationship between the New Testament and the Christian church implies the continuation within the church of the search for theological relationships among New Testament books and it surely also implies the continuing need for the accompanying critical assessment of the church's understanding by means of New Testament scholarship. Such a critical evaluation seems to involve New Testament scholarship in this same exercise as well. The origin of Biblical and/or New Testament theology was related to the perceived insufficiency of Systematic Theology in executing this task (Hasel 1978:16-28; Goppelt 1981:255-6; Kümmel 1983:14-15). It is today a bone of contention whether this role should continue within the scope of the Biblical disciplines or that of Systematics (Gaffin 1975-76:281,282); but it would seem that many aspects of this task are properly executed within the Biblical disciplines (Guthrie 1981:30-4).
2.4.1.4. **The manner in which the New Testament uses the Old Testament**

The Old Testament, like the New Testament, contains many diverse books (Goldingay 1987:1). It is, however, extensively used by the New Testament writers (Ellis 1977:199,200; McCartney 1988:101-3). The New Testament writers' use of the Old Testament suggests that these authors were involved in searching for theological relationships among the Old Testament books. This seems particularly apparent in their use of more than one Old Testament book. Indeed, there are even instances of New Testament passages which refer to more than one Old Testament passage. McCartney (1988:112,113) draws attention to two such passages, namely Luke 24:44-47 and 1 Peter 1:10-12.

The hermeneutical implications of this phenomenon for Old Testament theology have not escaped the notice of Old Testament scholars (Goldingay 1987:107-10). Scholars such as Ellis (1977:209-14), Hanson (1983:1-5), and McCartney (1988:110-11) appear, however, to be concerned to draw these implications with reference to the whole of Biblical theology. This means and implies that the New Testament's use of the Old Testament is advanced as one of the grounds for the search of theological relationships among New Testament books as well as for the manner of executing this task.

2.4.1.5. **Conclusions**

There are many ways in which New Testament scholars justify their search for theological relationships among the New Testament books, and those described in sections 2.4.1.1. through to 2.4.1.4. above should therefore only be considered as illustrative cases. This brief and inexhaustive description seems sufficient for our purposes and also warrants the following conclusions:

2.4.1.5.1. That the search and identification of theological relationships among the New Testament books appear to be an important, useful and regularly utilized aspect of New Testament study.

2.4.1.5.2. That this aspect of New Testament study is often undertaken for a variety of reasons and purposes.
2.4.1.5.3. That the presence and uniqueness of any particular theological motif within the New Testament may not simply be taken for granted, but is in itself also a valid sphere of this aspect of New Testament study.

2.4.1.5.4. That any study that gets involved in some form of searching for and identification of theological relationships among New Testament books has to be alert both to the unity and/or diversity of New Testament books.

2.4.2. Methods of highlighting and explaining theological relationships within the New Testament
There are a variety of methods which New Testament scholars use to highlight and explain theological relationships among New Testament books. Accordingly, some of these methods are briefly evaluated in this section.

2.4.2.1. The commentators' cross-reference
The most popular and widely practiced method of highlighting and explaining theological relationships among New Testament books is the cross-reference method which is usually employed by commentators. This particular method operates with the idea of analogies in the Scriptures and is used by commentators belonging to various traditions. It is also so universal that most commentaries could be used as illustrations of its use. The cross-reference method is also widely used when a particular topic is supported with a series of prooftexts. It is accordingly also widely encountered in Systematic Theology and other theological disciplines as well.

The cross-reference method is certainly useful in highlighting and explaining theological relationships among New Testament books, but it has to be handled cautiously because it can sometimes be misleading and may lead to invalid observations (Runia 1989:300-1). The unreliability of this method implies that the theological relationships which these cross-references are supposed to highlight have to be tested for confirmation or disconfirmation by investigating the meanings of the passages and then the relevancy and the appropriateness of the references.
2.4.2.2. Reductive methods

Some scholars highlight the theological relationships among New Testament books by reductive methods. Most of these methods often involve the marginalization of large New Testament sections in the pursuit of establishing theological coherence and contemporary relevancy. There are various methods belonging to this group and some of them are accordingly briefly evaluated because of their relevance in this investigation.

2.4.2.2.1. Reduction by means of employing the concept of a canon within the New Testament canon

The reality and possibility of achieving theological coherence by maintaining the concept of a canon within the New Testament canon has received the attention of several scholars (Hasel 1978:164-70; Goldingay 1987:122-6). It takes place primarily when certain New Testament books, passages and themes are used to judge the others as unorthodox or peripheral. In following Luther, the father of this paradigm, Käsemann's approach towards 2 Peter in his study entitled AN APOLOGIA FOR PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN ESCHATOLOGY [1964,cf also under 1.2.1.3.2.1.] may be regarded as a typical example of such a method because the study interprets the differences which Käsemann perceives between Pauline eschatology and that of 2 Peter as implying the unorthodox nature of 2 Peter's eschatological message (Käsemann 1964:182,183,195). Morris (1978:37) and Martin (1979:145-7) have evaluated Käsemann's general approach along the same lines.

2.4.2.2.2. Reduction by means of the analogy of faith

Another reductive method closely associated with that of a canon within the canon is that which pursues theological coherence in studying the New Testament by maintaining that all interpretation is to be undertaken in such a way that it can never require modifications within well-established theological positions. This method does not place the label "unorthodox" upon any book or passage of the New Testament, but ensures that they will be interpreted in accordance with the church's faith or theological traditions. Such an approach may lead to what J.G. Vos terms "Bible Bending" in his essay entitled BIBLE BREAKING, BIBLE BENDING, AND BIBLE BELIEVING [1978].

Problems related to the analogy-of-faith hermeneutic may also be illustrated with
reference to attitudes towards certain emphases in Hebrews. The book of Hebrews' emphasis on works and obedience, for example, does not seem to contradict its author's conception of what salvation through faith means; yet as Schoonhoven (1978:93) has indicated, in the immediate context of sixteenth century polemics between Roman Catholics and Protestants, this emphasis seems to have disturbed Luther. Schoonhoven (1978:108) observes the same uneasiness about this aspect of Hebrews' message even in certain contemporary circles.

Reduction by the analogy-of-faith principle basically means that the prospect of theological traditions and Systematic Theology being enriched and at times corrected by exegetical studies becomes only an elusive theoretical possibility which is never a practical reality. Fuller (1978:200) is therefore correct to observe:

"So long as the exegesis of Biblical passages is conducted by such analogy-of-faith hermeneutics, it would be difficult for Systematic Theology to be nourished and corrected by exegetical considerations from the Biblical text".

2.4.2.2.3. Reduction through demythologizing

Bultmann's concept of demythologization also appears to belong to the reductive methods which are concerned with explaining away certain aspects of the New Testament's message. It can also be considered as being closely associated with the idea of a canon within the canon insofar as there are certain categories which are not demythologized while others are. The fact that Bultmann accepts certain aspects of the New Testament as mythical and thus in need of being demythologized so that they may be understood by modern people, while considering others as non-mythical and therefore not to be demythologized is clear from his distinction between the mythical and the historical. Thus with regard to the demythologization of the Christ Occurrence Bultmann (1984:32) states:

"It is clear, first of all, that the Christ occurrence is not a myth like the cult myths of the Greek or hellenistic gods. The Jesus Christ who is God's son, a pre-existent divine being, is at the same time a certain historical person,
Jesus of Nazareth; and his destiny as a person is not only a mythical occurrence but at the same time a human destiny that ends with crucifixion. The historical and the mythical here are peculiarly intertwined: the historical Jesus whose father and mother are well known (John 6:42) is at the same time supposed to be the pre-existent Son of God, and alongside of the historical event of the cross stands the resurrection, which is not a historical event. Certain contradictions indicate how the combination of the mythical and the historical creates difficulties”.

Bultmann (1984:10,11) also clearly perceives his demythologizing programme as a method that would defuse the contradictions which he considers to be partly present as a result of the intertwining of the mythical and the historical non-mythical within the New Testament.

This method of Bultmann has accordingly been critically evaluated as a form of subjectivism and Sachkritik (Ladd 1971:44-6; Hasel 1978:87-97; Goppelt 1981:264-7; Goldingay 1987:118-9).

2.4.2.3. The contextual historical-critical approach
Some scholars seek to highlight and explain the theological relationships among New Testament books by employing what may be called a contextual historical-critical approach. The basic premise of a contextual approach is that the theological diversity within the New Testament is primarily due to the occasional nature of the books, namely, the fact that the New Testament writers address themselves to different issues, under a variety of circumstances and at different times as well as to a variety of recipients. Such an approach may be coupled with various methods; and when it is connected to the historical-critical method which tends to perceive history "as a closed continuum, an unbroken series of historical causes and effects" (Ladd 1971:49); then the result is what we mean by the concept of 'the contextual historical-critical approach' here. Thus the approaches which Hasel (1978:28,102) calls "the purely historical", "the positive historical", and "the historical"; while Goppelt (1981:257,272) designates them with the labels of "the purely historical line of questioning" and "the historical-positive position", are all
accordingly considered as classifiable under this category. The rationale behind classifying them together is the perception that although these methods differ in many ways, yet they appear to have the same basic stance with regard to the issue of highlighting and explaining the theological relationships among New Testament books. This approach attempts to harmonize and affirm the theological diversity within the New Testament primarily on the basis of some reconstructed historical circumstances and developments within early Christianity. Thus some particular reconstructed history of early Christian origins forms the primary context within which the theological relationships among New Testament books are highlighted and explained.

This characteristic feature of the contextual historical-critical approach may be illustrated on the basis of the views which Kümmel expresses in his THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT [1983]. Kümmel (1983:16-7) makes the features of the contextual historical-critical approach clear when he writes as follows:

"The scientific concern with the understanding of the New Testament must, precisely when it is pursued in the context of the church and from the presupposition of faith, take account of the fact that we also can come to a believing hearing of the message of the New Testament only in one way: namely, by seeking to make the utterances of the ancient authors of the New Testament understandable, just as their contemporary readers or hearers could and had to understand them. Hence there is no other access to the understanding of the New Testament writings than the method of historical research, which is valid for all writings of antiquity. ... Therefore the task of a theology of the New Testament can in no case consist primarily in presenting the views of the New Testament comprehensively as a whole. For in such a procedure one of two things would unavoidably occur: either the view of the individual writings or groups of writings are forcibly fitted together into a median outlook, or divergent ideas are sacrificed to the dominant ones. The task of a theology of the New Testament can only consist in first allowing the individual writings or groups of writings to speak for themselves, and only then to ask about the unity which is shown therein,
or else to affirm a diversity which cannot be eliminated".

Kümmel (1983:18) further insists that:

"... it is important to avoid subjecting the various forms of the proclamation to the same schema, ... For each of the forms of the proclamation in the new Testament has its own inner order and its own aim".

His THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT is accordingly also subtitled, "According to Its Major Witnesses, Jesus - Paul - John."

This emphasis of the contextual historical-critical approach on the importance of recognizing the value of the historical circumstances is certainly valid and helpful, but there appear to be two basic problems connected to the method. These are the tendency to regard itself as the only one way of studying the New Testament, and the presumption of having the ability to recover all the necessary historical circumstances connected to the aspects of the New Testament message(s) (Morris 1986:13).

2.4.2.4. The contextual salvation-historical approach

Another method used by scholars to highlight and explain the theological relationships among the New Testament books is that which may be called 'the contextual salvation-historical approach'. This approach has also been designated by such names as "Redemptive-historical" (Gaffin 1975-76:292); "Salvation History" or "Heilsgeschichte" (Hasel 1978:111); and "The Salvation-Historical Position of Historical Scripture Research" (Goppelt 1981:276). The concept of 'contextual salvation-historical' is employed here to indicate that the approach concerned combines the emphasis on the occasional nature of the New Testament books with an emphasis on the fact that the New Testament writers share a similar outlook in viewing certain historical events as part of an unfolding divine plan of salvation. Ladd (1971:50) accordingly distinguishes its conception of history from that of the historical-critical method by drawing attention to its allowance for transcendence in historical events.
Ladd (1971:55) then goes on to spell out some distinguishing features of this approach when he states:

"The Bible is the record of God's revelatory and saving acts in history, culminating in Jesus of Nazareth; and it is also the prophetic interpretation of these redemptive acts. As such, it is the word of God which speaks to me and brings me face to face with God who was revealed in the person, words, deeds, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth".

To the criticism that such an approach entails reading one's faith into the New Testament texts, Ladd (1971:58) maintains:

"My study of New Testament history supports, if it does not prove, what I believe".

According to this approach the interpretation of New Testament texts should not only occur within the context of its occasional historical circumstances, but also within that of the events of salvation history to which the particular texts are orientated (Runia 1989:303).

The contextual salvation-historical approach accounts for most of the theological diversity in the New Testament on the basis of both the occasional historical circumstances of a text and the particular period to which the text is assigned within salvation history. It is accordingly able to perceive more unity within the New Testament and usually also explains the diversity by the concept of progressive salvation events and revelation. One fundamental criticism levelled at this approach has accordingly been that "it lends itself to a conceptual unity which is, however, not realized" (Hasel 1978:126). In the light of such criticisms, it would seem to be more sensible to practice caution also with regard to this approach; and to regard the salvation historical schema which are encountered when using works that utilize this method as scholarly suggestions, which also might be tested for confirmation or rejection when particular texts are studied.
2.4.2.5. **Conclusions**

The evaluative survey of the methods used by scholars to highlight and explain the theological relationships among New Testament books (in section 2.4.2.1. through to 2.4.2.4. above) is merely illustrative and therefore not comprehensive. Some of the issues which it appears to illustrate are:

2.4.2.5.1. It confirms the availability of a variety of approaches and of diversities within the approaches which are employed by New Testament scholars in highlighting and explaining the theological relationships among New Testament books.

2.4.2.5.2. It also seems to draw attention to the absence of a perfect problem-free approach, but also appears to highlight the fact that some of the methods face more serious problems than others when the nature of New Testament books is taken into consideration.

2.4.2.5.3. The cross-reference method tends to violate linguistic principles and therefore has to be practiced with much caution; while some of the reductive methods tend to decanonicalize or marginalize sections of what they are supposed to study and that in an almost arbitrary and unacceptable manner.

2.4.2.5.4. The emphasis on context by both the two contextual methods (evaluated in 2.4.2.3. and 2.4.2.4. above) seems to be appropriate. Their reconstructions of the historical circumstances which are supposed to be treated as the context of the message(s) within the New Testament has however, to be handled with care. The salvation historical events which the contextual salvation-historical approach also works with may, if confirmed in a particular text’s case, open up important perspectives relevant in forging relationships with the messages of other New Testament texts.

2.4.3. **Concluding remarks**

This concluding section aims at giving a general description of the method which will be followed in chapter five. The description is undertaken with due respect to primarily the factors which are highlighted by the present investigation (see sections 2.4.1. and 2.4.2.
The purpose of chapter five's investigation is (as already hinted in 2.1. above) to examine New Testament scholars' suggestions about the presence and uniqueness of 2 Peter's hastening motif within the New Testament. The validity and importance of such a study could be argued on the basis of all the grounds that are briefly described above (see section 2.4.1.), but more especially on the ground concerning the debate around the theological unity and/or diversity of the New Testament.

The examination's nature is that of an evaluation of the passages which 2 Peter's commentators have given as manifesting comparable ideas to those in 2 Peter 3:12 where the hastening motif is most conspicuous. This examination takes into account the limitations of the cross-reference method in highlighting theological relationships among New Testament books as these were made apparent (see 2.4.2.1. above).

The scope of the examination may be described as follows: It is essentially restricted to 2 Peter's hastening motif as understood from the results of the study in chapter four. Further, the examination concentrates only on those passages which are alleged to embody ideas akin to 2 Peter's hastening motif by scholars who have commented on 2 Peter.

2.5. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES WHICH ARE ESPECIALLY PERTINENT TO CHAPTER SIX

New Testament scholarship discussions about the relationship between the religious ideas expressed within New Testament books and those in documents and traditions associated with other religions have and continue to include a wide variety of stimulating methodological issues as part of their agenda. Although these discussions clearly antedate 'the history of religions school', they have, however, become more intense within the context of debating the issues which this particular school raised (Bultmann 1956:209-13; Kümmel 1973:33-9, 206ff, Bruce 1977:36,48-50; Hasel 1978:28-9, 50-2;

Two of the issues which often crop up in these discussions are:

(i) the role and place of religious backgrounds in New Testament interpretation; and
(ii) the criteria for determining and evaluating the appropriateness of religious backgrounds.

These two methodological areas concerning New Testament interpretation are briefly explored in this part so as to give an account of the method which is followed in chapter six.

2.5.1. The role and place of religious backgrounds in New Testament interpretation

There appears to exist a general consensus among New Testament scholars concerning the necessity of using religious backgrounds in interpreting the New Testament. It is within the context of this general consensus that Fuller (1978:205) expressed appreciation for the contribution of "the history of religions school" as follows:

"So the history-of-religions school presented Biblical theology with an exegetical tool which made it virtually impossible for the Bible's message to be molded according to the current philosophy of a given culture. Now the Bible had to speak in terms of the meanings which the Biblical writers had intended by the words they used".

This general consensus is, however, only apparent and therefore, to a certain extent, superficial because New Testament scholars use different religious backgrounds in various ways when interpreting the same texts. It is in the face of such deeper divisions and/or diversities that when writing at almost the same time as Fuller, Drane (1977:124) expressed with some caution the general consensus about the usefulness of religious backgrounds as follows:

"From the brief survey we can see that the benefits of a judicious use of other religious texts in the exegesis of the New Testament are many... Used wisely, these materials can add a basic dimension to our comprehension of
the New Testament. Used indiscriminately, they can lead us up many a blind alley. But no reader of the New Testament can say they are irrelevant”.

Some of the factors which highlight the general superficial consensus and the deep divisions existing within New Testament scholarship concerning the role and place of religious backgrounds in New Testament interpretation are briefly surveyed in this section.

2.5.1.1. The continuity and/or discontinuity debate
Right from the outset, 'the history of religions school' championed the viewpoint that, with regard to its beliefs and practices, Christianity was and is continuous with other religions. This standpoint was also vigorously opposed, from the very beginning, by those scholars who maintained the uniqueness of Christianity and who accordingly championed the discontinuity viewpoint.

The emphasis on the continuity between different religions seems to have been predominant at the turn of this century. It was manifested conspicuously in the motto of 'the World's Parliament of Religions' [1893] which read as follows:

"To unite all religion against irreligion; to make the Golden Rule the basis of this union; to present to the world ... the substantial unity of many religions in the good deeds of the Religious Life; to provide for a World's Parliament of Religions, in which their common aims and common grounds of unity may be set forth, and the marvelous Religious progress of the Nineteenth century be reviewed ..." (in Kitagawa 1987:5; see also Lancaster 1987:12).

Although this emphasis on the continuity among religions still persists, contemporary scholars of the history of religions appear to have also become more aware of the discontinuities among religions. Kitagawa (1987:128) expresses this emphasis on discontinuity, without throwing the continuity among religions overboard, while arguing
for an approach that highlights the differences among the various religions.

The role of religious backgrounds in New Testament interpretation may, within the context of this debate, be considered as being that of highlighting the continuities and/or the discontinuities which are observed between religious ideas in New Testament texts and others associated with other religions. Religious backgrounds may accordingly serve to illustrate what the Christian message has in common with other religions as well as those aspects that distinguish it from other ancient and contemporary religious systems and traditions. Such a contribution would certainly be helpful with regard to New Testament interpretation.

2.5.1.2. **Indication of possible antecedents for aspects of New Testament teaching**

Religious backgrounds are sometimes used to suggest antecedents for the beliefs and practices which scholars encounter when studying the New Testament. Wilhelm Bousset [1865-1920] approached the New Testament concept of anti-Christ in such a manner when he, for example, wrote:

"... the anti-Christ legend is after all unable quite to conceal its origin in a far wilder and more fantastic world of thought and sentiments, from which it has received an indelible impression. During its further development there continually arises behind the anti-Christ the still wilder figure of the God-hating demon, of Satan, ever seeking to thrust him aside. The history of the saga bears on its face the impress of our assumption regarding its origin." (1896:145)

Bultmann continues in the same tradition and maintains that primitive Christianity is to be viewed as a syncretistic phenomenon (1956:11-12).

There appear to be, however, some big logical jumps which New Testament scholars undertake when they deduce antecedents merely from the phenomenon of parallels or continuities. It is within this context that some theologians advise and practise great caution with regard to the approach of scholars such as Bousset and Bultmann. Sandmel
(1969:8) aptly point out some of these logical gaps with the following perceptive words:

"... I have a conviction that for every fact about the first Christian century that I can be sure about, there are nine Pseudo-facts that I am unsure of; and great as is the collective knowledge in modern scholarship, the areas where we lack knowledge are immensely greater. If this contention is right, as I believe it is, it will also follow that much of the effort of scholars to provide correlations, and to make inferences from such alleged correlations, and to trace supposed developments, is at the minimum subject to substantial challenge, and at the maximum must necessarily be characterized as imaginative and ingenious and, at the same time, at least a little bit substantial."

2.5.1.3. Reservoirs of interpretative categories
In their use of religious backgrounds, scholars such as Bultmann often go further than suggesting possible antecedents and influences for certain New Testament religious beliefs and practices. They at times even interpret New Testament texts in terms of categories borrowed from these other backgrounds. With reference to Hellenistic religious influences on the New Testament, Bultmann, for example, appears to go as far as considering all or most aspects of some New Testament books' message in terms of Hellenistic myths. This viewpoint which would depict such New Testament messages as being totally and comprehensively syncretistic led Bultmann (1956:211) to interpret New Testament teachings about Christ, the Spirit, the Church, and even ethics in terms of such myths.

This Bultmannian viewpoint of depicting the message of certain New Testament books as comprehensively and/or totally syncretistic seems to have exaggerated its case and accordingly deserves the criticisms that it underemphasizes the influence of the New Testament message on these other religions (Sandmel 1969:21f; Guthrie 1981:70) and also that it deduces comprehensive syncretism from few particular cases (Yamauchi 1974:68). These criticisms imply that an approach which presupposes comprehensive influences on the New Testament from other religious traditions may involve totality
transfers of meanings when the meanings which these categories have within the context of Hellenistic mythology are regarded as being present in New Testament texts. It is in the face of this pitfall that Guthrie (1981:59) warns against possible resultant bendings of the New Testament message.

2.5.1.4. Conclusions

Apart from highlighting the general consensus about the usefulness of religious backgrounds and some deep division among New Testament scholars concerning the role and place of these backgrounds in New Testament interpretation, the survey in 2.5.1.1. through to 2.5.1.3. seems also to illustrate the following matters:

2.5.1.4.1. The religious backgrounds may and are often used for various purposes and in different ways by New Testament scholars. Seeing that the use of these backgrounds may be a potential factor contributing towards different understandings of the same texts, it seems essential that they be taken into consideration when evaluating the meanings which are assigned to New Testament texts.

2.5.1.4.2. A cautious stance seems to be called for when encountering and making suggestions concerning the religious backgrounds of New Testament texts and ideas expressed in them.

2.5.1.4.3. Care needs to be taken to ensure that religious backgrounds are not the only support for a particular viewpoint about the meanings of New Testament texts. This calls for their use together with other tools of interpretation.

2.5.2. Criteria for determining and evaluating appropriate religious backgrounds

The determination and evaluation of the appropriateness of religious backgrounds partly depend on the purposes for which they are sought and identified. If the primary purposes are those of having some religious categories to be used in interpreting the corresponding religious New Testament texts, then the set of appropriate religious backgrounds will be almost infinitely wide. Such an approach would also amount to contextualization in terms of the chosen religious backgrounds and when that is the case, then anything that can
qualify as religious would be a member of the set of appropriate backgrounds and the
question for criteria to determine and evaluate the appropriateness of backgrounds would
be almost irrelevant or meaningless. Religious backgrounds may, however, be
determined with the purpose of ascertaining possible religious influences which might
have exerted themselves upon the New Testament books' writers and their original
audiences. This is the area in which the present investigation is interested; and within
the context of such purposes, the options of appropriate religious backgrounds are limited
in such a way that the question about criteria for determining and evaluating the
appropriateness of backgrounds become not only immensely relevant but also extremely
pressing. Some of the criteria which seem relevant for the present investigation are
accordingly briefly surveyed in this section.

2.5.2.1. Contacts with adherents of other religions
A casual reading of the New Testament makes clear that the writers of its books and
early Christians in general came into contact with adherents of other religions. Some of
the forces which seem to have facilitated such contacts are:

(i) The phenomenon of pre-conversion religious relationships
New Testament passages such as John 1:35-51 and Acts 2:42-47 contain indications
that some of the Christians were converted from forms of Judaism. There is also
enough evidence to suggest that their conversion did not involve an immediate
total break with their religious past. Thus, Peter and John are depicted as still
using the Jerusalem temple (Acts 3:1), while even Paul is portrayed as still
submitting to Jewish purification rites as late as during the end of his third
missionary journey (Acts 21:26). Those who were not associated with Judaism, are
also portrayed as being converted from other religions. Thus the Thessalonians
are described as having 'turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God'
(1 Thess.1:9). The Corinthian dilemma about whether or not believers may
continue to partake in eating food that was offered to idols also suggests that some
of the Gentile believers may have persisted in contact with adherents of their
former religions (1 Cor.10:14-33). These contacts may have involved that the
Christian message had to indicate where the lines between the new and the old
faiths had to be drawn. In other words, converts had to know wherein the new and the old were continuous and/or discontinuous with each other. It seems therefore quite plausible that the writers of the New Testament books may have attempted to fulfill such needs. Indeed, the Jerusalem Assembly, described in Acts 15, appears to have been associated with such needs (Acts 15:19ff).

(ii) The Mobility of religious adherents within the Roman empire

Another major force which facilitated these contacts was the mobility of religious adherents within the Roman empire. This process had, with regard to the Jews, actually started to take place on a considerable scale during their Babylonian exile. The Acts 2 narrative manifests awareness of this phenomenon when it states that "there were staying in Jerusalem Godfearing Jews from every nation under heaven", and by depicting these Jews as hearing the Apostles declare "the Wonders of God" in their own tongues (Acts 2:5,11). There is also enough evidence to suggest that the pre-70 AD Palestine was ethnically and religiously diverse. There were Samaritans (Luke 9:51-56; John 4:39-42), and Galilee is even called a land of Gentiles (Matthew 4:15-16). It is within the context of this ethnic and religious diversity that Matthew 10:5-6 informs us that Jesus sent out his disciples with the following instructions:

"Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.
Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel." (New International Version)

This mobility also included the Roman soldiers who were present in many parts of the empire to secure Roman interests.

(iii) The missionary movement of the early Christians

Early Christians also came into contact with adherents of other religions because of their missionary activities. These activities necessarily brought Christians into conversational contacts with adherents of other religions. Paul, for example, had to preach the Christian message against the background of polytheism, Epicureanism and Stoicism in places such as Lystra (Acts 14:12), Phillipi
(Acts 16:16-18), Athens (Acts 17:18-31), and Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41). Such missionary activities implied that the Christian missionaries and converts had to know the continuities and/or discontinuities between the Christian message and the other religions or systems.

The criterion of contact imply that those religions with which Christianity could come into contact at certain places may have provided the religious background for many Christian ideas and practices. It does not, however, necessarily imply that all such religions had to be the background against which the Gospel was preached. In spite of this limitation, the criterion of contact is useful in that religions with which first century Christianity could not have come into contact may not be appropriate religious backgrounds for theological ideas expressed in most New Testament books.

2.5.2.2. The dates of religious documents

Another useful criterion for determining and evaluating the appropriateness of religious backgrounds is that of dating their religious documents. This criterion is premised on the fact that ideas expressed in later documents are generally speaking inappropriate religious backgrounds for those expressed in earlier documents.

The use of this criterion in issues concerning the determination of appropriate religious backgrounds may be illustrated on the basis of the debate around the Gnostic documents such as the Nag Hammandi texts. Most of these texts were discovered in 1945 (Drane 1977:117; Combs 1987:195). Scholars such as Bultmann consider the ideas expressed in these texts an appropriate religious background for the description of the person and work of Jesus Christ and the nature of the Church which is encountered in New Testament books such as Colossians. The evaluation of this claim immediately involved the criterion of dating. Since the earliest possible date for the composition of these Gnostic texts is generally considered to be the late second century (Yamauchi 1974:53), scholars such as Talbert (1976:418) and Combs (1987:195) deny the claim concerning these documents' validity, in this regard, partly on the basis of the dating criterion. The arguments for the existence of some pre-Christian Gnosticism which more or less
corresponded to the Gnosticism manifested in the Nag Hammanidi texts have, although being imaginative, accordingly been found unconvincing because such "arguments for pre-Christian Gnosticism are based upon late sources" (Combs 1987:208).

The criterion of dating even involves cases of citations or allusions. Thus even when a later document may have clear parallels with regard to an earlier document, it is impossible that it may have influenced the earlier document. The probability, in such cases, would be that of an earlier document having exercised influence on the later one.

2.5.2.3. The content of religious documents and traditions

Another criterion for the determination and evaluation of appropriate religious backgrounds is that the analysis of the content of their traditions should evince some relationships. These relationships may consist of similarities and/or contrasts. This criterion involves the demonstration of clear parallels.

The use of this criterion may also be illustrated on the basis of the appropriateness of the Gnostic texts in this regard. The argument for their appropriateness is primarily based on the perceived similarities between some of the categories expressed in Gnostic and New Testament texts. Bultmann (1956:193), for example, argues for their appropriateness on the basis of this criterion; but this claim for similarity is examined by Talbert (1976:419) and found to be superficial and unconvincing. Talbert (1976:440) goes on to demonstrate closer affinities between early Christian and Hellenistic-Jewish conceptions, and then suggests the latter as being a more appropriate religious background for the Christian conception.

2.5.2.4. Conclusions

The brief survey of criteria for the determination and evaluation of appropriate religious backgrounds (see 2.5.2.1. through to 2.5.2.3. above) is not meant to be exhaustive but is rather intended to be illustrative of the methodological issues involved in the examination of chapter six below. These criteria are often used in harness and it must also be observed that they cannot, in the nature of the circumstances, be regarded as being able to demonstrate certainties but they are certainly capable of providing useful probabilities
in this regard.

2.5.3. Concluding remarks

This section aims at describing the method to be followed in the examination of chapter six. The description is offered in the light of the methodological issues highlighted above (see sections 2.5.1. and 2.5.2.).

The purpose of the investigation in chapter six is to examine the appropriateness of some religious backgrounds for 2 Peter's hastening motif. This examination employs the criteria highlighted above (see section 2.5.2.). The investigation will also rely on the meaning of 2 Peter's hastening motif as defined by chapter four of the present inquiry. This investigation is therefore not an examination of the appropriate religious background(s) for the whole of 2 Peter's theological ideas and emphases. Indeed, the discussion on the role and place of religious backgrounds in New Testament interpretation (see section 2.5.1. above) seem to suggest the possibility of different religious backgrounds even for ideas which may be expressed in one New Testament book.

The method used in the examination involves the evaluation of certain religious backgrounds on the basis of the criteria already highlighted (see section 2.5.2.) and a particular understanding of 2 Peter's hastening motif (chapter four of this inquiry). This procedure raises a number of problems and some of them are:

(i) The fact that many possible religious backgrounds are omitted

This is actually only a valid hypothetical possibility because the examination does not leave out any religious background that has been specifically suggested for 2 Peter's hastening motif. Those commentators on 2 Peter who have taken the trouble to suggest a specific background for this motif appear to be united in regarding the appropriate religious background as rabbinic traditions. The fact that not many different religious backgrounds have been suggested in this regard is certainly related to the scant attention which 2 Peter's hastening motif has received among New Testament scholars (see on section 1.2.2.). The hypothetical
possibility of other apparently unlikely religious backgrounds would in any case exist even if twenty or more backgrounds were examined. This simply implies that while this possibility remains, the suggestions which are made about the appropriate religious background for 2 Peter's hastening motif have to be treated as hypotheses which are advanced on the basis of the criteria just indicated (see 2.5.2.).

(ii) The fact that the examination is based on information about which there is no absolute certainties
This problem actually affects all examinations similar to the one undertaken in chapter six (see the citation from Sandmel in section 2.5.1.2.). It must therefore be regarded as a valid problem that cannot, however, prevent such examinations. The attitude with which the present examination has to be approached is that when more and better information becomes available our hypothesis and those of others may have to be revised. It is in this context that the suggestions which the examination makes concerning the appropriate religious background of 2 Peter's hastening motif should not be viewed as having the character of finality.

(iii) The fact that the issues around the dating of 2 Peter are still unresolved
The debate concerning the dating of 2 Peter, which is closely related to the question of its authenticity, is still unresolved (see sections 1.2.1.3. and 1.2.1.4.). Scholarly opinions about this matter range "from AD 60 - 160" (Green 1987:41). Some of the implications which this problem has for the present inquiry, and for chapter six in particular, are: (a) the various possibilities about the dating of 2 Peter within the broad period of AD 60 - 160 have to be kept open; (b) the light which the investigation may throw upon the issue, has to be presented and viewed as tentative suggestions in view of the need to study more aspects of 2 Peter's massage before these kind of studies can make a deciding input upon this and related issues.
CHAPTER 3
THE USE AND MEANINGS OF σπεῦδω DERIVATIVES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the inquiry investigates the use and meanings of the σπεῦδω derivatives employed in the New Testament. The term 'σπεῦδω derivatives', as used here, refers to all the New Testament words which are morphologically derived from the root σπεῦδ-. The words formed from σπουδάζω are also included in this group because σπουδάζω is itself derived from σπεῦδω. (Greenlee 1983:119).

These words are distributed in books which were written by different authors, under a variety of circumstances, at different dates, and at a diversity of target groups (Johnson 1986:6). The words being investigated in this part are therefore used in different contexts.

The investigation takes the form of a survey which considers all the New Testament verses in which the σπεῦδω derivatives are found. The focus of the investigation primarily falls on ascertaining the meanings of these words within their various contexts. Many aspects and problems involved in the verses surveyed are therefore bypassed.

3.2. THE σπεῦδω DERIVATIVES IN THE GOSPELS

Mark and Luke are the only Gospels which contain these words as part of their vocabulary. The words are found in the following verses: Mark 6:25; Luke 1:39; 2:16; 7:4; and 19:5,6.
3.2.1. **The meaning of μετὰ σπουδὴς in Mark 6:25**

μετὰ σπουδὴς is used in Mark 6:25 as a prepositional phrase which modifies the main verb εἰσελθοῦσα. This section of scripture forms part of the narrative which supplies the circumstances that led to John the Baptist's death. The complete Markan narrative about the Baptist's death begins with verse 14 and ends in verse 29.

Mark 6:25 describes the action of Herodias' daughter. This girl is introduced in the narrative at verse 22 with her entry [εἰσελθοῦσα in verse 22]; she then went out [ἐξελθοῦσα in verse 24] to get her mother's advice about what she should request from the king; and she comes in again [εἰσελθοῦσα in verse 25] in order to present her request to the king. Mark then uses the phrase under consideration to modify her coming in again when she comes to bring her request to the king. It must be pointed out that 'the coming in' of verse 22 as well as the going out of verse 24 are not modified at all. This certainly serves to draw attention to this 'coming in' which is qualified with the phrase under consideration. What does the phrase mean? It means 'with hurry' or rather 'in a hurry'. The connotations may be that the girl regarded her request to be urgent and that she herself was also eager to receive it. The meaning of this phrase is not disputed among commentators. (See for example Gould 1955:114; Mann 1986:297).

3.2.2. **μετὰ σπουδὴς in Luke 1:39**

The meaning of the phrase μετὰ σπουδὴς in Luke 1:39 is the same as the one in Mark 6:25. Here it modifies the verb ἐπορεύομαι. The function of μετὰ σπουδὴς seems to be that of further highlighting Mary's readiness to do what God directs her. Thus she does not waste much time but goes to visit Elisabeth 'with hurry' or 'in a hurry'. Fitzmyer (1970:362) therefore correctly observes:

"... it suggests merely the proper reaction to the heavenly sign that has just been given."

3.2.3. **The meaning of σπεόσαντες in Luke 2:16**

The participle σπεόσαντες in Luke 2:16 is used in an almost identical context to the use of μετὰ σπουδὴς in Luke 1:39. The participle is used to modify the verb ἡλθον which
describes the response of the shepherds to the announcement of the angel. The use of the participle, under consideration here, serves to highlight their haste to go where the angel has directed them. The meaning of this \( \sigma \varepsilon \delta \omega \) derivative in this verse and context is that of 'hurrying'. The United Bible Society's translator's handbook therefore correctly observes:

"... the participle \( \sigma \varepsilon \delta \sigma \alpha \nu \tau \epsilon \zeta \) qualifies the action of the main verb as happening with haste or quickly" (Reiling & Swellengrebel 1971:119).

3.2.4. \( \sigma \nu \delta \alpha \iota \omega \varsigma \) in Luke 7:4
The derivative of \( \sigma \varepsilon \delta \delta \omega \) in Luke 7:4 which is \( \sigma \nu \delta \alpha \iota \omega \varsigma \) is also used to qualify the main verb. In this particular verse it modifies the verb \( \pi \alpha \varepsilon \chi \alpha \lambda \omicron \nu \). The meaning of 'hurrying' or of 'quickly' which suits the other cases already considered does not fit the context of Luke 7:4. The context is that of the Jewish leaders who petition Jesus on behalf of their friend, the centurion. The meaning which fits very well is the second meaning given by Bauer and others which is that of earnestly or diligently. The use of \( \sigma \nu \delta \alpha \iota \omega \varsigma \) indicates the urgency of their plea, certainly because of the seriousness of the problem. The United Bible Society Translator's Handbook makes the following helpful suggestion:

"'... besought him earnestly' or 'asked him urgently' ... here again a shift to direct discourse may be preferable, e.g. 'they urged him, "please, do help him"'" (Reiling & Swellengrebel 1971:293)

3.2.5. \( \sigma \varepsilon \delta \sigma \varsigma \zeta \) in Luke 19:5,6
The participle \( \sigma \varepsilon \delta \sigma \varsigma \zeta \) in these verses is used to modify \( \chi \alpha \tau \acute{\alpha} \beta \eta \theta \varsigma \) and \( \chi \alpha \tau \acute{\epsilon} \beta \eta \) in verses 5 and 6 respectively. The sense is that Jesus did not just call upon Zacheus to come down from the tree but that He called upon him to come down 'quickly'. Zacheus was also quick in his response. This seems to be the thrust of the words used in these verses.
3.2.6. Conclusion
In all their occurrences in the two Gospels the σπέδω derivatives are used as modifiers. They fulfill this function either as participles, adverbs or in the form of prepositional phrases. The meanings of the σπέδω derivatives in the Gospels are not disputed.

3.3. THE σπέδω DERIVATIVES IN ACTS

There are two instances of these words in Acts. They are used in Acts 20:16 and Acts 22:18.

3.3.1. ἔσπευδεν in Acts 20:16
The imperfect indicative active ἔσπευδεν is used as the main verb in Acts 20:16c. It refers to Paul's attitude which led him not to stop over at Ephesus. The whole Acts 20:16c gives the reason why Paul did not wish to stay long in Asia. He was 'hurrying' to be at Jerusalem by Pentecost. The word under consideration makes good sense when understood as meaning 'to be in a hurry'. Commentators do not disagree about the meaning of this word in this verse; what they differ about is whether the reason which is given in this verse was indeed all that made Paul bypass Ephesus (see for example Bruce 1981:208; Conzelmann 1987:171).

3.3.2. The meaning of σπέδον in Acts 22:18
The context in which the aorist imperative σπέδον occurs in Acts 22:18 is Paul's account of how he became God's messenger among the Gentiles. In this verse, he accounts for this by means of a divine command which he received during a trance while in the temple. The command was "σπέδον καὶ ἔξελθε ..." The imperative σπέδον makes sense when understood as 'hurry up'. Paul therefore simply accounts for his departure from Jerusalem and his short stay there after his conversion by reiterating this divine injunction.

3.3.3. Conclusion
The two σπέδω derivatives in Acts are used to account for some movement in Paul's
life. He bypassed Ephesus because he was hurrying up for Jerusalem; and after his conversion, he did not stay long in Jerusalem because God commanded him to hurry up and depart out of her. The two contexts in which these words are used in Acts are more or less the same: to account for some movement which involved Paul's decision not to stay and work at certain places. The usage in Acts 20:16 also conveys the connotation of eagerness, that is, to hurry up because one wants; while the Acts 22:18 usage carries with it the connotation of hurrying up because one is constrained by a divine call, even a call to which one offers some initial resistance.

3.4. **THE \( \sigma \pi \varepsilon \delta \omega \) DERIVATIVES IN ROMANS**

Romans contains only two instances of \( \sigma \pi \varepsilon \delta \omega \) derivatives. These two occurrences are found in Romans 12:8,11.

3.4.1. **\( \epsilon \nu \ \sigma \pi \omega \nu \delta \eta \) in Romans 12:8**

The phrase \( \epsilon \nu \ \sigma \pi \omega \nu \delta \eta \) in Romans 12:8 appears within a series of injunctions or directives which begin at verse 6. They are directions which concern the way in which those who have received some gifts and responsibilities are to discharge their duties. The phrase under consideration stands parallel to the other six \( \epsilon \nu \) phrases which are used from verse 7.

These \( \epsilon \nu \) phrases follow participial noun phrases which are used to designate a variety of responsibilities belonging to certain people as a result of the gifts which God gave graciously. The \( \epsilon \nu \) phrases in each case then describe the manner in which these different responsibilities are to be discharged. Our phrase \( \epsilon \nu \ \sigma \pi \omega \nu \delta \eta \) informs those who lead or rule [\( \delta \ \pi \rho \omega \iota \sigma \tau \alpha \mu \varepsilon \nu \rho \zeta \ - \ "the one who rules" - Morris 1988:422; Dunn 1988:731] that they should do so **diligently**. The meaning is therefore not that they should be quick in the sense of finishing up something and that the quickness then becomes something of the past; it is that they should display diligence continuously while they are at their work. Louw & Nida therefore render it as follows:
"Whoever has authority must work hard" (1989a:662).

Both the connotations of urgency and seriousness seem to co-exist in this interpretation.

3.4.2. \( \tau \eta \sigma \pi \omicron \omega \delta \eta \) in Romans 12:11

Romans 12:11 appears in a context where Paul instructs the readers of his letter about general Christian virtues to be displayed in their lives, as distinct from those which leaders are to display in the course of fulfilling their various tasks. The section to which Romans 12:11 closely relates begins at verse 9 and is headed by the virtue of love, whereas the preceding section which mainly concerns the way in which leaders are to execute their duties is headed by the concept of gifts. The section beginning at verse 9 ends in verse 13 because in verse 14 Paul's style changes into that which is characterized by explicit imperatives and this change in style seems to indicate some form of transition.

The transition from Romans 12:6-8 into Romans 12:9-13 and the relationship between the two sections is recognized by various commentators. Examples are Murray (1965:128); Harrisville (1980:197); Hendriksen (1981:400,413) and Dunn (1988:738). Morris (1988:443) expresses the significance of this transition as follows:

"At this point Paul moves from the charismatic gifts, functions exercised by individuals, to virtues he expects to see in all believers"

\( \tau \eta \sigma \pi \omicron \omega \delta \eta \) is parallel with the other datives such as \( \tau \eta \varphi \imath \lambda \alpha \delta \epsilon \lambda \phi \iota \varsigma \) and \( \tau \eta \varepsilon \lambda \nu \pi \iota \delta \iota \) in verses 10 and 12 respectively; and this implies that it also refers to something that is in their category. These datives stand at the beginning of their respective clauses. They are best understood as datives of sphere or place (Chamberlain 1979:34-6) which can be rendered with: 'in matters relating to'. \( \tau \eta \sigma \pi \omicron \omega \delta \eta \) is therefore used to designate a sphere of virtue in which Christians must not lag behind. The meaning which appears to be most suitable within the context of this section seems to be diligence in the sense of some laudable Christian trait.
3.4.3. Conclusion
The two uses of the $\sigma\pi\epsilon\omicron\delta\omicron\omega$ derivatives in Romans 12:8,11 seem to refer to diligence as a virtue required in the service of Christian leaders as well as in the general life-style of all Christians. Romans 12:8 belongs to the first category, that is, that which has reference to leaders; while Romans 12:11 concerns the category of all believers and therefore refers to diligence as a virtue which must be displayed in whatever role they are called to fulfill.

3.5. THE MEANINGS OF THE $\sigma\pi\epsilon\omicron\delta\omicron\omega$ DERIVATIVES IN 2 CORINTHIANS

There is a great concentration of the $\sigma\pi\epsilon\omicron\delta\omicron\omega$ derivatives in 2 Corinthians. It is also interesting that these words are used in 2 Corinthians 7 and 8 only. They occur in the following verses: 2 Corinthians 7:11,12; 8:7,8; 8:16,17; and 8:22.

3.5.1. $\sigma\pi\omicron\upsilon\delta\omicron\nu$ and $\tau\eta\nu$ $\sigma\pi\omicron\upsilon\delta\omicron\nu$ in 2 Corinthians 7:11,12

2 Corinthians 7:11,12 is an integral part of 2 Corinthians 7:8-13 within the larger context of 2 Corinthians 7:2-16, in which Paul informs the Corinthians that the report about them which was brought back by Titus to Paul and other associates [$\alpha\nu\alpha\gamma\gamma\ell\lambda\omega\nu$ $\eta\mu\iota\nu$ - in verse 7] has restored or increased their confidence in them. In 2 Corinthians 7:8-13, of which the verses under consideration are an integral part, Paul expresses his convictions about a letter which he wrote and which was instrumental in changing the condition of the Corinthians by causing them good divine grief which lead to repentance [$\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\delta\omicron\theta\omicron\delta\omicron\nu$ $\lambda\omicron\omicron\nu\pi\eta\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\omicron\nu$ - in verse 10]. The whole section of 2 Corinthians 7:8-13 is dominated by the use of the $\lambda\omicron\pi\epsilon\omega$ derivatives which occur eight times in the United Bible Society text of 2 Corinthians 7:18-13. The sorrow which his letter caused the Corinthians is viewed by him as good because like typical divine grief, it brought repentance. The grief of the world leads to death [$\tau\omicron\omicron\kappa\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ $\lambda\omicron\omicron\nu\pi\eta$ $\theta\omicron\alpha\nu\omicron\omicron\omicron$ ... in verse 10].

He proceeds in verse 11 to enumerate some good virtues. These are the traits in which their repentance, which was brought about by their grief, made itself concrete or visible. $\sigma\pi\omicron\upsilon\delta\omicron\nu$ then stands at the head of the list of these traits, just as $\eta$ $\alpha\gamma\alpha\pi\nu$ stands at the head of the list in Romans 12:9f. It seems therefore that $\sigma\pi\omicron\upsilon\delta\omicron\nu$ in 2 Corinthians 7:11
represents for and refers to an encompassing general virtue which can manifest itself in many ways. The other virtues listed under it are related to it and seem to refer to some of the ways in which σπουδήν displayed itself among the Corinthians. The meaning which seem to suit the context here seems to be that of diligence in the sense of an embracing virtue.

The τὴν σπουδὴν of 2 Corinthians 7:12, on the other hand, seems to be used in the sense of a more particularized meaning. This is certainly also the significance of the use of the determiner with σπουδὴν while it is absent in the usage of 2 Corinthians 7:11. The use of the personal pronouns in 2 Corinthians 7:12 further makes it clear that the diligence meant in verse 12 is not only a more specific instance of diligence but that it is also a diligence in interpersonal relationships. The two meanings should therefore be distinguished from each other as follows: The first one in verse 11 refers to diligence in the sense of a general virtue; while the second one in verse 12 refers to a particular diligence in the relationship between the Corinthians and Paul with his associates. This latter type of diligence may be expressed by care for; longing for; or even by devotion to as the United Bible Society Translator's Guide suggests (Bratcher 1983:78).

3.5.2. ἐν πάσῃ σπουδῇ and τῆς ἐτερῶν σπουδῆς in 2 Corinthians 8:7,8
The two derivatives used in 2 Corinthians 8:7,8 seem to be closely related and are therefore considered jointly in this inquiry. It has been observed that in 2 Corinthians 7:11 Paul concedes the manifestation of diligence with regard to the Corinthians. In the opening section of 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; he continues in the same tone and informs them of the manifestation of God’s grace with regard to the Macedonian churches. He informs them that this manifestation chiefly consisted of their rich generosity in giving [τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς ἀπλοτητος - in verse 2]. His intention in sharing this information concerning the churches of Macedonia is to inspire and motivate the Corinthians in the matters relating to giving for the poor. This motive becomes clear in the verses under consideration here. In 2 Corinthians 8:7 he names the virtues for which the Corinthians were then well-known. In the list of virtues that are mentioned by him, he includes ἐν πάσῃ σπουδῇ. This is not surprising in view of his concession in 2 Corinthians 7:11. It is accordingly preferable to understand ἐν πάσῃ σπουδῇ here as in 2 Corinthians 7:11,
that is, to take it to mean diligence as a general virtue which had manifested its presence among the Corinthians in many areas of their church life. Some of these areas are those hinted at when considering 2 Corinthians 7:11,12 (see 3.5.1. above). This understanding of \(\text{ἐν πάσῃ σπουδῇ}\) in 2 Corinthians 8:7 seems to be supported by its being used among the other embracing virtues like knowledge, faith and love. In 2 Corinthians 8:8, the \(\tauης\text{ ἐκτρωμεν σπουδῆς}\) is used to refer to the work of the Macedonian churches which Paul describes in the opening verses. In other words, the work of giving for the poor was a concrete manifestation of the diligence of the Macedonian churches. By informing the Corinthians about it, he is referring to the 'diligence which others have displayed' in order to test and thus to inspire the Corinthians. The implication is that the diligence of the Corinthians, although already having made itself visible in many areas of their service and living, has not yet been displayed in ALL spheres; and that one such area in which Paul desired to see their diligence was that of generosity with regard to the poor. Titus had tried to motivate the Corinthians for this goal in the past, but did not succeed and Titus gave up, probably having been discouraged by the attitude of the Corinthians towards the matter [verse 6].

Although it is beyond the scope of this inquiry, it can be mentioned in passing that these verses seem to be tremendously important with regard to a reconstruction of the background to 2 Corinthians. For example, it seems clear from these verses that there was a period when the Corinthians displayed very little diligence in general; and even a hostile attitude with regard to the collections which were being gathered under the leadership of Paul in particular; and that Paul then wrote his letter which caused grief; and that this grief led to the repentance of the Corinthians which was displayed in general diligence with regard to many areas; and now Paul writes to urge or to promote the manifestation of this general diligence in the area of giving for the poor, an area that may have been the source of strained relationships between them and Paul with his associates when it was tried in the past.

What is relevant for the purposes of this inquiry is to observe that the \(σπουδάω\) derivatives in these verses refer to diligence as a virtue which can be made visible in many areas of Christian living. The Macedonian churches had displayed it in the area of giving to the
particular poor in question, and the Corinthians are being requested to display it in that same area too. The United Bible Society Translator's Guide suggests the following renderings: "in your willingness to serve" for 2 Corinthians 8:7 and "earnestness of others" for 2 Corinthians 8:8 (Bratcher 1983:85,86). Its suggestion with regard to 2 Corinthians 8:7 seems to miss the point: It reduces the Corinthians' diligence to mere willingness and to the area of service alone, while the contexts appear to demand a more generally embracing rendering. As noted in 3.5.1. above, their diligence also manifested itself in the area of interpersonal relationships and not merely in the area of service. It may perhaps be better just to use 'diligence in many spheres' or 'general diligence' with regard to 2 Corinthians 8:7 and then to use 'this earnestness of others' for 2 Corinthians 8:8.

3.5.3. τὴν ... σπουδὴν and σπουδαίότερον in 2 Corinthians 8:16,17
The usage in 2 Corinthians 8:16 is on the level of interpersonal relationships as in the case of 2 Corinthians 7:12, which was already considered in 3.5.1. above. The word therefore means 'care for' or 'concern for'. Titus was concerned for the Corinthians [in a good sense] with regard to their participation in the collection being gathered for the poor.

The usage of the comparative form σπουδαίότερον in 2 Corinthians 8:17 certainly means 'more concerned than ever or before'. It is perhaps a reference to the earlier period during the work of Titus in Corinth which is hinted at in verse 6 and on which something was noted under 3.5.2. above. This changed attitude of Titus is due to the change in the Corinthians, but especially also due to the encouragement of Paul and the other co-workers [παρακαλέσατι in verse 6], but since Paul and the others were just God's instruments, it is ultimately a change that is from God [verse 16].

3.5.4. σπουδαίον and σπουδαίότερον in 2 Corinthians 8:22
The context of the two adjectives derived from σπεύδω, and which are used in this verse is that of interpersonal relationships. The brother who comes with Titus is described in terms of his love and concern for the church and he is even more concerned when it comes to the Corinthians because of the confidence he displays in them.
It must be observed in passing here that there seems to be solidarity between 2 Corinthians 7 and 8. The confidence which Paul's associates have in the Corinthians is probably to be understood as a result of Titus' report about their response to (and the effects of) the letter which caused them divine grief.

3.5.5. Conclusion

The eight usages of the \(\mathfrak{a1Te} \varepsilon\delta\omega\) derivatives in 2 Corinthians 7 and 8 are very interesting. They refer to various matters which can be placed in two groups. The first group is made up of those usages which refer to diligence as a general Christian virtue. The uses in 2 Corinthians 7:11; 8:7; and 8:22a appear to fall in this group. The second group is made up of those usages which refer to diligence in a more particularized manner. The uses which refer to interpersonal relationships and to the specific act about the Macedonian churches' generosity appear to be instances of this second category.

3.6. THE MEANING OF \(\mathfrak{e}\sigma\mathfrak{p} \mathfrak{o} \mathfrak{d} \mathfrak{e} \alpha \sigma \alpha\) IN GALATIANS 2:10

Galatians 2:10 is an integral part of Gal. 2:1-10 in which Paul, during the course of defending his apostleship, informs the Galatians about a meeting between him and the three most important apostles: James, Peter and John. Paul indicates to the Galatians that these three leaders accepted his apostleship and his work among the Gentiles once they were convinced that the grace of God accompanied him and his work [καὶ γυνὸν τις τὴν χάριν τὴν δόθεισάν μοι - in verse 9]. He then continues to inform his readers that these apostles only requested attention to one aspect with regard to his and Barnabas' work. This one aspect was that they should remember the poor. Paul then uses the word \(\mathfrak{e}\sigma\mathfrak{p} \mathfrak{o} \mathfrak{d} \mathfrak{e} \alpha \sigma \alpha\) to indicate that this request was not burdensome to him and that he did not experience the request as some new brief which these three leaders were teaching him; somewhat like teaching someone who is ignorant of the matter or who did not already know its significance. This is probably the central meaning of the aorist. It is important because Paul is eager to indicate that these leaders did not add anything to him at that meeting as far as his knowledge of God's will and the Gospel is concerned [οὐδὲν προσανεθεντο - in verse 6]. The meaning of \(\mathfrak{e}\sigma\mathfrak{p} \mathfrak{o} \mathfrak{d} \mathfrak{e} \alpha \sigma \alpha\) in this context
therefore seems to be that of 'I was eager already'. Its use refers to the eagerness which, at the time of his meeting with these three leaders, was already present in him and which may already have been demonstrated by his actions. Hendriksen (1979:86) seems generally correct in his rendering although he appears to be in danger of totality transfer when he brings in ideas of 'making every effort' into this usage by expressing himself as follows:

"Paul says that he was eager - was taking pains, making every effort - to do this."

The first meaning in these suggestions of Hendriksen, 'he was eager' seems to suit the context well. The United Bible Society Translator's Handbook suggest:

"... and I have always been eager to do just that" (Arichea & Nida 1975:38).

and its suggestion therefore appears to be in order.

3.7. THE MEANING OF σπουδάζοντες IN EPHESIANS 4:3

Ephesians 4:3 is an integral part of Eph.4:1-6 as well as of the wider section which stretches up to verse 16. The contextual circumstances which seem important for understanding the verbal participle present σπουδάζοντες chiefly appear to be the following:

(a) Paul's characterization of the whole part begins at Eph.4:1 in which he is mainly concerned about the conduct of the reader (believer). He makes it clear that his concern is conduct which is worthy of the calling directed at believers. [ἀξιῶς περιπατήσαι τῇ κλήσις ...

(b) Paul's general description of the conduct which he envisages in verse 2, which he accomplishes by mentioning important virtues which summarize what he has in mind. All the virtues mentioned are relevant in the sphere of human relations. This has the effect of particularizing the conduct which weighs heavy in his mind.
(c) In the verse under consideration Paul begins to write about conduct in human relations with regard to the spiritual oneness of the believers of the church. The dominant use of the numeral 1 as well as the metaphor of the body being applied to the matter of relations among believers seems to emphasize the oneness of the church.

This contextual background is helpful with regard to the understanding of the meaning of the word under review. It cannot mean hurry, nor can it mean general diligence; but it means a particularized diligence. It can therefore be rendered with the meanings which Bauer and others put in the second category: "be zealous or eager, take pains, make every effort" (1979:184). The preservation \( \tau \eta \rho \varepsilon \iota \nu \) of the oneness of the believing community is thereby made an urgent matter. The rest of the section dwells further on this aspect. It should be pointed out here that this diligence is of great importance for those serving as leaders and those who are led. In this respect, this part more or less corresponds to the sections of Romans 12 which were briefly considered under 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 above. The effort which is required with regard to good relations among believers is furthermore of a continuous nature, as is suggested by the tense of the participle. Hendriksen (1967:184) correctly emphasizes the significance of the use of the word under consideration here as follows:

"The spiritual oneness here indicated is an indispensable prerequisite for promoting the health and happiness of the church, ... It does not come of its own accord but is the result of both effort and prayer; of effort, for the apostle says, 'making every effort' ..., and doing this constantly."

3.8. \( \sigma \pi \omicron \upsilon \delta \alpha \iota \omicron \tau \varepsilon \rho \omicron \varsigma \) IN PHILIPPIANS 2:28

There seems to be a number of contextual matters which appear to assist in ascertaining the meaning of the comparative adverb \( \sigma \pi \omicron \upsilon \delta \alpha \iota \omicron \tau \varepsilon \rho \omicron \varsigma \) in Philippians 2:28. They mainly revolve around the information which is given about Epaphroditus and his almost fatal illness. Two of these factors are:
(a) Epaphroditus’ longing for his friends in Philippi; and
(b) the desire of Paul to make the Philippians happy by allowing a reunion between them and Epaphroditus.

The adverb further qualifies the main verb εἰρήνευ and it therefore seems to have the function of indicating that Paul was sending back Epaphroditus earlier than would have been the case if the circumstances which he mentions did not exist. It therefore can be rendered with 'more hurriedly'. Hendriksen (1962:143) and Loh & Nida (1977:84), however, choose the meaning of "more eagerly" and this sense may be implied in the meaning of 'more hurriedly'; which also receives some support from the ranks of the commentators, for example Silva (1988:162).

3.9. THE MEANING OF ἐπονοεῖσαι IN 1 THESSALONIANS 2:17

The aorist active ἐπονοεῖσαι appears within a context in which Paul explains that their being separated from the Thessalonians by circumstances beyond their control caused them pain for a while [ἀπορρήτως θερέτες] but that this separation, although akin to a bereavement and therefore painful, applied only with regard to their physical contact and not with regard to their hearts. In their hearts it made them even more desirous to see the Thessalonians. The meaning of ἐπονοεῖσαι in this context seems to be that of 'longing for' in the sphere of interhuman relations. What they longed for is a physical reunion with the Thessalonians [τό πρόσωπον ὑμῶν ἰέναι]. That the meaning belongs in the sphere of 'longing for' appears to be supported by the predominance of words which appear to be expressions and elaborations of that longing (Frame 1960:119; Bruce 1982:54). The New International Version rendering of 'made every effort' seems therefore to need some qualifications.

3.10. THE MEANINGS OF THE σπεύδω DERIVATIVES IN 2 TIMOTHY

The σπεύδω derivatives are used several times in 2 Timothy. They occur in
2 Timothy 1:17; 2:15; and in 4:9,21.

3.10.1. \( \sigma \rho \omega \delta \alpha \iota \omega \varsigma \) in 2 Timothy 1:17
The adverb \( \sigma \rho \omega \delta \alpha \iota \omega \varsigma \) is used to modify the verb \( \varepsilon \zeta \eta \tau \eta \varsigma \varepsilon \nu \) in 2 Timothy 1:17. It therefore describes the manner in which Onesiphorus looked for Paul in Rome. The meaning which seems to be suitable appears to be that of seeking someone diligently with determination in order to find him. The meaning of \( \sigma \rho \omega \delta \alpha \iota \omega \varsigma \) can therefore be diligence in the sense of 'earnestly'. Onesphorus' diligence may in this case have displayed itself not primarily in overcoming practical difficulties related to the tracing of Paul, but rather in his readiness to be associated with a prisoner. This seems to be the force of the words 'not ashamed of my chains' \( \tau \eta \nu \ \varepsilon \lambda \upsilon \sigma \iota \nu \ \mu \omicron \upsilon \ \omicron \ \omicron \ \kappa \ \varepsilon \pi \alpha \iota \sigma \chi \omicron \omicron \nu \tau \omicron \eta \) in verse 16.

3.10.2. \( \sigma \rho \omega \delta \alpha \sigma \omega \omicron \) in 2 Timothy 2:15
The context of 2 Timothy 2:15 deals with Timothy's ability to be a good church leader. Two matters seem to receive the attention of Paul in his injunctions here:
(a) That Timothy's teachings are to be correct and of such a nature that it will embody what Paul regards as essential elements of the truth [verse 2,8,14]. The reference to false teachers such as Hymenaeus and Philetus seems also to emphasize this stress on correct teaching.
(b) That Timothy will endure the hardships related to the work of such a teacher [verse 3f].
These two matters, especially the first, form the context of \( \sigma \rho \omega \delta \alpha \sigma \omega \omicron \) in 2 Timothy 2:15. Its use is to appeal for devotion with the aim of achieving these two matters. It refers to the effort that is needed on Timothy's side. It therefore could be rendered as 'do your best' (Louw & Nida 1989a:415).

3.10.3. \( \sigma \rho \omega \delta \alpha \sigma \omega \omicron \) in 2 Timothy 4:9,21
The uses of \( \sigma \rho \omega \delta \alpha \sigma \omega \omicron \) in 2 Timothy 4:9 and 21 are not very different from the one considered in 3.10.2. above. The grammatical construction is in both cases the same, being that of an imperative followed by an infinitive. The contexts are, however, not the same. Paul's concern in 2 Timothy 2:15 is with Timothy's ability to be a teacher who
pleases God; while in the verses under consideration the main concern is for Timothy to come to him quickly [τὰχειμιν] and then before winter [πρὸ χειμῶνος]. Though it can also be rendered as 'do your best' as the New International Version does, it may, within the context of 2 Timothy 4:9 and 21, be better rendered as 'hurry up'. The idea of effort or diligence in the sense of doing something within a certain time limit is what the use of these imperatives seems to convey in this context.

3.10.4. Conclusion
The meanings of the σπεδω derivatives in 2 Timothy relate to diligence in three senses. 2 Timothy 1:17 concerns earnestness; 2 Timothy 2:15 seems concerned with working hard; while the use in 2 Timothy 4:9,21 conveys the sense of hurrying. The connotations of 'effort' are present in all the cases.

3.11. THE MEANINGS OF THE σπεδω DERIVATIVES IN TITUS

There are two occurrences of the σπεδω derivatives in Titus. These are the imperative σποδασάναυ in Titus 3:12 and the adverb σποδαίως in the verse that follows. The use in Titus 3:12 is exactly the same as the ones in 2 Timothy 4:9,21 which were considered in 3.10.3. above. The use of the adverb σποδάως in Titus 3:13 refers to effort which is displayed when travellers are assisted. It is in the sphere of hospitality. Within such a context, σποδάως basically means 'stretch yourself'. Effort is implied but the connotation of practical love is that which appear to receive emphasis.

3.12. THE MEANINGS OF THE σπεδω DERIVATIVES IN HEBREWS

There are two occurrences of the σπεδω derivatives in Hebrews. They are σποδάσωμεν in Hebrews 4:11; and τὴν ... σποδὴν in Hebrews 6:11.

3.12.1. σποδάσωμεν in Hebrews 4:11
The subjunctive aorist σποδάσωμεν in Hebrews 4:11 occurs within the context of the
author's exhortations to the readers with regard to appropriate action and attitude in view of God's promise of giving believers rest. This context is clear in the appeal which heads this section in verse one. The author uses the incidence of the failure of Israel in the wilderness to exhort the New Testament believers against careless overconfidence which may lead to the neglect of their responsibilities. He does this by indicating that the promises of God imply faith and obedience on the part of the readers just as they did to Israel in the Old Testament. The realization or inheritance of the promises demands effort on the part of believers. The meaning of σπουδασμός in this passage is therefore a general appeal of exhortation in the sense of 'let us be diligent' or 'let us make every effort'.

3.12.2. τὴν ... σπουδήν in Hebrews 6:11
The context of Hebrews 6:11 is the serious warning of Hebrews 5:11-6:8. The author warns the readers against immaturity by indicating some of the possible results of such a state. The results mentioned are dangers which climax in the use of the metaphor of the field which in spite of good rains and proper care still continues producing thorns and thistles. Such a field's final future is described as akin to being burned [verse 8]. In verses 9 through 12, the author reassures the readers that the use of such serious warnings is not a result of his ignorance of their good works of love, for example in helping God's people; but that his use of serious language is due to his concern that every one of them will manifest the diligence which was displayed in the past and that they do this to the end. The meaning of τὴν ... σπουδήν in this context is diligence which is required for perseverance when they have to persevere. It refers to effort that accompanies watchfulness. The meaning of the word is explained by 'not slothful' [μη νοθροί - in verse 12]. Commentators seem to be agreed on this meaning of the word (Bruce 1964:127; Fensham 1981:56; Wilson 1987:113).

3.12.3. Conclusion
There seems to be no difference between the meanings of the two σπουδάσμος derivatives in Hebrews. They all refer to diligence in the contexts of inheriting the promises of God and in the midst of trials which demand some efforts in which one has to persevere.
3.13. THE \( \sigma \tau \epsilon \delta \omega \) DERIVATIVES IN 2 PETER

There is a great concentration of \( \sigma \tau \epsilon \delta \omega \) derivatives in 2 Peter. They occur in the following verses: 2 Peter 1:5,10,15; and 3:12,14.

3.13.1. \( \sigma \tau \nu \delta \eta \nu \) \( \pi \alpha \sigma \alpha \nu \) in 2 Peter 1:5

The context which helps in determining the meaning of \( \sigma \tau \nu \delta \eta \nu \pi \alpha \sigma \alpha \nu \) in 2 Peter 1:5 is the review of the promises and gifts of God in verses 3 and 4. The author seems eager to point out the responsibility which these gifts and promises bring with them to their recipients. The responsibility which the author draws attention to makes it necessary that the readers cultivate the qualities mentioned in verses 5 through 7. The function and meaning of \( \sigma \tau \nu \delta \eta \nu \pi \alpha \sigma \alpha \nu \) appear to be that of emphasizing the seriousness with which they should embark on the cultivation of the qualities mentioned in these verses. It can be rendered as: 'be diligent' or 'make all effort'.

3.13.2. \( \sigma \tau \nu \delta \alpha \sigma \tau \epsilon \) in 2 Peter 1:10

The context is basically the same as the one sketched in 3.13.1. above. The imperative \( \sigma \tau \nu \delta \alpha \sigma \tau \epsilon \) in 2 Peter 1:10 implies that since the qualities mentioned in verses 5 to 7 are important, the readers should consider their cultivation as a way of manifesting their calling and election. In a sense the author is appealing to the readers to prove or attest their right to being within the circle of the called and elected ones. The meaning of \( \sigma \tau \nu \delta \alpha \sigma \tau \epsilon \) is that of approaching the business of living as people of God with all seriousness. The word therefore seems to refer to diligence in the sense of serious effort. The rendering of 'make every effort' may be the best within this context.

3.13.3. \( \sigma \tau \nu \delta \alpha \omega \) in 2 Peter 1:15

The indicative future \( \sigma \tau \nu \delta \alpha \omega \) in 2 Peter 1:15 refers to the author's undertaking which involves the provision of a 'reminder' \( \mu \nu \eta \mu \nu \nu \) which will assist the readers even after the death of the author. The meaning of \( \sigma \tau \nu \delta \alpha \omega \) seems to be 'I shall leave no stone unturned' or 'I shall strive'. It amounts to a strong promise or a vow on the part of the author.
The use and meanings of the participle present \( \sigma\pi\epsilon\delta\sigma\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma \) and the imperative aorist \( \sigma\pi\nu\delta\sigma\varsigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma \) in 2 Peter 3:12, 14 respectively appear to be so closely connected that they warrant joint consideration. The context is in both cases the coming judgement of God as described by the author in 2 Peter 3:10, 11; and they occur in each case with forms of \( \pi\rho\sigma\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma \). The use of \( \pi\rho\sigma\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma \) and \( \sigma\pi\epsilon\delta\sigma\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma \) in this section seems to be prompted by the need to describe the appropriate conduct in the face of the judgement of God which is described in terms of bringing an end to certain conditions and of introducing others in their place. The use of the two words seem to be intended to draw attention to two responsibilities which flow from the certainty of that judgement. These are:

(a) Expectation; and

(b) Speeding up the arrival of the day of God.

The latter is then primarily defined in terms of responsibility that leads to conduct which may lead to being found spotless, blameless and at peace [\( \delta\sigma\pi\iota\upsilon\upsilon\iota\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \dot{\alpha}\mu\omega\mu\nu\tau\iota\iota\ \ldots\ \epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\iota\rho\iota\nu\nu\iota \)]. The meaning of the words seems to be that of drawing the attention of the readers to the fact that their duty is not just that of awaiting the future but also of doing something which will speed up its arrival and which because of it being primarily in the sphere of obedience to God may lead to their being spotless and blameless.

The essential aspects of this understanding are upheld by most contemporary commentators, among whom are Bauckham (1983:325); Green (1987:153); and Vaughan & Lea (1988:197). The author’s view in verse 9 concerning the relationship between the repentance of certain people and the deferment of the end may lend further contextual support to the meaning of 'hastening' or 'speeding up'. Another matter is that this meaning is grammatically the most commonplace. The use of the \( \sigma\pi\epsilon\delta\delta\omega \) derivatives within 2 Peter in the other passages already considered seems also to lend themselves towards usage involving effort in discharging certain responsibilities.

The meaning which the New International Version puts in a footnote to 2 Peter 3:12 is the only other serious contender for rendering \( \sigma\pi\epsilon\delta\sigma\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma \) in 2 Pet.3:12. This alternative rendering reads as follows:
"... as you wait eagerly for the day of God to come."

Some of the major objections which can be presented towards such a rendering are:
(a) Such a rendering seems to flout normal grammar. It can only be supported by recourse to abnormal grammatical constructions. Such an appeal can only be justified where the normal grammatical rules lead to senseless meanings. Since it is not the case in this particular passage, it does seem to be inappropriate.
(b) The alternative rendering overlooks the fact that 'as you wait eagerly' could be expressed by the use of ποσδοκωντας alone.
(c) It is not consequent in its treatment of these words in verse 14 and in the other passages of 2 Peter employing the σπευςω derivatives.

The problem reflected in the search for an 'abnormal' rendering underline the need for an investigation into the meaning of 2 Peter’s hastening motif. The next chapter of this inquiry pays attention to the problem. The meaning of the word σπευςωντας in 2 Peter 3:12 seems better rendered by 'hastening' or 'speeding up' or "hurrying up" as Louw and Nida also suggest (1989a:664).

3.13.5. Conclusion
The meanings of σπευςω derivatives in 2 Peter appear to refer to diligence involving some effort in discharging certain responsibilities. The author employs these words to refer to effort required in cultivating a life characterized by the qualities mentioned in 2 Peter 1:5-7; the diligence needed to make certain or clear a person's status of being called and elected (2 Pet.1:10); to refer to a strong undertaking to leave the readers a reminder (2 Pet.1:15); and to refer to appropriate conduct in the face of the coming judgement of God and the meaning of such conduct in relation to the coming of the day of God (2 Pet.3:12,14).

3.14. πασαν σπουδην IN JUDE 3

The use of πασαν σπουδην in Jude 3 corresponds to σπουδην πασαν in 2 Peter 1:5.
The only difference is that in Jude the effort was with regard to the task of writing about the faith while in 2 Peter 1:5 the effort is that needed with regard to cultivating certain qualities. That this word could be used to refer to efforts involved in writing a letter within the tradition represented by the letter of 2 Peter and Jude is clear also from 2 Peter 1:15. The meaning of πᾶσαν σπουδὴν in Jude 3 seems to be 'working hard' or 'making every effort'.

3.15. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Some of the observations which can be made from the results of this word study concerning the σπουδῆς derivatives in the New Testament are the following:

(a) The words are used in describing the manner in which certain tasks are approached and done. Such tasks may be in the sphere of service (Rom.12:8) or the cultivation of certain virtues (2 Pet.1:5; 2 Cor.8:7). The tasks which are referred the most in this regard appear to be those of obeying God or related to responsibilities which flow from faith in Him.

(b) There are also uses and meanings referring to mere "hurrying up". These are mostly in the Gospels, Acts and some uses in the pastorals when Paul indicates the need for co-workers to join him quickly.

(c) The words are also used to refer to 'longing for' in interpersonal relationships. A good example is the usage in 1 Thessalonians (see section 3.9.).

(d) The uses in 2 Peter seem to be somehow related to the issues around eschatology and conduct. This may be important with regard to the further investigation into 2 Peter's hastening motif. Chapter four of this inquiry pays attention to this possibility.

(e) In the rest of the New Testament (outside 2 Peter), only the σπουδῆς derivatives in Hebrews occur in contexts with eschatological undertones which, however, seem to lack ideas of hastening the Lord's coming. The presence of 2 Peter's hastening motif is, if present in other New Testament books, most probably indicated by other words and categories. This is significant for the investigation in chapter five.
4.1. INTRODUCTION

The study of the \( \sigma \pi \varepsilon \delta \omega \) derivatives in Chapter three of this inquiry confirmed the presence of 2 Peter's hastening motif. The precise role and meaning of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's overall message was, however, not investigated in that word study because such an investigation was beyond the scope of the word study. The investigation which is required in order to ascertain the role and meaning of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's message involves, instead, an exegetical study of wider proportions. The present part of the inquiry aims at the fulfilment of the task by exegetically studying 2 Peter with the primary objective of determining the precise role and meaning of the hastening motif within its message. The scope of the exegetical study is therefore also limited to those sections and aspects of 2 Peter that seem to be immediately relevant for a proper understanding of 2 Peter's hastening motif.

4.2. THE HASTENING MOTIF IN 2 PETER 3:1-13

2 Peter's hastening motif is most conspicuous in 2 Peter 3:12 which in turn appears to be an integral part of 2 Peter 3:1-13. It is for this reason that the exegetical study which is being undertaken in this chapter focuses on and takes 2 Peter 3:1-13 as its point of departure.
4.2.1. *2 Peter 3:1-13: An integral part of 2 Peter*

The first two verses of 2 Peter 3 furnish some general but important information concerning several aspects of 2 Peter as a whole. The information that seems to be particularly relevant for this investigation's exegetical study is:

(i) information concerning the literary form of 2 Peter
(ii) information concerning the purpose and contents of 2 Peter in general; and
(iii) information concerning the structural pattern of 2 Peter.

4.2.1.1. *2 Peter 3:1-2: The literary form of 2 Peter*

The use of the words τας τετραντα ... ὑμίν ... εἰς τοὺς ἔχοντας in 2 Peter 3:1 identifies 2 Peter as an epistle or letter addressed to a group of Christians. The epistle was a well known and widely utilized literary form within the Hellenistic society even before the appearance of Christianity. It could be used to communicate on different occasions, about various matters, and there were accordingly a variety of letters in existence within that culture (Martín 1978:241-2; Longenecker 1983:101-2; Stambough & Balch 1986:39-40; Ryken 1987:87-90). Doty points out that there were even handbooks written by letter theorists with the purpose of helping Hellenistic letter writers in the composition of different types of letters (1973:9-10). The need for the use of a letter then and nowadays "arises because of the inability of two or more parties to communicate face to face. Thus, the letter becomes the written means of keeping oral conversation in motion" (White 1988:1731).

In the life of the early Christian Church, the letter became essential when, as a result of Christians' mobility and the missionary planting of various new church communities, there came into existence dispersed Christian groups geographically far from the Church's key leaders; Christian groups with whom it was still exceptionally important for the key leaders of the Christian Movement to communicate (Martín 1978:231-2; Longenecker 1983:103). Christian authorized leaders (for example, the apostles) who could not speak or preach to a particular Christian group because of the spatial separation, resorted to the use of the letter as a substitute of their presence (Ryken 1984:68). The use of the plural pronoun ὑμίν in 2 Peter 3:1 suggests that 2 Peter belongs to this category of early Christian letters.
The nature of 2 Peter is therefore that of a letter through which its author became somehow present among the recipients in order to be 'heard' while 'speaking' to them through its reading. This has important implications for 2 Peter's interpretation today and this investigation into the hastening motif within 2 Peter's message has therefore also to take this nature of 2 Peter into consideration.

The literary form of 2 Peter has been variously categorized by different New Testament scholars. Some of the suggestions in this regard are:

(i) Parenetic (Weersink 1969:191);
(ii) Civic decree (Danker 1980:166);
(iii) Testament (Bauckham 1983:131); and

It is, however, doubtful if these categories are helpful and appropriate when used in respect of 2 Peter as a whole. Most of these suggestions seem relevant and appropriate when viewed as ways of drawing attention to certain sections and aspects of 2 Peter. Thus, there is no necessity to contest that 2 Peter uses language akin to that of

(i) civic decrees in 1:3ff (Danker 1978:66),
(ii) parenetic materials in 1:5ff (Kahmann & Dehandschutter 1983:17), and

What cannot be conceded as valid is the tendency of considering the whole document in terms of these categories. Such a tendency leads, in our judgement, to serious forms of totality transfers especially when all that is connected with a particular literary form elsewhere is read into documents such as 2 Peter. The point we are making in this particular context may be illustrated by the way in which certain scholars argue for their viewpoint that 2 Peter belongs to the testament literary form by appealing to 2 Peter 3:1-2 and its parallel, namely, 1:12;15. Bauckham (1983:132), for example, argues, among others, that the use of words for "remind/reminder" in these verses, and the hint to the author's impending death (1:13-15) implies that 2 Peter is offered as the apostle Peter's will or testament. He forcefully expresses this as follows:
"1:12-15 is full of language typical of farewell speeches ... and explicitly describes the occasion for the writing of 2 Peter as Peter's knowledge of his approaching death and his wish that his teaching be remembered after his death. These two features are standard and almost universal features of the genre" (1983:132).

It is about the way in which Bauckham argues for this viewpoint on the basis of these passages that we want to raise the following objections concerning such a treatment of words:

(i) Why do the words "remind/reminder" necessarily have to do with a testament genre? In the light of the polysemous nature of words, we contest this approach. These words are used within the New Testament in contexts which need not imply the presence of such a literary form (For examples in this regard see Louw & Nida 1989a: 246-9).

(ii) Why is it that expression of consciousness concerning one's approaching death necessarily imply such a literary form? We are not convinced that such a treatment of words is proper and we therefore suspect and suggest that this sort of procedure is one of those unfortunate cases in which New Testament interpretation is made on the basis of a particular category that has been borrowed elsewhere and we cannot be so confident, therefore, that the author and/or the original readers would have employed them. It is, in other words, quite possible that 2 Peter was and is not meant to be understood with such categories. A reference to an impending death may, even today, depending on the context, simply be a rhetorical device meant to highlight the seriousness with which the author desires the readers to take his or her particular message or teaching. The same is quite possible in connection with the use of words like "remind/reminder" within a teaching context.

The testament genre category was, of course, introduced in 2 Peter discussions in an effort to deal with the authenticity of the letter. Our survey in chapter one has
accordingly indicated that it was introduced into this long-ranging debate as early as by F.C.Baur [1792-1860] (see section 1.2.1.3.1.6). Since this present inquiry does not necessarily have to evaluate the pros and cons of the usefulness of this category within the context of that debate, presenting such an evaluation as part of this inquiry here, would amount to lengthy and, in our judgement, an unnecessary excursion within the scope and the issues concerning this inquiry into 2 Peter’s hastening motif.

The suggestion that 2 Peter be considered as a letter by which the author intended to be "heard" while speaking to a far-away Christian community through 2 Peter’s reading, appear to be broad enough for the purposes of this study. Above all, it is something simple and not a disputed viewpoint. Such a general category would allow the author to include or compose certain sections resembling other literary forms such as apocalyptic.

4.2.1.2. 2 Peter 3:1-2: A general description of the purpose and contents of 2 Peter

The use of διεγείρω ... διάνοιαν in 2 Peter 3:1 describes the general purpose of 2 Peter (and indeed of the other letter which is referred to in this verse) as the stimulation of the readers toward proper thinking. This implies that, through 2 Peter, the author intended to assist the recipients by strengthening their capability to take good decisions with regard to what was proper for them to believe and to do in terms of their Christian status. The word διεγείρω generally suggests the idea of waking someone up when such a person tends to be sleepy. This same word is used in 2 Peter 1:13 where the author seems eager to justify the practice of constantly sending the recipients letters. The context of its use in 2 Peter 3:1 also suggests that the necessity for the watchfulness which is implied in such a stimulation of proper thinking may have been connected with the danger of false teachings. The exhortation to "be on your guard" in 2 Peter 3:17 may be a confirmation of this connotation. Kistemaker (1987:322; -see also Vaughan & Lea 1988:136) appears therefore justified to write:

"What is the meaning of the phrase 'wholesome thinking'? Peter means unsullied and pure thinking. The expression 'common sense' comes close to conveying what Peter means. He contrasts the thinking of the believers with that of the false teachers; and he implies that Christians should be
It must be emphasized that this is certainly only a general broad description of 2 Peter's purpose. When its purpose is described in such general terms, it would not be difficult to understand 2 Peter as sharing this purpose with many other New Testament books, especially with 1 Peter which is most likely the other letter being referred to in 2 Peter 3:1. The specific and distinctive purpose of 2 Peter becomes apparent when one reads it as a whole. The meaning of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's message must be sought within the context of the general purpose of 2 Peter as indicated in these verses, as well as within the context of its more specific purpose which becomes clear from the reading of 2 Peter as a whole.

How is 2 Peter intended to help the recipients towards proper thinking? The use of the prepositional phrase, εν ουςωνησετι, in 2 Peter 3:1 and 1:13 describes the primary function of 2 Peter as that of reminding the recipients concerning the teachings of the holy prophets, as well as about the command of the Lord Jesus. The genitives in της των αποστολων υμων εντολης το θεον κυριου do give rise to some problems. Blass & Debrunner (1970:93) regards this usage as an instance of what is referred to as concatenation of genitives with different meanings; and accordingly suggests the rendering,

"... of the commandment of the Lord transmitted by the apostles ..."

The difficulty concerning these genitives is also noted by Bauckham (1983:287) who states:

"The double possessive genitive in this expression is awkward. It must mean that the commandment is primarily Christ's, but also in a secondary sense the apostles', because they were the people who preached it to the readers."

The prophets who are meant in 2 Peter 3:2 and whose teachings 2 Peter functions to remind the readers of, just as it does with regard to the commandment of Christ.
transmitted through the apostles, are most certainly those of the Old Testament era. The use of ὀμίων with ἀποστολοῖς suggests that the apostles belong to the readers in a way that the prophets do not; that is, the prophets referred to in this passage are of another era, while the apostles belong to the readers in view of their being ministers of the era to which the readers also belong, namely, the New Testament dispensation.

2 Peter seems therefore intended to keep the teachings of the prophets and the commandment of the apostles constantly before the readers. The implication of this is obvious: the author of 2 Peter attaches great importance to the Old Testament scriptures and to the additional complementary teaching which Jesus entrusted to His apostles. 2 Peter accordingly emphasizes the necessity for its recipients to acquire the knowledge which comes from this two-fold source. This emphasis on the Old Testament does not appear to be a mere claim of the author, as it indeed can be indicated to be a reality. It is, for example, pervasive even in the immediate context of 2 Peter 3:1-2. This is clear from the way in which the author uses forms of γινώσκω and λάλησαν in 2:12; 3:3, 5 & 8. The false teachers and the scoffers are depicted as being in their terrible condition because of their false knowledge or ignorance concerning certain matters; and 2 Peter is intended to help prevent the readers from developing along that road of doom. This two-fold source of useful knowledge is indicated in 2 Peter 1:16-21 where the pattern is apostles (Christ) and Prophets, while in 2 Peter 3:2 the pattern is reversed. The emphasis on the prophets and the apostles as two sources of reliable knowledge is noted by, among others, Bigg (1961:289) who, while commenting on 2 Peter 3:2 made the following remark:

"The author here reverts to the end of chapter 1; and repeats the appeal to his two witnesses, the prophets and the apostles".

The author of 2 Peter also makes a strong claim to being one of the apostles, namely, the apostle Peter (especially in 2 Peter 1:1; and 1:12-18).

A general description of 2 Peter's contents may therefore be stated as follows: 2 Peter contains the teachings of the prophets (Old Testament) as well as the witness of the
apostles concerning those issues which the author deemed relevant to the readers. It is also quite clear that the author considered these teachings as being seriously compromised and/or threatened by the attitudes and activities of certain false teachers (2:1ff) and scoffers (3:3ff). 2 Peter is therefore also to be characterized as being a document in which the apologetic motif appears prominent (Desjardins 1987:89). The meaning of the hastening motif in 2 Peter's message must accordingly also be sought within this general context of 2 Peter's contents.

4.2.1.3. 2 Peter 3:1-2: The structural pattern of 2 Peter
One of the implications flowing from the literary form of 2 Peter as described in 4.2.1.1. above is that 2 Peter may validly be handled as a homily, more or less, similar to those which were delivered in Jewish and Christian assemblies during the Graeco-Roman period, but a homily that is in the letter format. McDonald (1980:62) investigates the form of these homilies and then draws attention to this aspect of 2 Peter as follows:

"It would appear that, after allowance has been made for literary and epistolary elements, 2 Peter discloses a classic Jewish homiletic structure, in which the three main parts stand in antithesis to each other in such a way that the third or concluding part resumes and presses home the leading theme of the first part or introduction."

The investigation of Wills (1984) into the form of the sermon in Hellenistic Judaism and early Christianity proceeded along the same lines but focusing more on the manner of argumentation in those sermons, and demonstrates that the argumentation in these sermons generally proceeded from the presentation of Exampla through Conclusion to Exhortation. Wills (1984:279) submits the results of his study as follows:

"The pattern generally consists of
(1) an indicative or exemplary section (hereafter referred to as "exampla"), in the form of scriptural quotations, authoritative examples from past or present, or reasoned exposition of theological points;
(2) a conclusion, based on the examplar and indicating their significance for
those addressed (often expressed with a participle and οὖν, διό, διὰ τοῦτο, or some such particle or conjunction); and

(3) an exhortation (usually expressed with an imperative or hortatory subjunctive, often accompanied by οὖν). From the numerous instances isolated below, it is clear that the form is quite flexible and can be applied in a variety of ways.”.

Wills also identifies certain sections of 2 Peter which seem to manifest this structural flow of the argument but confesses to encountering difficulties with identifying such patterns in large parts of 2 Peter (1984:290-2). The publication of Kennedy (1984) continues this trend by arguing that since letters such as 2 Peter are forms of homilies, which in turn are a form of speech, they therefore may validly be analyzed in terms of the general rhetorical principles which were applicable to speeches during the Graeco-Roman era, that is, the period to which these letters generally belong (1984:8). Kennedy argues that these letters were in fact most probably read and listened to in terms of those principles by their original recipients irrespective of whether or not they were consciously composed in terms of these principles (1984:10). It is within the context of this development that many contemporary scholars such as Wuellner (1987;1989), Watson (1988a;b), Black II (1988), Botha J. (1989), Wolthuis (1989), and Mack (1990) insist on the use of Graeco-Roman rhetorical principles in analyzing New Testament texts such as 2 Peter. The last mentioned of these scholars, for example, while arguing for the case of reading New Testament texts such as 2 Peter in terms of Graeco-Roman rhetoric, states:

"To be engulfed in the culture of Hellenism meant to have ears trained for the rhetoric of speech. Rhetoric provided the rules for making critical judgements in the course of all forms of social intercourse. Early Christians were not unskilled, either as critics of their cultures of context or as proponents of their own emerging persuasions" (1990:31).

There are even some scholars who consider 2 Peter to have been largely influenced, especially in its style, by Asian rhetoric rather than the Graeco-Roman (Lombard 1991:497-8). It would seem that 2 Peter is best considered as having been influenced by
a variety of rhetorical traditions. Mack (1990:35) therefore also concedes that early Christian rhetoric was a "... mixed bag in which every form of rhetorical issue or strategy was frequently brought to bear simultaneously in an essentially extravagant persuasion."

In attempting to understand the structural pattern of letters such as 2 Peter, it would seem that the elements of this "mixed bag", which have to be taken into consideration, include their letter format, their character as religious homilies of the Judeo-Christian tradition during the Graeco-Roman period, their liturgical use, as well as their argumentative or persuasive character. The challenge is obviously how to balance all these aspects. The suggestions of Black II (1988) that, Graeco-Roman principles of rhetoric when properly understood do not need to be taken in a rigid but elastic fashion (that is, able to embrace other forms of persuasions), seem to point the right direction along which the structural patterns of these letters should be approached. Black II (1988:7) illustrates this point with several examples and then convincingly argues as follows:

"In other words, the organization of a speech varied with respect both to its constituent parts and to their degree of elaboration, depending on the species of rhetoric to which that speech belonged as well as on the particular demands of the rhetorical situation. Therefore, the fact that Hellenistic-Jewish and early Christian sermons do not exhibit the full-blown arrangement of judicial discourse should occasion little surprise: no species of classical rhetoric, not even judicial oratory itself, was straightjacketed into this comprehensive taxis. Within certain broad strictures, structural modification and abridgement was the rule, not the exception."

In the light of these developments, the study of Watson (1988a), which aimed at providing a complete rhetorical analysis of Jude and 2 Peter according to the Graeco-Roman system of rhetoric (1988a:7), although very instructive and useful, seems to be a bit unbalanced. It, for example, does not seem to take sufficient note of the exampla/conclusion/exhortation pattern of homilies which Wills suggested in 1984. It will therefore need some modification. The present exegetical study focuses on the role
and meaning of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's message and can therefore only make certain broad suggestions about 2 Peter's structural pattern in the light of this development and the above-mentioned insights of various scholars. It seems essential that such a structural pattern should manifest the persuasive, homiletical, and liturgical aspects of the letter. Keeping in mind these broad principles, it seems very possible that 2 Peter can be considered as composed of two cycles of the Exampla/Conclusion/Exhortation pattern, with the first cycle being primarily anticipatory of the second cycle. Thus, its structural pattern may be formulated as follows:

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<td>1:3-11.</td>
<td>Anticipatory cycle of Exampla/Conclusion/Exhortation pattern.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1:3-4.</td>
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<td>(B) Conclusion.</td>
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<td>III.</td>
<td>1:12-3:18a.</td>
<td>Second cycle and main body of the letter. Composed of many exampla which in a cumulative way argue towards a conclusion and an exhortation. The final sections therefore act like some sort of climax.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:12-3:10.</td>
<td>(A) series of exampla, climaxing in the ones of chapter 3.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1:16-21.</td>
<td>Foundational exampla (III A2)-functions to establish the validity of the apostles' evidence as well as that of the teachings of the Old Testament prophets.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2:1-3a.</td>
<td>Historically based exampla (III A3)-typologically establishing the need to be watchful from the</td>
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lesson of the existence of false prophets during Old Testament history.

2:3b-10a. Historically based exampla (III A4)-typologically establishing the ability of God to save those who serve Him, as well as His ability to judge the ungodly - from cases in Old Testament history.

2:10b-22. Analogically based exampla (III A5) - establishing the terrible condition of the ungodly - from Old Testament cases and author's experiences.

3:1-2. Transition and foundational exampla (III A6) - marking the transition into final phase of argument. Repeats with some progression III A1 + III A2., i.e. parts of chapter 1.

3:3-10. Partially repetitive exampla (III A7) - functioning to establish the validity of God's promises by a typological reading of the Old Testament. Chiefly refers back to III A3-A5. i.e. to portions of chapter 2. Also refers to IIA in first cycle.

3:11-13. (B)-Conclusion of the whole second cycle, but more closely connected to exampla III A6 + A7. Corresponds to the conclusion of the first cycle (IIB).

3:14-18a. (C)-Exhortation of second cycle and corresponds to that of first cycle, that is IIC.

IV. 2 Peter 3:18b. Liturgical doxology, and ending.

The following observations may be offered here:
(i) The minimum requirement for any text that would qualify as a letter, in accordance with Graeco-Roman conventions, is the opening (White 1988:1732). 2 Peter may therefore correctly be called a letter. Contemporary scholars such as Bauckham (1983:135), Kistemaker (1987:232), and Watson (1988a:85, 87) agree that 2 Pet.1:1-2 performs the function of a letter's opening.

(ii) There is also general agreement about taking 2 Peter 3:18b as a doxology (Bauckham 1983:338; Green 1987:165; Vaughan & Lea 1988:203).

(iii) The grouping of verses in this structural pattern is basically the same as that in Kleulers (1956), Kistemaker (1987), Watson (1988a), and in many other commentaries. There exists, therefore, some wide agreement concerning the delineation of 2 Peter's pericopes.

(iv) The structural pattern which is suggested in this section has much to recommend it. It does, for example, bring out the antithetic nature of 2 Peter; as well as its character as a persuasive, homiletic and liturgic letter. The antithetic arrangement may be illustrated as follows: III A6 corresponds to III A1+ A2. The addition of τῆς εἰλικρινῆς διάνοιας indicates some progress in 2 Pet.3:1-2. III A7 also corresponds to III A3-A5, and refers to IIA as well.

The unity of the whole letter is confirmed in many ways. One of these is that chapter 3 does not only refer to sections of chapter 1 alone, but also to chapter 2 as well. Thus the description of the false teachers and the scoffers and that of the judgement of the ungodly are introduced in chapter 2 and then followed up in chapter 3. The unity of 2 Peter is so pervasive that if the author did borrow sections from the letter of Jude, then he synthesized the borrowed sections with his other arguments very well.

(v) Many analyses of 2 Peter are often deficient in one way or another. For example, Kistemaker's analysis does not adequately bring out the persuasive character; while those of Watson and Bauckham seem not to adequately bring
out the homiletic features of the letter.

(vi) The exampla in the second cycle refer to the conclusions and exhortations in both the cycles. This analysis also brings out the cumulative nature of the argument in 2 Peter.

(vii) The structural pattern being proposed in this section also seems to suggest that 2 Peter 3:11-13 is the conclusion to which the exampla in the second cycle points forward to, and that it also accordingly points back to all of them in spite of its closer links with those in chapter 3. In other words the message contained in these verses, which also corresponds to that in the anticipatory conclusion II(B), seems central to 2 Peter as a whole. Since this is the place where 2 Peter's hastening motif is most conspicuous, it would seem to be an important indication that the hastening motif does not have a peripheral role within 2 Peter's message.

4.2.1.4. Conclusion.
The discussion of 2 Peter's literary form (in 4.2.1.1.) and the general description of its purpose and contents (in 4.2.1.2.); as well as the consideration of 2 Peter's structural pattern (in 4.2.1.3) all seem to support the conclusion that 2 Peter 3:1-13 is an integral part of the whole letter. In other words, its purpose, contents and structural place seem to fit very well within that of the whole letter.

4.2.2. Some important aspects of 2 Peter's message.
The place of 2 Peter 3:3-13 within the structural pattern of 2 Peter seems to suggest that the exampla and conclusion contained in these verses could offer important insights into 2 Peter's message. A consideration of those aspects of 2 Peter which are emphasized in this passage is therefore necessary when attempting to understand 2 Peter's message. Those aspects which seem particularly relevant with regard to comprehending the precise role and meaning of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's message, and which therefore require the attention of this study, are now accordingly to be highlighted through an exegetical study of 2 Peter 3:3-13 in this section.
4.2.2.1. 2 Peter 3:3-13: Reminding the Christian community about the parousia promise

Our suggestion regarding the structural pattern of 2 Peter (see section 4.2.1.3 above) characterizes 2 Peter 3:1-2 as a transitional and foundational exampla which marks the transition into the final phase of 2 Peter's argument. This basically means that what is contained between 1:12-15 and 3:1-2 is also regarded as the substance of some Old Testament prophetic traditions confirmed, complemented and interpreted by the apostolic teachings. In other words, the part which precedes 3:1-2 from 1:12-15 is regarded by the writer as part of what he is concerned to remind the readers about. Our suggestion in this regard also means that the substance of the verses coming after 3:1-2 in the final exampla is also part of what the author desired to remind the readers of. The substance of 2 Peter 3:3-13 may therefore be regarded as containing what the readers are reminded of together with what that reminder should bring about in their life.

What is contained in 2 Peter 3:3-13? This calls for a description of the way in which the argument in 2 Peter 3:3-13 is connected and such a task is made easier by the general consensus existing among scholars concerning how the argument in 2 Peter 3:3-13 is constructed.

The last verses in this passage, namely 3:11-13 are clearly marked out as being a new phase in the argument by the use of τοῦτον ὁδῷ at the beginning of verse 11. These function words mark the transition into the conclusion. It is especially a transition into the conclusion of the immediate exampla (3:3-10) but in view of the relation of these exampla to the other exampla of the second cycle of the whole letter, it may be regarded as also being the conclusion of the whole second cycle. We are presently only concerned, however, with the demonstration of these sequence markers' immediate scope or relations. There appear to be no significant differences among scholars concerning the fact that there is a transition in verse 11. (Bauckham 1983:321; Green 1987:152; Kistemaker 1987:337). Some scholars, however, view it as a transition into exhortation while others, like the present author, distinguishes between the conclusion and the exhortation. Kistemaker (1987:342) and Vaughan & Lea (1988:199) also seem to maintain this distinction - but Bauckham (1983:321) does not, in our opinion, sufficiently distinguish between these two things and he accordingly regards the whole of 3:11-16 as
an exhortation and again 3:17-18a as a final exhortation. If our definition of a conclusion is used, then 3:11-13 is the part in which the author simply indicates the appropriate attitudes and actions which flow out from what is taught about the parousia and/or Day of the Lord in 3:3-10, while 3:14-18a is an exhortation in which the readers are spurred on to execute, fulfil or have the indicated attitudes and/or actions.

The substance of 2 Peter 3:3-10 is divisible into three main units. These apparently clearly marked out units are:

(i) 3:3-4: Containing the words which the author puts in the mouths of the scoffers. This unit concerns the scoffers' viewpoint concerning the parousia promise.

(ii) 3:5-7: Containing the author's refutation of the scoffers' argument. This refutation is also concerned with the parousia and the Day of the Lord.

(iii) 3:8-10: Containing some positive teaching about the parousia and Day of the Lord. This unit is marked out by its contrast of the readers with the scoffers.

The flow of the argument in 2 Peter 3:3-13 is therefore as follows: The point of departure is the scoffers' position about the parousia promise (3:3-4); then the author refutes that viewpoint by indicating that the historical evidence points to the reality of the Day of the Lord or judgement (3:5-7) and then he gives positive further instructions to the readers concerning the Day of the Lord and coming of the Lord (3:3-10). The argument is then concluded by indicating what the appropriate attitudes and actions (life) are with regard to the readers in view of the teaching just given concerning the parousia and Day of the Lord. Seeing that the whole 2 Peter 3:3-13 is dominated by the teaching concerning the parousia promise and the Day of the Lord, the whole of 2 Peter 3:1-13 may be considered as: A reminder concerning the parousia and Day of the Lord with an indication of the appropriate attitudes and actions for the Christian community.

4.2.2.2. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The portrayal of the scoffers

The use of τοῦτο πρὸ τοῦ in 2 Peter 3:3 seems to indicate that the author's description of the scoffers is an essential aspect which needs to be grasped when attempting to understand 2 Peter 3:3-13. The significance of τοῦτο πρὸ τοῦ in this verse can be expressed with the following paraphrase: 'In order to understand what I am about to say,
you have above all to keep in mind the following matters about the scoffers'. This role of τοῦτο πρᾶτον in this passage is also recognized by, among others, Bauckham (1983:229-288), Green (1987:137), and Kistemaker (1987:325). Kistemaker (1987:325), for example expresses himself on this matter as follows:

"When Peter says "first of all", he is not enumerating a list of items. Rather, he stresses the primary importance of what he is about to teach".

The use of ἐπὶ ἑσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν describes the scoffers eschatologically. Their appearance and existence are thereby portrayed as an eschatological phenomenon which is in accordance with prophetic predictions. Fornberg (1977:61) draws attention to this matter as follows:

"The adversaries are identified with the false prophets who, according to accepted Jewish and Christian tradition, will appear in the latter days".

This manner of portraying the scoffers has the effect of emphasizing the validity of the prophetic word; it also underlines its usefulness with regard to the problems which the recipients encounter; and then stresses the reliability of those eschatological promises which had not as yet been fulfilled. The reading of this eschatological portrayal of the scoffers seems therefore to generate confidence in the promises of God. 2 Peter obviously may have been written to strengthen the faith and hope of the recipients also by such a description.

The scoffers are also typologically portrayed. This is evident when the description of the trials and temptations which they present and cause for the believers are considered. The use of the "Where is" (ποῦ εἰστιν) question to describe their taunts immediately reminds one of the same derision which Old Testament believers often went through. Drawing attention to this aspect, Bauckham (1983:289) aptly observes:

"The rhetorical question beginning ποῦ εἰστιν ... is a standard form in the Old Testament. "Where is your/their God?" is the taunt of the psalmist's enemies,
when God does not intervene to rescue him from trouble (LXX Ps.41:4,11), or of the Gentile nations when God does not intervene on behalf of his people (LXX Pss.78:10; 113:10; Joel 2:17; Mic.7:10)."

This manner of portraying the scoffers has also the effect of depicting them as descendant counterparts of those enemies of God’s Old Testament people, and it indirectly also associates the recipients of 2 Peter with the Old Testament covenant people of God. These implications have, if confirmed, the consequence that the place and role of 2 Peter’s believing community within the programme of God may be understood as being analogous to that of the Old Testament faithful covenant people of God.

2 Peter also portrays the scoffers in terms of their ethical conduct. The use of κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας αὐτῶν πορεύομενοι in 2 Peter 3:3 seems to suggest this moral portrayal. The effect and implication of portraying them in this manner seem to convey that the recipients are in contrast to understand themselves as being under the law of God. The "command given by our Lord and Saviour through your apostles" in verse 2 may have been an anticipation of this aspect of 2 Peter’s message.

The scoffers are also portrayed in terms of their disregard for certain teachings of the Old Testament. This disregard is characterized as being wilful by the use of λανθανεὶ ... θελοντας at the beginning of verse 5. The contrast with the believing community in this case is suggested by the use of δὲ ... λανθανέτω ὦμᾶς in verse 8. This type of portrayal appears to be in accordance with the previously noted feature of 2 Peter, namely, that it seems to have been intended to underline the importance of the Old Testament with regard to its readers.

The portrayal of the scoffers and that of the false teachers in 2 Peter has given rise to all sorts of hypotheses about their identification. The different positions are summarized by Bauckham (1988b:3724-8). Their identification with one particular historically known group seems to be made impossible because the portrayal in 2 Peter does not give enough details for such an exercise and also because they are described in broad general terms. 2 Peter’s portrayal of them, however, seems to be adequate for the purposes for
which the author appears to make them for. The primary purpose for which this portrayal is made seems to be pedagogical, that is, that of indicating what the wrong way, which the readers should avoid, looks like. In the light of this type of portrayal it can be deduced that the author was primarily motivated by pastoral concerns. Thus, 2 Peter's message persuades the reader to desist from the way of scoffers, which is characterized as one of unfruitfulness and of doom; the letter persuades the readers to be, instead, God's faithful and fruitful servants who are committed to Him and are accordingly on the road of life in accordance with the eschatological promises of God.

4.2.2.3. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The argument of the scoffers against the parousia promise

2 Peter 3:3-4 contains, among other things, the argument which 2 Peter's writer formulated and put in the mouths of the scoffers. It is important to keep this in mind when attempting to understand the teaching in these verses. This suggestion about the words of the scoffers as the author's composition put in their mouths means that the writer does not claim to have already encountered and heard these scoffers. In fact, these scoffers are introduced by the author as a future phenomenon (note the future ελευσόνται in verse 3). The argument put in their mouths by the writer of 2 Peter may have been formulated simply as a rhetorical device for pedagogical purposes. This would be quite a powerful device when anyone who may have similar notions is thus identified as an archetype of those who would operate during the last days. It also means that those who may already have as yet not developed similar views are warned of what their doubts may lead to.

The scoffers deride the parousia promise (see section 4.2.2.2 above) because of the deaths of the fathers before the promise was seen to be fulfilled. This raises the question concerning who these fathers are. Fornberg (1977:62-3) argues for the viewpoint that these fathers refer to the first Christian generation and so does Bauckham (1983:290-1). The latter, however, also suggests that the author of 2 Peter used a Jewish apocalyptic document wherein was employed 'our fathers' with reference to some Old Testament believers and scholars such as Green (1987:139f) and Vaughan & Lea (1988:189f) argue for the viewpoint that these 'fathers' refer to Old Testament key believers because the words are usually used in that way elsewhere. It seems, however, that the immediate
context suggests that this choice should be considered as unnecessary. The author has in 3:1-2 associated the Old Testament prophetic teaching with that of the apostles, and in the next unit (3:5-7) argues on the basis of the Old Testament incident concerning the flood. At the same time the scoffers are presented as largely being a future phenomenon. Their argument is also framed in such a way that it rests on the fact that the actions they expected have not occurred since the creation. Taking all these matters together, we suggest that 'the fathers' should be taken as a reference to the fact that the promise does not seem to have been fulfilled since it was first made and also even when it had been severally reaffirmed by the Old Testament prophets and the apostles. Thus, these "fathers", it seems to us, should be taken not as referring to either Old Testament or New Testament persons but to both and especially those who were the first to announce the promise and its reaffirmations in both dispensations. This viewpoint could find support from the fact that both in the Old Testament and New Testament there can be found passages which announce this promise, and those relevant aspects that go with it, as imminent (see for example Zephaniah 1:14 and Matthew 25:13).

It should also be observed that the scoffers' problem has to do with the fact that the changes or actions which were part of the parousia promise have not taken place. They are therefore made to say that 'everything' continues as it has since the beginning of creation. What does this 'everything' refer to? Scholars such as Fornberg (1977:64), and Vaughan & Lea (1988:189) appear to have missed the point of this unit by interpreting the words here ascribed to the scoffers as if they mean that the delay of the destruction of the world is presented as that which disappoints the scoffers. The latter scholars express their viewpoint in this regard as follows:

"The mockers buttressed their disbelief concerning God's entrance into history through Jesus' return by emphasizing the immutability of the world. If they had lived today, they might have referred to natural laws that prevent the occurrence of miracles" (Vaughan & Lea 1988:189).

Bauckham (1983:294) has rightly observed that the problem which the scoffers' raise is that of judgement and not necessarily that of the destruction of the world. It has to do
with the apparent fact that the evildoers are not dealt with; which is the problem of evil. Thus, the argument put in their mouths refers to the fact that since the creation of the world the promise concerning the dawn of a better society which is free from evil and unrighteousness does not appear to be fulfilled. We suggest that this interpretation is supported by the way the author deals with it in the next unit (3:5-7). The other interpretation which regards the issue as being that of the destruction and immutability of the world faces the difficulty that it has to regard the author's response as being based on a misunderstanding of the scoffers' problem. (See in this regard Fornberg's difficulties in his study 1977:65). Such a viewpoint would only be possible if the author is considered as responding to an actual objection formulated by actual scoffers. Our argument is that since the words are put in the scoffers' mouths by the author, 2 Peter's writer cannot be represented as misunderstanding that very position which he formulated for pedagogical purposes.

4.2.2.4. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The refutation of the scoffers' argument.
The author of 2 Peter refutes the scoffers' argument in 3:5-7. This particular passage presents several difficulties for exegetes and the opinions of scholars accordingly diverge, especially about the details involved. Some of the major viewpoints about this unit are ably summed up by Bauckham (1983:298). The difficulties involved are accordingly also indicated in this inquiry. There is no dispute about the fact that the author portrays the scoffers' position as being due to a deliberate ignorance or lack of understanding. (See section 4.2.2.2 above). The difficulties confront us when we try to establish the exact nature of that which the scoffers deliberately ignore. The New International Version translates the description of that about which the scoffers are ignorant as "that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and with water. By water also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgement and destruction of ungodly men."

This translation is quite reliable except for its rendering of ἀπὸ τῆς ὕδατος: by 'was formed' in verse 5 and we shall use it in highlighting the difficulties involved. Most of these difficulties are in verse 5. These are:
(i) The separation of οὐρανοὶ (heavens) from γῆ (earth) in verse 5 while in verse 7 they are combined as οὐρανοὶ καὶ θ. γῆ. Bauckham (1983:296) and Kistemaker (1987:328) are some of the exegetes who argue for the non-separation of οὐρανοὶ and γῆ in verse 5. Their primary argument appears to be based on theological rather than grammatical principles. Thus Kistemaker writes:

"Does Peter mean that the heavens are eternal but the earth is created? Certainly not. The words heavens and earth must be understood as a pair that is mentioned in one breath."

This viewpoint which is upheld by these very able exegetes leads them into conflict with normal grammatical rules and they therefore also appeal to exceptional grammatical principles. Bauckham (1983:296), for example, has to write:

"Since the whole argument of these verses requires a statement that the heavens, as well as the earth, were created by the word of God, it is best to take σωζόμαι, "created", with οὐρανοὶ as well as with γῆ and to explain its feminine singular form by attraction to the nearest subject, γῆ".

Our contention is that these suggestions are unnecessary because the passage is quite lucid as it stands. The singular feminine σωζόμαι has to be singular precisely because it does not describe something that affected the 'heavens' or the 'heavens and the earth'. It describes a phenomenon that only affected the earth.

(ii) Related to the difficulty just noted, it is the wrong viewpoint which would take σωζόμαι as meaning "created" here. Again, it has to be pointed out that this word means "to hold together", i.e. it refers to preservation and not creation. Louw and Nida (1989a:614) agree with our rendering of this word in this regard. In fact the author of 2 Peter appears to have been careful in this case because οὐρανοὶ and γῆ in verse 5 each have their appropriate verbs in ἡσαυν and
Another significant detail which also accounts for the divergence of viewpoints is the use of ἐκπαλατ in verse 5. It would seem that this word is often taken as referring to the very beginning of things. However, the word is rightly rendered as "of old" or "long ago". It refers to some period in history. This sense links up very well with ἀπ' ἀρχής κτίσεως (from the beginning of creation) at the end of verse 4. The scoffers refer to the apparent non judging of evil after creation within human history and the author refutes their argument not by referring to pre-historical phenomena but to events within human history.

The last detail that we want to point out because it also accounts for the divergence of viewpoints in this regard, is the tendency to fail to distinguish properly between γῆ (earth) in verse 5 and κόσμος (world) in verse 6. The latter refers to sinful human beings and their sinful creations (world system) in verse 6 because these are what was deluged, but it does not refer to 'earth' as God's creation. These are the main points of details over which there are differences. Having highlighted them in this manner opens up the way to explain what the author meant and how these verses refute the scoffers' viewpoint in 3:3-4.

We propose that the author is refuting the argument put in the scoffers' mouths by reminding them of God's act which dealt with human sin during the Flood in Noah's time. The water then covered the earth and the earth was also preserved by the water (γῆ ἐξ δαστος καὶ δι' δαστος συνεστῶσα) while the heavens continued to exist without being affected by the water at all. This we suggest is the reason for the separation of 'heavens' and 'earth' in verse 5. The author's argument in refutation of that of the scoffers is further that this phenomenon was by God's word. It was pre-announced by God and also took place by His command. The refutation establishes that God did what He promised, and that He judged evil then. Thus the scoffers' viewpoint is maintained by way of choosing to forget this piece of history.
The refutation then goes on to indicate that it is by the same word of God that the heavens and the earth (now combined) have been stored up for conflagration. This seems to be an indication that God's word has announced a more severe and comprehensive judgement. Here also the author, on the basis of the analogy with the Flood event, seems to indicate that the heavens and earth will emerge through that fire intact just as the earth did when deluged by the water then. Yet that day of fire is the day in which ungodly men are to be judged and their works also destroyed. Fortunately, in this latter part of the argument, there is some consensus among exegetes. Thus Bauckham (1983:301) observes with regard to 3:7:

"When the author of 2 Peter writes that by the word of God the world "has been held in store for fire," he must mean that the expectation of the eschatological conflagration is founded on prophecy which reveals that God has decreed it."

The exampla in 3:5-7 which are used to refute the scoffers' argument against the parousia promise is therefore historically based. 2 Peter also employs this event of Noah's Flood in 2:5.

4.2.2.5. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The contrast between the readers and the ungodly scoffers
As already indicated (see section 4.2.2.1 above) 2 Peter 3:8-10 is the next and final exampla unit of the argument in 2 Peter 3. It is important to observe a small but significant detail before this final unit is considered. The scoffers of 3:3-4 virtually seem to correspond to the ungodly during Noah's day because those in Noah's day are also indicated as having ignored the word of God concerning that event which was ultimately to deluge them. This is not directly indicated in this passage itself but the tradition contained in Matthew 24:36ff seems to be relevant and deserves therefore, in our judgement, to be mentioned here. In that Matthean passage we are informed that

"As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is
The description of the pre-Flood generation suggests that they may have afforded 2 Peter's author with an analogy when he had to write about the pre-parousia period. It would seem these people had a preacher of righteousness in Noah (2 Peter 2:5) but in spite of that fact they were unaware of this fact until the day of their judgement or the flood. Apart from pointing out this analogy, we also detect in the beginning of 2 Peter 3:10 that the last days' scoffers are contrasted with the believing community (see also section 4.2.2.2. above). This would imply that the author desires that the believing community should view itself as those who are supposed to be like Noah and thus be in contrast with the scoffing ungodly who will be judged by the judgement of God's Day. This detail is noted because of its seeming importance with regard to understanding the meaning and role of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's overall message.

4.2.2.6. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The ungodly scoffers and the ungodly false teachers of 2 Peter 2

Also demanding some attention before proceeding to the exegetical study of 3:8-10, is the question whether or not the ungodly scoffers of chapter 3 are the same people who are described as the false teachers in chapter 2. The studies of Klinger (1973) and Desjardins (1987) focus on the issue of whether 2 Peter's opponents may be identified with some particular historically known group within early Christianity (see also 4.2.2.2. above). The question being raised at this point of this inquiry is somewhat different and it primarily concerns the issue of whether or not the descriptions of chapters 2 and 3 may be used to complement each other.

There are obvious corresponding parallels. For example, the analogy of the Flood is employed with regard to both the false teachers (2:5) and the scoffers (3:5), both are described as being morally bad (2:10; 3:3), and both are also described as operating with false knowledge (2:12; 3:5). These and many other parallels seem to support the suggestion that 2 Peter refers to the same group of people in both chapters. Kistemaker (1987:325) therefore writes:

"We understand that the mockers are the false teachers Peter has described in
Bauckham (1988b:3724) maintains the same viewpoint. This viewpoint may be supported by the fact that the exhortation seems to make the association when it says 'be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men' (in 3:17).

We, however, also want to draw attention to the fact that the two descriptions also suggest that, in spite of their close association, some distinction should be made between the false teachers and the scoffers. The false teachers are for example, described as people who will introduce destructive heresies (2:1) and it would be inappropriate to restrict their false teachings to the area of eschatology alone. On the other hand, the scoffers are primarily introduced for the sake of refuting particular attitudes and viewpoints which concern the Day of the Lord and are associated with the parousia promise. It is small details like this which seem to suggest that the two groups, although closely associated, should be distinguished from each other and that caution should be exercised regarding an oversimplified conjoining of the descriptions of the two groups. We suggest that the two descriptions may only be validly used to associate the two groups in matters which are explicitly indicated as being characteristic of both and that when it comes to those particulars which are only asserted with regard to the one group without them being explicitly indicated as relevant with regard to the other, the silence of the text in such cases should be respected. Thus, the false teachers are introduced in a context in which the document seems to emphasize that just as Old Testament prophets had their opponents, so also may it be expected that there will be people who will challenge and contradict the teachings of the apostles on many points; while the scoffers are introduced with regard to the particular teaching on the parousia promise.

4.2.2.7. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The fulfilment of the parousia promise and the patience of the Lord

2 Peter 3:8-10 contains some positive teaching about the parousia promise (see section 4.2.2.1. above) and comes after the argument of the scoffers was refuted in 3:5-7 (see section 4.2.2.4. above). This positive teaching is introduced in a manner that suggests that 2 Peter's writer desired the special attention of the readers to it. Such a significance
seems to be indicated by the use of the vocative ἀγαπητέ (beloved) at the beginning of the unit.

The unit has received various interpretations from commentators and Bauckham (1983:306f) sums up some of them. A popular viewpoint among commentators is that the words, 'one day with the Lord (is) as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day', are meant to express the idea that God views time differently from human beings (Vaughan & Lea 1988:193). Such an understanding seems to overlook the fact that 2 Peter's writer is concerned to indicate that the apparent delay concerning God's promise is related to the Lord's patience. It appears therefore better to understand these words as meant to convey the message that the Lord is capable of announcing the Judgement Day immediately or after the lapse of a long period of time but that God's action is, in this regard, not arbitrary but determined by His patience. This understanding therefore reads these words of 3:8 as not standing alone but as being related to those in 3:9.

Another detail which accounts for the divergence of viewpoints regarding this unit concerns the identification of the people whom 2 Peter's author depicts as manifesting the attitude which is negated by the words 'the Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some deem (it) slowness, but He is longsuffering toward you, ...' (in verse 9). The important question here is: who are the 'some' (τινὲς) being referred to in this passage? This group must certainly not be identified with the scoffers because the latter are depicted as scoffing and arguing against the reality of the promise itself, while the former are people who only consider God to be slow or delaying the parousia. It must also be observed that unlike with the scoffers, 2 Peter does not portray this group as even openly uttering their viewpoint in this regard, and they may have simply been manifesting their view through their lifestyles or attitudes. We therefore suggest that this 'some' refers to members within the Christian community to which 2 Peter was originally dispatched. We further suggest that the wicked servant who in the parable of Matthew 24:45-51 is depicted as saying "to himself, 'My master is staying away a long time,'" and then beginning "to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards," would describe the type of members who are referred with 'some' within the Christian
community addressed by 2 Peter. This understanding links up satisfactorily with the further detail concerning the objects of God's longsuffering in 2 Peter 3:9.

2 Peter 3:9 clearly regards God's patience, that accounts for Him being seemingly slow in fulfilling His promise, as something specifically connected with the Christian community. It is unfortunate that this detail is often overlooked. Even if the unlikely variant reading of καταμαθήματος (to us) is adopted, it would not change the point which we are concerned to emphasize here: The longsuffering which 2 Peter 3:8-9 associates with the parousia's 'delay' concerns the Christian community and not everybody. This does not mean that there may not be other passages in Scripture which speak of God's patience concerning those outside the Church. We are only contending that even if that could be the case, it would be wrong to read such relations into this passage and thereby conceal its special emphasis. 2 Peter seems to be pointing out to the believing community being addressed that their attitudes and conducts would have implied their being adversely affected by the Day of Judgement if it had come earlier and that they therefore should be grateful for God's patience towards them in this connection. It is, of course, also implied that if it does not come at the day of 2 Peter being received by them, then they should view it as due to God's patience towards them.

This interpretation also means that 'the all' whom God wills to be saved and has accordingly given time for them to repent are exactly those within the Christian community who do get saved. They all will and should look back with gratitude that God's Day of Judgement did not come earlier than it ultimately will do.

The Matthean parable, to which reference has just been made, also speaks of the wicked servant as being in danger of sharing the fate of hypocrites if his master comes to find him in such a wicked condition (Matthew 24:50-51).

It is, however, the analogy with Noah's flood that seems to support our interpretation of 2 Peter 3:8-9 (against Bauckham 1983:314 who minimizes the analogy). 1 Peter 3:20 speaks of God's patience during the period preceding the Flood. The appropriate words may (as in the New International Version) be rendered as follows:
"... God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built."

Our suggestion is that this patience was primarily directed towards Noah who had to complete the ark. Indeed, Noah even had to be shown patience while working hard to save 'His works' by bringing it within the ark in accordance with God's command.

This understanding, which seems correct, is important when attempting to understand the role and meaning of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's message. For instance, it suggests that the Day of God is hastened by the Christian community's diligence in connection with the tasks and responsibilities which God has given. Like Noah, the Christian community would 'delay' that Day if what needs to be done is not undertaken with utmost seriousness and diligence; and like Noah, the Christian community 'hastens' that Day when what needs to be done is undertaken with appropriate diligence. This would include self-discipline as well as ecclesiastical discipline with a view to ensuring that the tendency to become 'wicked servants' is curbed and dealt with. We further suggest that the special attention which 2 Peter's writer draws to this teaching, as primarily indicated by his introducing it with the vocative αὐτῷ, demonstrates the importance attached to this teaching and also emphasizes it as a matter which the author wanted to be seriously pondered by the addressed Christian community to which the epistle was directed.

4.2.2.8. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The certainty, imminence and impact of the parousia

The unit containing some positive teachings of 2 Peter concerning the parousia, namely 3:8-10, ends with an emphatic affirmation of that event's imminence (in verse 10). This affirmation is introduced by means of the conjunction δὲ (but). Although the relationship indicated by this conjunction between 3:8-9 and 3:10 has been observed by many commentators (see Bauckham 1983:314; Green 1987:149; Kistemaker 1987:336), it has often been interpreted in a manner that is questionable. Green (1987:149) expresses this popular but questionable interpretation of the relationship between 3:8-9 and 3:10 as follows:

"Although the parousia may be deferred in God's patience with sinners, that
patience is not inexhaustible".

This popular interpretation is due to a reading of the preceding verse’s "divine patience" in general terms, that is as patience directed towards sinners in general and not as patience regarding a particular group of sinners (see section 4.2.2.7. above). Such an interpretation actually nullifies the significance of the relationship between God's patience and the fulfilment of the parousia promise because it implies that the Judgement Day comes when divine patience has been exhausted while the text seems clearly to teach that the Judgement Day (Day of the Lord) comes when divine patience has achieved its objectives. We have again to emphasize that the issue is not whether or not Scripture elsewhere teaches the idea of divine patience being exhausted with regard to sinners in general, but that what we are here contesting is the validity of introducing such a notion in interpreting 2 Peter 3:8-10. Instead of the popular viewpoint in this connection, we suggest that the relationship indicated by the use of δὲ is that the day of judgement will come because and when divine patience achieves its objectives. This implies that the repentance and service which are essential precedents of that day will be achieved. The Flood analogy is again helpful here because Noah and those associated with him did get saved and they certainly completed what had to be achieved by the day when the Flood came.

Another aspect of the relationship between 3:8-9 and 3:9 is the implicit involvement of God in the execution of the parousia's precedents. God ensures that these essentials are met. This does not necessarily imply that all those associated with the Christian community for which 2 Peter was originally intended would be saved, but that those who consider themselves God's people are taught their serious responsibility with regard to the fulfilment of the parousia promise. 2 Peter 3:10 teaches therefore, that the parousia is certain to take place not because God's patience will one day get exhausted but rather because that divine longsuffering achieves its goals. Since these goals concern the Christian community, their responsibility regarding the fulfilment of the parousia promise is actually enhanced.

2 Peter 3:10 further uses the 'thief metaphor' in connection with the manner in which the
parousia or Day of the Lord comes. This 'thief metaphor' is also used in the Matthean passage to which reference has already been made (Matthew 24:42-44). We suggest that this metaphor primarily refers to the aspect of the parousia happening at a moment and date that is not pre-disclosed. In the context of 2 Peter 3:10 this metaphor seems, however, also meant to encourage the Christian community towards faithful diligent service during the pre-parousia period. We further suggest that when the injunctions concerning faithful diligent service are properly heeded, then the Christian community involved is not embarrassed by the fact that the Day of the Lord comes like a thief. The meaning which this metaphor receives in 2 Peter 3:10 therefore seems to correspond with that in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4.

The impact of the day of the Lord's coming is described in apocalyptic terms (Green 1987:150). Some of the matters which are quite clear are:

(i) That unlike Noah's flood, the parousia affects both the heavens and the earth (see also section 4.2.2.4. above). It should be observed that the heavens and the earth are not depicted as being affected in the same manner. The heavens are described as passing away with a sound similar to that of something rushing. What does this mean? Although the decoding of these images cannot be approached with an attitude of possessing ability to know their exact meanings, we suggest that 2 Peter uses this description with reference to the heavens making way for the Lord who will be coming on the clouds. This suggestion is submitted as a plausible way of explaining the apocalyptic terms involved (οἱ οὐρανοὶ ἀδιαβόλως παρελεῖσθονται). It is also important to observe that the heavens' passing away does not mean their destruction but seems to indicate the effects of Christ's passing through them while descending on His way to the earth. The στοιχεῖα which are described as being dissolved by burning could be associated with powerful entrenchments of unrighteousness or corruption (for other possibilities, see Bauckham 1983:315f). It would seem that the description reaches its climax when the author comes to the description of the parousia's impact upon the earth and the works in it. Danker (1962) and Wenham (1987) have, in our judgement, convincingly argued for εὐρεθῆσεται as the most likely original reading at the end of verse 10.
The significance of this description for the Christian community for which 2 Peter was intended as well as the reasons for the adoption of εὐρεθῇσεταί are expressed by Danker (1962:84) as follows:

"That a scribe should have altered a word like κατακαθῆσεται or one of the other readings into a more difficult εὐρεθῇσεταί to secure a sophisticated verbal echo appears extremely improbable, especially in view of the number of the variants which document the efforts made in the direction of a lectio facilior. But if εὐρεθῇσεταί in verse 10 was the original reading, then the echo in verse 14 is artistically designed, and in keeping with the writer's trend of thought. In contrast with those who are met with an adverse judgement, ... the Christians should aim to be found blameless, ..."

The earth will therefore be 'discovered' or 'be found'. This refers to the judgement that shall then take place (Kistemaker 1987:337). Thus both the heavens and the earth are described as being affected, although in different ways.

(ii) That some works will remain and be saved for the post-parousia age. Although this interpretation would find strong support from the adoption of εὐρεθῇσεταί, it does not depend on that reading. Even when the other variants are adopted, this interpretation could be argued for on the basis of the fact that the metaphor of 'fire' can involve the process of testing and/or cleansing through destroying the impurities. 1 Peter 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 are evidence of the fact that such an understanding of the 'fire' metaphor was well known among the early Christian communities (see also Hebrews 12:28,29).

The ideas about the impact of the judgement day upon the earth and the works in it could also imply that the quality of the work of Christians may be taken into consideration when attempting to understand 2 Peter's hastening motif. Thus, Christians may be conceived as helping to speed up that day's coming when they are diligent in establishing ethically clean actions which will be able to emerge through the fire of that
4.2.2.9. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The parousia implies the need for holiness concerning the Christian community's whole life

2 Peter 3:11-13 is the last unit in 3:3-13 and contains the conclusion of the positive teaching of 2 Peter's writer concerning the parousia or the Day of the Lord (see section 4.2.2.1. above). It accordingly contains the implications which 2 Peter's writer regarded as being appropriate in the light of the teaching of especially 3:8-10. The unit gives three related implications. The present section focuses on the first of these implications while the next two sections will concentrate on the remaining two implications.

It is important to grasp the manner in which both these three implications are introduced at the beginning of verse 11. All of them are made primarily on the basis of the extent of the dissolution that will be associated with the events surrounding the parousia. This is indicated by the introductory statement in verse 11 which relates this unit to the preceding one and which may, as the New International Version does, be expressed in the form of the question 'Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?' The following two details are important with regard to an understanding of this introductory statement or question:

(i) The meaning of λυσθένων. The New International Version translates this word with 'destroyed'. This word and λυθεραται, which is employed in verse 10 with regard to the impact of the parousia on the στοιχεῖα, are both derived from λύω. The manner in which the λύω derivatives are used in this unit and the preceding verse is quite interesting. They are used three times, that is once in each of the verses of 3:10-12. In verses 10 and 12 the words are respectively used together with καυσοδύνα (burning) and πυροδύνα (being set on fire), and in each of these two instances, the actions described refer to the στοιχεῖα ('the elements') and the οὐρανοί (the heavens) respectively. The usage in verse 11, which is the one under consideration here, is, unlike these other cases, used without any other word complementing its meaning. This seems to suggest that it could be understood to refer to the dissolution or disintegration of everything in general terms without
specifying the mode and nature of such a destruction. We suggest that it should be interpreted in this way in verse 11 and accordingly read as a reference to the general destruction (falling apart of things) which takes place at the parousia. The New English Bible translation also uses the words 'break up' and translates these introductory words as follows:

"Since the whole universe is to break up in this way, ..."

(ii) The scope of πᾶν ὤν. The New International Version translates this word with 'everything' and the New English Bible uses "universe" to render the same word. It would seem that this word is here used to indicate the comprehensive extent of the parousia's disintegrating impact which verse 10 alludes to. Actually, this word is further support for the viewpoint that the writer's primary purpose in mentioning 'the heavens', 'the elements', 'the earth' and 'the works in it' in verse 10 is chiefly meant to convey the comprehensive nature of the parousia's impact upon all things. The significance of this detail for these verses' interpretation is that although we may not know exactly what a concept like στοιχεῖα refers to, we may be able to know that the author meant to express comprehensiveness by the use of the list 'heavens', 'elements', 'the earth' and 'the works in it' in verse 10. Thus the parousia reorientates everything, it affects everything and its disintegrating influences will extend to every aspect and corner of created reality and human society. Perhaps the most apt contemporary words to describe this phenomenon are that of radical and fundamental. If these two modern words are used then we would get something like, 'since the disintegration which the Day of the Lord brings is radical and fundamental ...

These comprehensive terms set apart God's act of dissolution (or even reformation) perhaps from some of those which people were employing in their attempt to deal with the problem of evil within society and which ultimately amounted to being cosmetic or mere patchwork.

What is the first implication which 2 Peter's author is concerned to point out with reference to its Christian readers? It is that the Christian community (and of course each believer within it) should be distinguished by a corresponding comprehensive (and
radical/fundamental) holiness. The writer expresses this idea by employing plurals (ἐν ἁγίαις ἀναστροφαῖς καὶ ἑυσεβείαις) which are recognized to be difficult to translate with exactness in most languages (Bauckham 1983:324). Overstreet (1980:366) seems to overlook this important detail concerning these plurals but Lombard (1991:506) also draws attention to them. These plurals may be translated as "holy behaviours and godlinesses" (Vaughan & Lea 1988:197). It seems that 2 Peter uses these words to indicate that the fact of the parousia's comprehensive reorientation demands that nothing ethically unworthy will be able to emerge through the detailed scrutinization which will accompany the parousia. Particularly interesting in this regard is the fact that even works of piety (godlinesses) are included in this implication. This aspect of 2 Peter's message enhances the responsibility that the Christian community has concerning the fulfilment of the parousia promise because lack of holiness in the comprehensive life of the community may, in the light of 3:8-10, be interpreted as one reason for the seeming delay of the parousia. God's patience extended to the Christian community aims also at the achievement of clean or holy activities concerning all aspects of the Christian Church. The implication that when this task of being holy in every sphere is undertaken with diligence by the Christian community, it thereby also will be shortening the period which divine patience has granted before and thus hastening the parousia, does not seem farfetched. In other words, the Christian community seems to be taught in this implication of 3:11 that the parousia is not only 'hastened' by fulfilling all the necessary tasks which are given as the parousia's precedents, but also that all these tasks have to be fulfilled in a holy manner. We could perhaps express this by saying: The Christian community 'hastens' the Day of the Lord when it is diligently concerned for both quantity and quality with regard to all the tasks assigned for it. This underscores the primary importance at obedience to the instructions of the Lord, because obedience lies at the core of holiness. The use of διί is probably meant to draw attention to the fact that this implication (and the other two) is not a peripheral responsibility. (It is quite tempting to indulge in using Noah's analogy in this regard, because this saint of old is in Genesis 6 and 7 described not only as completing the tasks which God assigned to him but also as undertaking those tasks in a meticulously obedient manner).
4.2.2.10. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The total disintegration of evil which accompanies the parousia implies hopeful expectation for the Christian community

The second implication for the Christian community's life arising from the fact of the parousia's radical impact within the whole of created reality and human society is that which is described by the use of προσδοκῶντας at the beginning of verse 12. It would seem that the accusative case in which this word appears here (this is also valid with regard to στερεόντας) is meant to indicate that it also describes those actions which are governed by the interrogative adjective πορευόμενος (verse 11).

Bauckham (1983:324) makes the relevant observation that προσδοκῶντας refers to eschatological waiting or expectation. Its use in the present context is quite interesting. In this verse (3:12) it refers to a 'looking forward' to the Day of the Lord which will bring complete disintegration, while in the next verse (3:13) it refers to looking forward to the positive results of that day, namely the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. The Christian community is taught its obligation of drawing all the necessary comfort from the fact of the changes which that Day brings. In the face of even the greatest entrenchments of darkness and unrighteousness, the Christian community is obliged never to lose faith in the fact that these conditions will by God's power completely be removed and dealt with. On the other hand, such an expectation entails a vision of the perfect conditions which will replace the evil systems. This aspect of 2 Peter's message is taken up in the exhortation pericope which starts in 3:14. (We must also indicate here that the other two implications are likewise also taken up in that part of the letter).

4.2.2.11. 2 Peter 3:3-13: The total disintegration of evil which accompanies the parousia implies faith-inspired works of the Christian community to hasten it

The third implication, for the Christian community's life, arising from the fact of the parousia's radical and comprehensive impact upon everything is that which is described by the use of στερεόντας in verse 12. It is the suggestion of this inquiry that the meaning of στερεόντας in this verse (3:12) should be distinguished from that of προσδοκῶντας. 2 Peter is here concerned with drawing attention to the Christian
community's responsibility which, in particular, is explicitly introduced in 3:9 (see section 4.2.2.7 above), namely the task of hastening the Day of God. The Christian community has the obligation not only to hopefully (and thus also longingly) expect the resolution of the problem of evil and the creation of a new dispensation, which will replace this present order, as is indicated by the use of προσδοκώντας, but also has the obligation of being obedient servants of God, who co-operate with God (and are thus God's partners in this regard) in speeding up the coming of that day. We suggest that this responsibility involves works of faith. In other words, what often seems impossible to destroy or to erect (that is regarding God's commissions) is to be approached and undertaken out of faith in God and with an attitude that refuses discouragement because God is involved in it together with the Christian community and His involvement ensures that the struggle against sin and unrighteousness and that for peace and righteousness will succeed.

Although the two words, namely προσδοκώντας and σπεύδουντας are to be distinguished from each other, it would be an equally serious mistake to fail to recognize the relationship which this unit indicates as existing between them. This relationship, it should be emphasized, is of cardinal importance for a proper understanding of the meaning and role of 2 Peter's hastening motif within the message of this document as ascertained by our exegetical study of the whole 2 Peter 3:1-13. The relationship is: the responsibility of leading lives which hasten the Day of the Lord suffers when the hopeful expectation (which includes a longing for) of the parousia is weak. This is also suggested by the Matthean parable (24:48-52) especially in its description of the way in which the servant progressed along the road to doom by being a wicked servant because it started with that servant's loss of the expectation for the parousia. We suggest that the reason why 2 Peter's writer was so concerned about the statement ascribed to the scoffers, is the awareness that failure to challenge and deal with such notions could contaminate Christians and lead to carelessness and to a Christian community that has become the fellowship of wicked servants. Does this not suggest that the maintenance of the eschatological hopes are seriously important with regard to the comprehensive life and service of the Christian community? This relationship between προσδοκώντας and σπεύδουντας is in any case taken up in the exhortation which the New International
Version translates as follows:

"So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him" (3:14).

The following words of Green (1987:152) therefore seem generally appropriate here:

"As always in the New Testament, the moral imperative follows the eschatological indicative. The expectation of the Lord's return always inspires Christians to a holy life (cf 1 John 2:28). Disbelief in the Lord's return all too often produces indifferentism in behaviour, as it had with these errorists. There is an indissoluble link between conduct and conviction. Barclay gives three superb examples from the inscriptions on heathen tombs of what happens when men reject the theological view of history, the belief that creation has a goal, a climax, which is one of the main themes of the doctrine of the advent. It leads to hedonism: 'I was nothing; I am nothing; so thou who art still alive, eat, drink, and be merry.' It leads to apathy: 'Once I had no existence; now I have none. I am not aware of it. It does not concern me.' It leads, finally, to despair: "Charidas, what is below?" "Deep darkness." "But what of the paths upwards?" "All a lie" ... "Then we are lost." Barclay concludes, rightly, that without the truth, embodied in the second coming doctrine, that life is going somewhere, there is nothing left to live for" (see also Vaughan & Lea 1988:197).

4.2.2.12. Brief Summary

The study of 2 Peter 3:3-13 confirms the dominance of eschatology in this passage and, in the light of its structural place within 2 Peter, it can be considered as confirmation of the dominance of eschatology in the whole letter. This is indicated by the following matters: the scoffers are an eschatological phenomenon; although 2 Peter is aware of the variety of God's promises, its emphasis centres around those promises connected to the parousia; the employment and meanings of the Day of the Lord/God phrase; as well as the use of the apocalyptic categories which relate to the ultimate hopes of believers. The study of 2 Peter 3:3-13 also indicates that each of these eschatological aspects of the
message of 2 Peter is accompanied by an equally strong emphasis on pastoral moral
dimensions which have to do with the comfort, encouragement and counselling of
believers in the context of their practical service and living as people of God. The
eschatology therefore seems to be in support of, or for the sake of these dimensions.

4.2.2.13. 2 Peter 3:1-13: Some observations concerning 2 Peter's hastening motif

Our exegetical study of 2 Peter 3:1-13 seems to offer important insights concerning the
meaning and role of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's message. Since 2 Peter 3:1-13
is the primary section that is exegetically studied for clues about 2 Peter's hastening motif
in the present inquiry, some of the most important insights which the exegetical study
highlighted concerning 2 Peter's hastening motif should be summarized here.

These are:

(i) 2 Peter's author uses the concept of hastening the coming of the Day of God in
order to draw the attention of the Christian community to the fact that there are
important tasks which they are supposed to fulfil before that Day comes. These
tasks are mainly in the areas of repentance, comprehensive holiness and obedient
faithful servanthood. It also seems clear that these activities and tasks are
related to three important categories. These categories are:

(a) The category of divine patience. It enables the author of 2 Peter to teach
that because God desires their salvation, believers hasten the parousia when
they are diligent in working for their salvation by repenting. This repentance
is that of Christians and not of those outside the Christian community.

(b) The category of the comprehensive disintegration which accompanies the
parousia. It enables the writer of 2 Peter to drive home the teaching that
Christians hasten the parousia when they are not only concerned with
quantity but also for quality in those tasks which God has assigned to them.
This enables their works to stand the test of holiness and thus be able to
emerge or remain after the conflagration of that Day.
(c) The category of anticipating the new heaven and the new earth which the parousia brings. This category enables the writer of 2 Peter to emphasize the need of hastening that Day by living and working for righteousness, the quality that will characterize the new order. It also enables 2 Peter's author to emphasize the relationship between expectation and works of faith.

(ii) God is portrayed as involved in all of these aspects and dimensions. He is thus busy fulfilling His promises and thus is actually hastening that Day. What He assigns to the Christian community to achieve during the pre-parousia period are at the same time matters of great importance in His programme. It is in the light of this insight that we suggest the hypothesis that this motif is meant to highlight the partnership existing between God and His people in the fulfilment of the eschatological hopes.

(iii) The analogy of Noah and the Flood seems quite relevant in highlighting most of these aspects of 2 Peter's hastening motif.

4.3. POSSIBLE FORESHADOWINGS OF THE HASTENING MOTIF IN 2 PETER 1:1-11

Our suggestion about the structural pattern of 2 Peter (see section 4.2.2.3. above) characterizes 2 Peter 1:1-11 as being made up of an epistolary introduction (1:1-2) and an anticipatory cycle of the Exampla/ Conclusion /Exhortation pattern (1:3-11). Such a structural pattern suggests that the themes which are elaborated on in the second cycle of the letter, namely 2 Peter 1:12-3:18a, that is, themes like the hastening motif, are anticipated in the first cycle. This part of our exegetical study focuses on this first cycle with the purpose of identifying any possible foreshadowings of those ideas which the exegetical study in 4.2. highlighted concerning 2 Peter's hastening motif.

4.3.1. 2 Peter 1:1-11: Reminding the Christian community about God's gifts

2 Peter 1:12 describes the contents of the verses preceding it as also being part of that
which 2 Peter's writer desired to remind the Christian community of. We detect this in
the use of the demonstrative τούτων (in verse 1:12). This particular detail is made clear
even by translations such as the New International Version which renders the whole verse
as follows:

"So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are
firmly established in the truth you have" (see also section 4.2.1.2.)

What are the readers reminded of in 2 Peter 1:1-11? This calls for a description of the
way in which the whole of 2 Peter 1:1-11 appears to be constructed and this task is made
easier because of the general consensus existing among scholars concerning the flow of
the argument in 2 Peter 1:1-11. After the epistolary introduction (1:1-2), the author dwells
on the theme of gifts which have been given to Christians by God (1:3-4); the argument
then moves on to the section in which the implications of having received those gifts are
pointed out to the Christian community (1:5-9); and then it ends with the exhortation in
which the readers are spurred on to live in accordance with the described implications
(1:10-11). In view of this apparent flow of the argument in 2 Peter 1:1-11, it is suggested
here that this particular cycle may be considered as A reminder concerning the gifts of
God and their implications for the Christian community's life together with a
corresponding exhortation.

4.3.2. 2 Peter 1:1-11: The Christian community is a particularly gifted people
The format of 2 Peter's epistolary introduction largely resembles those of other New
Testament epistles (Kelly 1969:295). Its description of the addressees, however, is to
some extent unique. The description seems to highlight the fact that the Christian
community (the addressees, the author and those associated with him) has been the
recipient of significant gifts from God. This note is expressed by the use of τοῖς ...
λαχῶσιν (1:1). The author seems to dwell on this theme in 1:3-4 as well, and
apparently desired to make this fact and reality the core of the exampla for the whole
cycle.

The gifts which the author mentions are:
(i) Faith
This is mentioned in verse 1 when the writer describes the readers as having received "a faith as precious as ours". The distinction which these words manifests, that is, between the readers and the writer's group, has received various interpretations. There are those who understand it as a reference to the distinction between Jews and Gentiles (for example, Green, 1987:68). On the other hand are those who with Bauckham (1983:167) regard this distinction as a reference to that between the apostles and the later generation of believers. These two viewpoints seem to have serious flaws. The former view faces the problem that the distinction between Jews and Gentiles is not at all apparent in the document (Bauckham 1983:167), while the latter seems to be a reading that forces notions of lateness in the document's opening verse. Just as the distinction Jews/Gentiles does not feature prominently in the letter, so also is the distinction apostles/later Christian generations not so apparent. In fact, the author writes as the apostle Peter addressing some contemporary group of Christians. Kistemaker (1987:241) appears therefore to be on the right track when he considers this distinction as that between apostles and other believers and then writes:

"In the Christian community every believer receives the same precious gift of faith from God. Peter uses the plural pronoun our in this text to demonstrate that the faith of the apostles is the same as that of the readers. In other word, the apostles are on the same spiritual level as all other Christians".

The distinction apostles/readers is certainly an important one in the document as verse 16 indicates with its saying:

"We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you ... but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty."

Another even more apparent distinction in the letter is that between the writer
and the readers on one side against those who may have been outside their orthodox circle. It is perhaps better to view the apostles/readers distinction as having the dimension of writer/orthodox believers in view of verse 12 wherein the writer makes clear that he accepts the claim of the readers to be in the same tradition as that championed by him. Although this gift of faith appears to be understood primarily in subjective terms, the objective dimension is therefore not entirely excluded. Kistemaker (1987:241) excludes the latter dimension, but it is because he appears to have overlooked the possibility that the dimension writer/orthodox fellow believers may be included within the apostles/readers distinction with which he works. It must be pointed out here, in view of the authenticity debate, that it would be unjust to deduce that the mere recognition of the apostles/readers distinction in verse 1 excludes the possibility that 2 Peter is unauthentic, because it could still be argued, possibly on other grounds, that the writer maintains the distinction apostles/contemporary readers in verse 1 exactly in order to present his or her document as apostolic. The manner in which God gave the same gift of faith to all believers further seems to be considered as having been a proper display of God's righteousness.

(ii) Everything needed for life and piety

This is mentioned in verse 3 and such a description of the gifts seems to be intended to foreshadow the aspect of ethical human responsibility. It does this because of its being an emphatic affirmation of the generosity of God or Christ with regard to the Christian community. (αὔτοῦ in verse 3 may refer to God or Christ. Perhaps the writer did not intend such distinctions.) These comprehensive gifts of God are further indicated as having been given for the sake of life and piety. The words ζωή καὶ εὐσεβεία remind us of the pair we encountered in 3:11, namely the "behaviours and Godlinesses". We therefore interpret the 'life and piety or godliness' in 1:3 along practical lines. Thus, by reminding the readers of the gift of God in this context, right at its beginning, 2 Peter makes it impossible for readers to wonder as to the source of their ability for being considered as having the ability to be obligated to strive towards being holy in a radical and comprehensive manner. Kistemaker (1987:246) while
commenting on this aspect of 1:3 therefore aptly writes:

"Observe that God has granted and continues to grant us "everything for life and godliness". He wants us to live in harmony with his Word by honouring, loving, and serving him."

It must be observed that whereas the first gift, namely that of faith, is accounted for on the basis of God's righteousness, these second category of gifts are accounted for in terms of divine power. This seems to be most appropriate in the context of reminding readers about the comprehensive and fundamental manner in which God in Christ has dealt with their great poverty and inability to be holy by showering them with everything they needed in this regard. Bauckham (1983:173) seems to have correctly observed that the ως at the beginning of verse 3 should be regarded as intended to create "a loose connection between verse 2 and verse 3". This opens up the possibility that it could be related to verse 1 with the ως being given a temporal understanding of "while". This could then result (when verse 2 is ignored) in a reading resembling the following:

"... To those who by the righteousness of our God and saviour Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: ... While by his divine power having been given all things for life and piety."

Such an interpretation is not in conflict with grammatical rules. The genitive absolute is known for its elasticity; and the opinion which Bigg (1961:253) expresses when stating: "ως followed by the genitive absolute, may be rendered "seeing that"" should be recognized for what it is, namely, just another possibility, but certainly not the only one. Chamberlain (1979:31-2) aptly hints to the elasticity of the Genitive absolute as follows:

"Many other classifications of the genitive might be given, but that would not serve any good purpose here. The important thing to
learn is that a genitive with another substantive is describing it in some way. The sense of the passage should, as a rule, tell you the exact meaning of the genitive. One should start with the idea that it is describing something, and then ask oneself just how it describes it. It is entirely wrong to start with the thought that the primary idea is possession or separation (as many of the older grammarians held)."

The suggestion being made here would mean that just as "the same precious faith as ours" (in verse 1) is accounted for by the righteousness of God, His divine power on the other hand accounts for the comprehensive "everything for life and piety" (verse 3) and at the same time gives some indication that these two gifts are given from the same moment. There is no such thing as a Christian with "faith as precious as ours" but not also in possession of the "everything for life and godliness" in terms of 2 Peter categories. In other words, even the new Christians who are often the most likely prey of the false prophets are responsible people in terms of the gifts of God.

(iii) Precious and very great promises
This gift is mentioned in verse 4 and is closely connected with the "glory and virtue" at the end of verse 3. The mention of precious and very great promises certainly includes the parousia promise and all that accompanies it as also highlighted by our exegetical study of 2 Peter 3:1-13 (see 4.2. above). This has been recognized by, among others, Fornberg (1977:89), Bauckham (1983:179), and Kistemaker (1987:247). Vaughan & Lea (1988:147) accordingly write:

"As later explained in 3:13, these promises must surely include the return of Christ, the establishment of a new heaven and earth, and an entrance into Christ's kingdom".

The use of the plural "promises" may therefore be taken as an indication of the fact that 2 Peter's author is aware of the plurality of God's promises (or Christ's,
again it must be pointed out that we probably are not meant to distinguish between God and Christ here). This particular gift of "precious and very great promises" is accounted for by reference to the divine qualities of glory and virtue (end of verse 3). We therefore suggest that the δι' ἄν (through which things or through these) at the beginning of verse 4 refers to the δόξη καὶ ἀρετή at the end of verse 3. The significance of this is that as the first two gifts are accounted for by referring to some divine quality, so also is this third gift. It would seem that these two qualities refer to the excellence and goodness of God. It would be an appropriate way of drawing attention to the fact that in the precious and very great promises, especially those relevant to the parousia, Christ's (also God's) honour and reliability are displayed. The text also draws attention to the fact that these qualities were displayed in the call of God or rather that they were the means of calling Christians as well. They attracted and drew the believer to God through Christ (verse 3). Just as the gift of everything is for the purpose of life and piety, this particular gift of "precious and very great promises" serves a particular goal. This particular goal is described by words which have until recently been always generally translated as "so that you may by them (that is the promises) participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires".

In a recent essay, entitled, "Partners of the Deity", Wolters (1990) has, however, in our judgement, succeeded in arguing the case for an interpretation that differs from the generally predominant view in this regard. Wolters' insightful essay demonstrates that the goal referred to by these words (in 1:4) are better understood in covenantal terms and not in ontological terms. He does this by furnishing enough evidence, in our opinion, that the noun συμμαχός is best taken in its common meaning of partners. He expresses this point as follows:

"It seems therefore that the word regularly means "partner"... in the classical Greek literature. The same is true of the Septuagint, but in the New Testament the situation is somewhat different. Bauer's dictionary of New Testament Greek lists the meaning "companion"
and "partner" but also "sharer". It is clear from two verses (2 Cor.1:7 and 1 Pet.5:1) that the meaning "sharer" or "partaker" does indeed occur in the New Testament. In the remaining eight cases, however, the word means "partner". ... If we look beyond classical Greek literature and the Greek Bible and examine the use of κοινωνός in the nonliterary papyri, we find that the word virtually without exception means "partner", especially in the sense "business partner". ... In the light of this overwhelming evidence, why is it that New Testament translators always choose the much rarer meaning "partaker" in 2 Peter 1:4?". (Wolters 1990:33).

Wolters (1990:33-4) then goes on to answer this question posed at the end of this citation by stating:

"The answer to this question has to do with the grammatical relationships into which κοινωνός enters. When associated with a genitive case, the general rule appears to be that κοινωνός means "partner" when the noun in the genitive refers to a person but that it means "partaker" when the noun in the genitive refers to a thing. According to this rule, since "divine nature" is not a person but a thing, κοινωνοί must here mean "partakers".

Then he indicates that this rule does not apply when the thing referred to by a genitive noun with which κοινωνός associates in a particular context represents a person (Wolters 1990:34). He makes a strong case for the fact that θεος φώσεως in 2 Peter 1:4 represents the divine person or God. This leads him to propose the following translation for verse 4:

"He has granted us precious and very great promises, in order that you might become thereby partners of the Deity, having been acquitted of the corruption which has come into the world because of desire" (Wolters 1990:44).
The translation of 2 Peter 1:4 which Wolters proposes obviously means that this particular verse contains a strong foreshadowing of ideas connected to the hastening motif and which are highlighted in our exegetical study of 2 Peter 3:1-13, because it makes clear that the partnership of God and the people He saves is a practical and a very much present reality belonging to the pre-parousia period. In support of this interpretation, it could be pointed out that the "everything for life and piety" of verse 3 is parallel to this goal for this third gift and that it also refers to pre-parousia realities. How would the giving of the precious and very great promises enable the Christian community to be God's partners? We suggest that these promises, especially those with future dimensions, make known what God is going to do often so that His people may have the same programme and goals which He has. It is especially within covenantal categories that this aspect is most prominent. The Old Testament can provide many examples in which the giving of great promises to God's people is explicitly indicated as partly serving the goal of enabling the believing community to be partners with God. Thus concerning Abraham it is written:

"Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him". (Genesis 18:18-19 New International Version).

Our reference to this Old Testament passage is only intended to indicate the possibility of promises with future dimensions being ways in which God takes His people into partnership with Him in the process of achieving the hopes which those promises generate.

It must also be pointed out that the way in which the three gifts are appropriated by the Christian community seems to be that of "knowing" God. This appear to be the significance of διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως in verse 3.
4.3.3. 2 Peter 1:1-11: The gifts of God imply the Christian community's diligence concerning all aspects of life

Our suggestion concerning the flow of the argument in 2 Peter 1:1-11 characterizes 1:5-9 as the conclusion, that is the part in which the author indicates the implications of what has been stated regarding the life of the reader (see section 4.3.1. above). The introductory statement in verse 5 and which, in accordance with the New International Version, may be rendered: "For this very reason, make every effort ..." establishes this aspect of 1:5-9. This has been recognized by commentators on 2 Peter (Bauckham 1983:184; Vaughan & Lea 1988:148). The words "for this very reason" apparently refers to the whole of 1:1-4. Bauckham (1983:184) takes it as referring only to 1:3-4. Although this detail does not make such a big difference we could argue for the inclusion of some parts of the epistolatory introduction in view of the fact of some, although indirect and loose, relationship between 1:3-4 and 1:1-2. Perhaps this could even be the significance of the fact that the list of qualities contained in 1:5-7 starts with "faith" and would immediately suggest "the faith" already mentioned in verse 1 and which we accordingly took note of (in section 4.3.2. above). The words which the author uses to introduce the list also seem to distinguish between faith and the others because παρεισενέγκαντες ἐπιχορηγήσατε may be rendered as "bringing in alongside of, adding" (Rienecker & Rogers 1980:769). Translations like the New International Version therefore maintains some distinction between faith and the other virtues using the words "add to your faith goodness, and to goodness ..." Faith has accordingly been considered as some sort of foundation on which the other virtues are added. (Vaughan & Lea 1988:149). The whole way in which this whole pericope is introduced with σπουδὴν πᾶσαν emphasizes the role of human effort in the achievement of these virtues. Kistemaker (1987:250) recognizes this dimension and expresses it in the following manner:

"Make every effort to add." The Greek for this particular phrase is interesting indeed. Peter uses the noun effort, then the verb to apply, and last the verb to add. Peter writes the noun first to give it emphasis. The noun itself means "diligence" and even conveys the idea of haste. That is, when God calls a person, he wants him to put forth every possible effort to obey this divine call and to do so without delay. The verb to apply signifies that we must bring our diligence
into God's presence and place it next to what God does for us. Even though the initiative in salvation comes from God, he works out our sanctification by putting us to work".

The qualities which are then mentioned in the list are recognized as resembling Greek ethical lists (Fornberg 1977:98).

For the purpose of this study the following details are important:

(i) **Recognition of the eschatological dimension as part of the basis for the implications being indicated.**

This is basically entailed in recognizing that the words "for this very reason," at the beginning of 1:5 refer to the gifts in 1:1-4 or 1:3-4. It is so because those gifts include "the precious and very great promises" among them. Another reason for the recognition of the eschatological dimension as part of the basis for the implication pointed out in 1:5ff is the "so that you may be partners of the Deity" of verse 4.

(ii) **The comprehensive nature of the holiness and service indicated by the virtue of lists.**

The use of ethical lists within the New Testament is certainly intended to express comprehensiveness. In other words, the fact that in the list in 1:5-7, there may be one virtue that is not mentioned but that is mentioned, say for example in Galatians 5:22-23, is not significant, because all of them have the same intention; comprehensive obedience and holiness in all spheres of life. Thus the list of 2 Peter 1:5-7 may be taken as another way of expressing what the plurals in the words ἐν ἁγίαις ἀναστροφαῖς καὶ εὐσεβείαις in 2 Peter 3:11 express (see section 4.2.2.9. above). This at the same time lends a strong support for the structural pattern which is suggested in this inquiry, and wherein it is pointed out that 1:5-9 corresponds to 3:11-13 in the second cycle.

The fact that God's comprehensive gifts, including the precious and very great promises, imply a comprehensive obedience and holiness, is, in our judgement, a foreshadowing of the idea detected in our exegetical study of 2 Peter 3:1-13 (see especially section 4.2.2.9.).
4.3.4. 2 Peter 1:1-11: The Christian life and service which are implied by the reception of God’s gifts relate to eschatological productivity

The list of virtues which indicates the need for comprehensive holiness ends in 1:7. 2 Peter 1:8-9 is an evaluation of the lists, intended to point out what the possession and non-possession of these virtues imply. The author starts with the positive side - and states:

"For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive ..." (New International Version)

This suggests that it is not sufficient to have a small display of some or even of all the virtues. No wonder that 2 Peter can later in 3:9 teach that God gives the pre-parousia period as a matter of patience towards the Christian community. Such a period allows room for improving with regard to all. It is important that the words on productivity be noted. We suggest that they have eschatological connotations. This becomes clear when the opposite of possessing the virtues is allowed to illuminate the positive evaluation. The letter describes those who do not diligently cultivate an abundance of these virtues in their lives as "nearsighted and blind". Such a person sees only into the very near future and has no vision for what lies on the eschatological dimensions. We suggest that this foreshadows the fact of anticipating the relevance of the Day of God for Christian living and service. Thus those nearsighted and blind are also described as being people who forget the significance of their being cleansed from their sins.

4.3.5. 2 Peter 1:1-11: The Christian community exhorted to embark on the life and service implied by God’s gifts within view of the eschatological hopes

2 Peter 1:10-11 corresponds, according to our suggestion concerning the structural pattern of the letter, to 2 Peter 3:14-18a. It is the part in which the author moves from merely pointing out the implications to exhorting the readers to live according to the implications. Since 2 Peter 3:14-18a was not intensively analyzed in our exegetical study in 4.2. we shall only point out those matters which were also noted concerning 2 Peter 3:14ff.
In both of the sections 2 Peter's writer exhorts the readers on the basis of their hopes. Thus in 2 Peter 1:10-11, the effort which is required is based on the desire and expectation of the readers concerning not falling but entering into the Kingdom of Christ, just as 2 Peter 3:14 states -

"Since you are looking forward to these things ..."

In both pericopes, \( \sigma\pi\nu\omicron\delta\sigma\alpha\tau\epsilon \) is used (1:10; 3:14). Receiving a "rich welcome" appears to correspond to the freedom which those who are "at peace with Him have at the parousia" (1:11; 3:14). The confirmation of their calling and election could be that which is echoed again in the later injunction to take care that they do not fall from their secure position (1:10; 3:17).

4.3.6. Concluding remarks

Our study of 2 Peter 1:1-11 appears to support not only the suggestion concerning the structural pattern of 2 Peter; but also the hypothesis that the ideas which are expressed concerning the hastening motif in 2 Peter 3:1-13 are also foreshadowed in the first cycle of the letter. Perhaps this is also indicated by the fact that four of the five \( \sigma\pi\epsilon\omicron\delta\omega \) derivatives in 2 Peter are found in these parts of the letter. Indeed the reason why the author may have used a \( \sigma\pi\epsilon\omicron\delta\omega \) derivative to describe the manner in which he undertook the task of writing the letter (1:15) may have been an awareness that the writing was itself a way of helping the readers to be diligent and thus also thereby hasten the parousia.

4.4. BY WAY OF SUMMARY

The purpose of this section is to make some observations which are based on our exegetical study of sections and aspects of 2 Peter. This summary is accomplished by:

(i) observing and indicating certain dominant aspects of 2 Peter's message, and

(ii) by summarizing some insights concerning the hastening motif within the eschatological message of 2 Peter.
4.4.1. Observations regarding some aspects concerning 2 Peter's message

We make our observations under the following three categories:

(i) the importance of the parousia promise in 2 Peter's message;
(ii) the final intervention of God in human history according to 2 Peter; and
(iii) the contrast between this world and the one that will exist after God's final intervention in human history.

4.4.1.1. The importance of the parousia promise

2 Peter's explicit references to the promises of God in 1:4; 3:4,9 and 13 give the impression that the letter also emphasizes the aspect of promise and fulfilment in its message. Indeed the statement that "the Lord is not slow concerning his promise" (ου βραδένει κόριος της επαγγελίας) in verse 9 seems to be an explicit reference to this aspect of the message in 2 Peter. The derisions of the scoffers also seem to be connected with the reliability or the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His promises.

The use of the plural επαγγελματα in 1:4 suggests that 2 Peter's author is aware of the plurality of God's promises. The emphasis of 2 Peter's message, however, seems to be on the eschatological promises which are connected with Christ's parousia. What and wherein lies the importance of the parousia promise in 2 Peter 3:3-13?

It would seem that the statement about the Day of the Lord which will come like a thief, in verse 10, is helpful in this regard. It is certainly a reference to the teaching of Christ that is preserved in some parables. The view that this statement has its background in the eschatological parables of Jesus which are preserved within the Gospels is shared by commentators such as Bauckham (1983:314,315), Green (1987:149), and Vaughan & Lea (1988:195). The reference is usually interpreted as indicating that 2 Peter emphasizes the unexpected suddenness of the parousia (Kistemaker 1987:336). What is often overlooked and not recognized is the fact that since the scoffers appear to have coupled their taunts concerning the parousia promise with their enticements in the sphere of ethical conduct, this background of 2 Peter 3:10 suggests that the importance of the parousia promise could primarily lie in emphasizing the necessity for faithful servanthood. The parable in Matt.24:45-51, namely, the one about the faithful and wise servant seems applicable in
this context. The servant who came to the conclusion that the master was delaying is depicted as one who "begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards" (Matt.24:49; see section 4.2.2.7. above).

On the other hand the faithful and good servant is one whose master comes and finds (εὐφήσε) him faithfully discharging the commands of the master (Matt.24:46); and such a servant receives honour and appreciation from the master. The evidence that 2 Peter emphasizes this aspect of the parousia promise seems to be the undisputed use of εὐπεθήσαν in the exhortation which follows this section in verse 14; as well as the reference to receiving "a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" in 1:11. The author of 2 Peter seems therefore to emphasize the parousia promise not simply because it was being denied, but also because circulating notions of the Lord's delay may have been undermining the dedication and faithfulness which accompanies a living expectation of the Lord's coming. 2 Peter's message in this regard seems intended to convey the need for the believing community to be faithful servants of the Lord. The strong denial of having followed cleverly invented stories in preaching the parousia in 1:16 is probably to be understood in this context. The scoffers may have been deriding the parousia promise with the purpose of sabotaging the morale of believers and thereby making them easy prey to be won over to their easy-going ways.

The implication of this importance of the parousia promise with regard to the present study is that the meaning of 2 Peter's hastening motif may be sought in the context of the contribution such a conception of the church's role could have made in raising the commitment of the believers to dedicated servanthood. It is not hereby being denied that the message of 2 Peter in this regard also emphasizes unexpected suddenness of the parousia. This aspect is incorporated (thus the use of προδοκῶντας in 3:12); because it also relates with faithful service; and therefore the use of σπεδοντας in the same verse.

4.4.1.2. The final intervention of God in human history

One of the characteristic features in the 2 Peter 3:3-13 message is a strong emphasis on the Day of the Lord/God concept. This concept or phrase has its roots in the Old
Testament where it occurs in many varied contexts within the books of the prophets. It is used, for example, by Amos (5:18-20), Zephaniah (1:14-18), and Malachi (4:1-6). It is a phrase whose meaning has to be determined on the basis of a particular context's circumstances. This applies with regard to the Old Testament as well. It is this feature of the phrase that Saebo (1990:30) recognizes when writing as follows:

"When YHWH is the nomen rectum associated with yōm he has a time to act, a time to intervene in "history"; what will take place then, he alone determines. The relative chronology is necessarily not uniquely defined (e.g., future), being defined in each instance by usage and context; but the future is most common. The most important element, however, is God's act".

The reference to the prophets in 2 Peter 3:2 suggests that the author of 2 Peter may have been employing this phrase in the manner in which some Old Testament prophets used it. The problem is, however, that in view of the variety of ways in which different Old Testament Prophets used the phrase it would be illegitimate to elect one of the usages in the Old Testament and to read it into 2 Peter 3:3-13. Thus, it would seem that the most valid way of detecting its meaning in this passage remains the one that grants the contextual priority to the passage itself.

2 Peter uses the phrase to refer to an eschatological activity in the future. Thus the significance of the future tense in the verb ἡξεῖ in 3:10 is not that of stressing certainty only, but also that of emphasizing futurity. The context of the scoffers' derision of the parousia promise also suggests that the Day of the Lord/God is in this passage associated with the parousia. This would imply that the parousia is thereby understood as an important future intervention of God in human history.

The same "Day" is in 2 Peter 3:7 referred to as "the Day of judgement and destruction of ungodly men" (ἡμέραν ἁτωλοικοῦ ἁνθρωποῦ). This aspect of 2 Peter's message is also clear in 2:9. The significance of this aspect of 2 Peter's message appears to be that of conveying the idea that the ungodly who taunt and cause suffering for believers will be rewarded in accordance with their evil deeds when Jesus comes.
Neyrey's study suggests that this message may have its background in the fact that the false teachers could have been denying postmortem retribution and accordingly could have been encouraging the disregard of God's law. He compares what he regards as the apology in 2 Peter with that of Plutarch in De Sera and then concludes:

"Our analysis thus far has indicated the presence of the same apology in 2 Peter. He defends divine judgement (3:9; 2:3b-9; 3:7,9-13), afterlife/another world (3:7,10-13), and postmortem retribution (2:4,9,17; 3:7,10)" (Neyrey 1980a:424).

Apart from the emphasis on the aspect of the judgement of the ungodly in the use of the Day of the Lord/God phrase in 2 Peter 3:3-13; there also seems to be an emphasis on the judgement of the believing community. Their judgement, however, appears to be related to their service as explained in 4.2.2.2. above. The evidence for this conclusion is primarily the exhortation to "make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him" in 3:14.

The use of the Day of the Lord/God phrase to refer to the eschatological future moment of Christ's parousia implies that the present period is of great importance for the believing community. It is a time of opportunity for repentance (3:9) and of cultivating the abundance of good qualities (1:8). It is a time of God's patience. The implication is also that what the believing community does in obedience to the Lord is important within the context of the kingdom of Christ (1:11).

It must also be observed that the use of the Day of the Lord/God phrase in 2 Peter 3:3-13 is also associated with what is commonly referred to as the cosmic conflagration. The passage seems to suggest that the background of this event should somehow be regarded as the Flood during Noah's time. Scholars such as Fornberg (1977:66) and Thiede (1986a:82) draw attention to this aspect of the phrase's use in the context of 2 Peter 3:3-13. Thiede (1986a:81-2), for example, writes:

"Notwithstanding its place among other Old Testament and New Testament passages, 2 Peter 3:7 + 10-12 is the culmination of Biblical conflagration
prophecy. ... 2 Peter begins with a reference to the previous destruction of the world by the Deluge (v.6) which will be followed by a destruction through fire (v.7).

The conflagration is in 2 Peter 3:3-13 described with words which present problems when taken literally. Green (1987:150) aptly recognizes this difficulty when he writes:

"Peter's language is not entirely clear in detail, which is hardly surprising. He is using the language of apocalyptic in the attempt to describe the indescribable. His main purpose is to lift up the eyes of his readers to the climax of history."

The significance of the description seems to be that of generating comfort by emphasizing that what often appears to human eyes as being exceptionally and apparently eternally entrenched forms of evil are not truly so. The language of apocalyptic preaches that no form of evil is above the power of God, and that all evil will accordingly be defeated.

The different aspects of the meaning of the Day of the Lord/God phrase in 2 Peter 3:3-13 make it essential to investigate which of its aspects are associated with the hastening motif's meaning. The important conclusion to be drawn from the examination of the phrase in this present section is that the phrase is used to refer to God's eschatological intervention, an intervention associated with the coming of Christ, the judgement of people; and that in its apocalyptic features, the phrase is used also to comfort believers. The phrase also emphasizes the importance of the pre-parousia human history or rather that of actions during this present period ... The role and meaning of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's message have to be described within the context of these meanings of the Day of the Lord/God phrase.

4.4.1.3. The contrast between this world and the one that will exist after God's final intervention in human history

The use of πῦρ and καυσόμενα in 2 Peter 3:7,10 and 12 suggests the metaphor of fire, which if taken literally, would seem to imply that nothing of the present world will continue in the post-parousia world; that is, the world after the conflagration which takes
place with the coming of the Day of the Lord/God. The debate that rages around the meaning of στοιχεία in verses 10 and 12 is also connected with the tendency to take apocalyptic metaphors literally. The word στοιχεία may, depending on the background being adopted refer to things like water, air, fire and earth; or sun, moon, and stars; or the angelic powers (Bauckham 1983:315,316; Kistemaker 1987:336). The point is, however, that words like these are probably not to be understood literally when they are encountered in apocalyptic contexts.

It would seem that the employment of apocalyptic metaphors in 2 Peter 3:3-13 is primarily intended to convey the message that the perfection which is part of God's promise shall be fulfilled. This connotation becomes explicit in 2 Peter 3:13 which reads:

"But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness" (New International Version).

The contrast between the old and the new world appears to be chiefly described in moral terms when the clause ἐν οἷς δικαιοσύνη κατοικεῖ is used. 2 Peter describes the present world as one that suffers corruption which results from evil desires (1:4); a world in which the godly and the righteous are subject to trials (2:9); and in which their faith is regularly taunted by the scoffers (3:3-4). The new earth is accordingly, in contrast to the present pre-parousia one referred to as the home of righteousness, that is, the one in which righteousness dwells. The present pre-parousia world is thereby by implication characterized as one that does not easily accommodate righteousness. 2 Peter portrays the believer as having escaped "the corruption in the world caused by evil desires " (1:4); but also as someone involved in a serious struggle against this corruption that is typical of one's environment; a struggle which is analogous to that of Lot, "a Righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men - living among them day after day, being tormented by the lawless deeds he saw and heard" (2:7,8). In this struggle it is possible that the believer may be associated with the ungodly to the extent of becoming one who forgets "that he has been cleansed from his past sins" (1:9). One of the serious threats from the false teachers is exactly in this sphere of enticing "people who are just escaping from those who live in error" (2:18). In such a context, the conflagration or final
intervention of God in human history may be understood as that action whereby God through His power will completely remove or sweep away all forms of unrighteousness in order to give heaven and earth a new look. Words like στοιχεῖα, in such a context, could simply be references to the destruction of powerful entrenchments of unrighteousness or corruption. Cramer (1956:54) seems to suggest a somewhat similar idea when stating:

"Hoewel wij menen dat het niet mogelijk is met zekerheid vast te stellen welke voorstelling aan 2 Petrus 3:10,12, ten grondslag ligt, is toch de strekking van deze teksten duidelijk. Overwegend welke de inhoud van de apocalyptische conceptie betreffende de chaos in de eindtijd binnen het N.T. is, kunnen wij concluderen dat met de verbranding van de stoicheia de prijsgave aan de chaos aangeduid is, de vernietiging van het 'gebinte', het ordenings-principe van deze 'wereld die voorbijgaat'.

The contrast between the pre- and post-parousia conditions have the effect of assuring the believing community that the world which they long and strive for will at long last be a reality. Their work or service in obedience to God is thereby implied to be not in vain. The meaning of the hastening motif within 2 Peter's message has to be described within such a context.

4.4.2. The hastening motif in the context of 2 Peter's eschatological message

The investigation into the nature of the message of 2 Peter in respect of 2 Peter 3:1-13 has indicated that 2 Peter's message is dominated by eschatological aspects which are accompanied by an emphasis on pastoral moral dimensions. These findings seem to enable a determination of the meaning of 2 Peter's hastening motif within such a message. The present section intends to fulfil the task of describing the meaning of 2 Peter's hastening motif by way of integrating the results of section 4.2. and 4.3. In order to achieve this objective, it seems necessary to focus on two aspects of 2 Peter 3:1-13 and to describe the hastening motif's role and meaning by reference to them. These two aspects are:

(i) the role of God in 2 Peter's eschatology; and
(ii) the role of God's people in 2 Peter's eschatology.

4.4.2.1. **The role of God in 2 Peter's eschatological message**

2 Peter 3:1-13 emphasizes various aspects concerning God's role in its eschatological message. The first aspect is that of stressing God as the giver of the promises which are fulfilled in the latter and end times. The author draws attention to this aspect by portraying the prophets and the apostles who made these end time phenomena known to people as being God's messengers. Thus the apostles are described as transmitting Christ's command (3:2), their message is based on what they have truly "heard" God saying concerning Christ as the use of καὶ ταῦτην τὴν φωνήν ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν καὶ ὄφειλον in 1:18 emphasized; and their writings are also regarded as transmitting this witness (1:12-15; 3:1; 3:15-16). The works of the prophets are also portrayed as having come into existence by the will of God (1:19-21). The aspect of God as the giver of the promises which are fulfilled eschatologically is also conveyed by the rhetorical question which the author ascribes to the scoffer, for these people are heard to use the word ἔπαγγελία. In this connection, note must also be taken of 1:4 and 3:13.

God is also described as being already at work in order to bring His promises into fulfilment. He is thus not inactive during the pre-parousia period. This is also emphasized in various ways. Thus He is already at work "to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgement" (2:3b, 9b). God is busy with the fulfilment of His eschatological promises when he saves people from the corruption in the world (1:4); preserving such people amidst the corruption in the world as those associated with righteousness, the very trait which He is ultimately going to establish in the new earth (2:7--9, 3:13). He is also already at work in preserving or reserving this world for the fire that will grant it its new look (3:7). In other words, God's eschatological future work is some sort of continuation of the work He already is busy with. This seems to be valid with regard to all the aspects of the Day of the Lord/God concept. His future work can be gleaned from that which He does even during the pre-parousia phase.

Another aspect which is emphasized with regard to God is that the determination of the moment of the parousia is His prerogative. This is most clearly expressed in 3:8 where
the author refers to Ps.90:4. This aspect is also expressed by the use of the thief metaphor in 3:10. This aspect also seems to imply that God is hastening the complete realization of what He has promised by doing what has to be done before that day. When everything has been done, this most important day will come.

The author also emphasizes the fact of God's actions not being morally arbitrary. God's actions are based on righteousness. This includes even the granting of faith (1:1); and also in His judgement of the ungodly (2:9,13). But God's actions are also in accordance with His µακροθυμία (3:9,15). His present and future actions are therefore a display of what He is. Even the parousia itself will be a manifestation of the power and authority of Christ (1:16,17). It will also be a manifestation of His faithfulness, goodness and care for His own (1:11; 3:13).

4.4.2.2. The role of God's people in 2 Peter's eschatological message

The role of God's people in 2 Peter's eschatological message is best understood by way of analogy to that of God. Thus, God's people are to accept the promises of God (1:4; 1:16-21; 3:1-2). This involves the expectation of the eschatological parousia and all that is entailed by it. This aspect of their role is referred to by the use of προσδοκώνται in 3:12. It includes being comforted and encouraged by such an expectation. Believing the promises includes being counselled and given direction by such expectations. The metaphor of the promises acting like a guiding star during the dark night in 1:19 seems powerfully to enhance this aspect of the acceptance of God's promises. Just as God is already now at work with regard to the achievement of the eschatological goals, so also does 2 Peter stress the involvement of God's people in that aspect of His work. Just as God is hastening that day by doing what has to be completed before it, so also must these people be involved in helping to complete that which has to be in the pre-parousia period. This is mainly through repentance and dedicated service. Thus God's people are to repent (3:9), and cultivate the qualities enumerated in 1:5-9 with the purpose of being effective and fruitful within the context of the work that God is doing with a view to the full realization of His eschatological goals. Their role in this regard is also analogous to that of their Old Testament counterparts who practiced righteousness (for example, Lot and Noah - 2:3b-10a). In this role, God's people may be regarded as His important
partners whose contribution is not insignificant (1:11). This aspect of the role of God's people is then the one which is referred to by the use of the word σπευδοντας in 3:12. It is a role which must be taken seriously because the parousia brings a judgement (assessment) in this regard as 1:11; 3:14 suggests. In order to achieve their role in this regard, the moral conduct of God's people has to be not arbitrary; thus the emphasis on ethics.
CHAPTER 5

2 PETER'S HASTENING MOTIF WITHIN THE NEW TESTAMENT
(outside 2 Peter)

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The study of the \( \sigma\pi\epsilon\delta\omega \) derivatives in this inquiry's third chapter failed to confirm the presence of 2 Peter's hastening motif in the New Testament outside 2 Peter. This result of our word study does not, however, necessarily have to imply the absence of 2 Peter's hastening motif in these other New Testament texts because it is quite possible for their writers to express ideas similar to 2 Peter's hastening motif by other words and means. Indeed, there are many New Testament scholars who believe this to be the case and who accordingly have suggested many New Testament passages as corresponding parallels to 2 Peter's hastening motif. The passages belonging to this category are: Acts 3:19-21; the petition, "Thy kingdom come" in the Pater Noster; 1 Corinthians 16:22; Revelation 22:20; Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10,20; Matthew 28:19,20; 1 Peter 2:12; and Revelation 8:4. This part of the inquiry examines the relevancy of these passages and their appropriateness regarding the issues concerning the presence and uniqueness of 2 Peter's hastening motif within the New Testament.

The framework that is used in examining the suggested passages will be basically the same for all of them. This framework is formulated on the basis of chapter four's results about 2 Peter's hastening motif. In essence, it involves:

(a) The question whether or not the suggested passage embody any eschatological hopes as well as an investigation of the character of those hopes when they are found to be present.

(b) The question whether or not the particular passages manifest some ideas that may reasonably be interpreted as suggesting some form of divine and human
partnership with regard to the fulfilment of the eschatological hopes expressed by them.

There are various problems connected to the method and procedure as just described. Some of the most serious ones are:

(a) the fact that the study leaves out much of the New Testament;
(b) the real danger that such an examination may develop into reading 2 Peter's hastening motif ideas into the passages being studied; and
(c) the fact that the passages may be severely violated when they are examined on the basis of a framework or questions formulated in accordance with extraneous materials.

These problems, although serious, are, in our opinion, not as insurmountable as they may appear. Thus with regard to (a) it may be observed that it is possible to undertake an independent search for separate meanings and their theological relationships between 2 Peter's hastening motif and the rest of the New Testament, and thus be not restricted to the cross-references which have been suggested by commentators only. Such a study would be of a much wider scope and perhaps would be more fitting within a study of 2 Peter's hastening motif in the New Testament per se. The scope of the present investigation is more meaningful because of the absence of any major study on 2 Peter's hastening motif and is limited to investigating the alleged parallels which 2 Peter commentators have associated with this motif. Regarding (b) and (c) it might be stated that these are real dangers and the examination attempts to avoid falling into their pitfalls by paying especially close attention to the immediate comprehensive contexts of the passages concerned.

5.2. 2 PETER'S HASTENING MOTIF IN ACTS 3:19-21

Acts 3:19-21 appears to be the New Testament passage which most commentators think about when commenting about 2 Peter's hastening motif in 2 Peter 3:12. Some of the commentators who suggest this passage as a cross-reference in this regard are Mayor

5.2.1. Some general remarks about Acts 3:19-21

The author of Acts, who is regarded to be also that of the third Gospel by many contemporary New Testament scholars (Tyson 1988:132; Gaventa 1988:147; Willimon 1988:158; Walasky 1988:171) offers Acts 3:19-21 as part of a speech ascribed to the apostle Peter. This speech, which is the second major Petrine speech addressed to a largely Jewish audience associated with the activities in the Jerusalem temple in Acts, forms part of Acts 3:11-26; while the first one constitutes the bulk of Acts 2:14-41. Opinions of scholars are divided concerning whether these and the other speeches in Acts are entirely unhistorical creations of the author, or summaries of actual speeches, or compositions which the author made on the basis of some oral and/or written sources (Gasque 1989:251-305). Many contemporary scholars seem, however, to consider Luke as having been both a historian and a theologian (Gasque 1989:309), and it would seem to be in accordance with such a judgement when these speeches are regarded as historically based compositions of the author, that is, speeches which the author composed using oral and/or written sources about actual historical events in the life of the early Christian church. In this particular case of Acts 3:11-26, the writer gives us the main substance of the message which Peter delivered when explaining the significance of a particular miracle to a Jewish audience.

5.2.2. Eschatological hopes in Acts 3:19-21

Acts 3:11-26 seems primarily to focus on the Christological significance of the healing miracle. Thus, the healing of the cripple is viewed as having taken place in Jesus' name and is therefore presented as proof of his resurrection and glorification by God (Acts 3:11-16).

The speech virtually identifies Jesus with the Messiah whom the Jews were awaiting in accordance with the Old Testament promises. This identification comes out clearly not only in the use of titles such as "the Holy and Righteous One" (verse 14) and the "Prophet" like Moses (verse 22) with reference to Jesus, but also through the explicit
claim that the Old Testament promises were being fulfilled in Jesus and the events concerning him (verses 18-24). Such an identification certainly means that the Christology of the speech as a whole is also pregnant with eschatological themes.

Eschatological themes also seem present in the specific part of the speech which is here under consideration, namely Acts 3:19-21. This particular part of the speech also seems to be the conclusion of the speech, that is, the part in which the speaker spells out the appropriate response expected from the audience. The presence of eschatological hopes in these verses seem to be indicated by the use of ἀποστείλῃ τὸν ... κριστὸν and ἀναφέρειν in verses 20 and 21. Scholars such as Schweizer (1974:664) and Bruce (1988:84) also interpret ἀναφέρειν in verse 20 eschatologically. Thus Bruce (1988:84) sums up the promise which the speech held out for the audience as follows:

"Not only would their sins be blotted out; those times of refreshment and joy which the prophets had described as features of the new age would be sent to them by God".

5.2.3. Divine and human partnership with regard to the fulfilment of eschatological hopes in Acts 3:19-21

The emphasis on God as the one who is primarily responsible for the fulfilment of these promises is quite clear in Acts 3:19-21. For example, the times of refreshment come from God as the use of ἀναφέρειν τοῦ κυρίου in verse 20 seems to indicate; and God is being alluded to with the use of the phrase "the heaven" which must receive Christ until the time of the promised restoration (verse 21). God's role in the fulfilment of these promises also seems to be emphasized by the fact that the restoration is presented as that which God had spoken about through his holy prophets.

Together with such an emphasis on God's role with regard to the realization of the promises, the passage also seems to hint at the responsibility of people in this regard as well by relating the repentance of the audience to the fulfilment of these same promises. Newman & Nida (1972:82) have correctly pointed out that:
"... the clause so that he will wipe away your sins (v.19b) is the direct purpose of "repenting and turning to God";

and that there is:

"... an additional purpose, namely, the content of verse 20 which is divided into two parts:
(1) the coming of the times of spiritual strength and
(2) the coming of Jesus as the Messiah".

Thus the required repentance which is urged upon Peter's Jewish audience is related to the fulfilment of the promises in question. This relationship, which makes people responsible for the fulfilment of the particular eschatological hopes, has also been noted by commentators such as Munck (1967:28,29) and Marshall (1980:93,94).

5.2.4. Conclusion

Our examination of Acts 3:19-21 in the light of ideas connected to 2 Peter's hastening motif confirms that the passage has indeed clear undertones of the motif under consideration. It may be not insignificant that 2 Peter and the particular speech in Acts are both ascribed to the apostle Peter. The main difference between 2 Peter's hastening motif and the ideas expressed in Acts 3:19-21 is that the latter largely seems to refer to the repentance of Jews who were unbelievers, while the former is set within the context of a Christian community which is presumed to be facing some challenges from the scoffers.

5.3. 2 PETER'S HASTENING MOTIF IN THE PATER NOSTER'S "THY KINGDOM COME" PETITION

The second petition of the Pater Noster, namely, "Thy kingdom come" is also given by commentators such as Bigg (1961:298), Mayor (1965:161), Beasly-Murray (1965:87) and Kistemaker (1987:338) as being a prayer that expresses ideas similar to those which are
conveyed by 2 Peter's hastening motif.

5.3.1. Some general remarks about the Pater Noster
The Lord's Prayer is found in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4 within the New Testament, and it is accordingly part of two different contexts. Its forms in the two contexts also differ slightly. Some scholars have accordingly attempted to account for the phenomenon of its existence in these different contexts and forms. Jeremias (1967:86) is certainly correct to suggest that there might have been already two variant forms of the Prayer by the time when these Gospels were being composed. His further suggestion is that:

"... each of the evangelists transmits to us the wording of the Lord's Prayer as it was prayed in his church at that time" (1967:89).

This latter suggestion, although quite helpful, does not seem to be satisfactory because it takes us only up to the congregations of the two Evangelists but does not wrestle with the earlier history of the Prayer, that is, the period when these congregations were yet to be established. Ridderbos (1987:126) suggests that:

"... since Jesus' instructions were oral, it is not at all surprising that He should have pronounced the prayer more than once as an example for His disciples."

This interpretation seems, in these circumstances, to be a good suggestion, although it certainly represents an instance of harmonizing the diversity. The diversity between the two forms of the Pater Noster does not, however, directly affect the petition which is the concern of the present investigation in this section.

5.3.2. Eschatological hopes embodied in "Thy kingdom come"
New Testament scholars such as Ladd (1975:63-9), Goppelt (1981:43-76), Morris (1986:106-8), and Dunn (1990:13-6) appear to be correct in suggesting that the concept "kingdom of God" is, in the synoptic Gospels, often used with eschatological undertones.
The use of the concept in the Pater Noster's "Thy kingdom come" petition seems to be an instance of such a usage insofar as it is future-orientated. Boff (1983:62) has accordingly aptly suggested that:

"The supplication 'Thy kingdom come' is a cry that springs from the most radical hope, a hope that we often see contradicted, but which we never give up despite everything, as we hope for the revelation of an absolute meaning that is to be realized by God in all of creation".

The future with which the petition is concerned seems to be both the immediate and the ultimate, or a future within the pre-parousia period as well as the parousia itself together with the age it ushers. Ridderbos (1987:127-8) therefore has interpreted the petition salvation-historically when he states:

"the first three petitions do not look exclusively to the definite and final coming of the kingdom. They also are concerned with the progress of salvation history during the dispensation that began with Christ's coming".

This second petition further seems to be concerned with the establishment of peace and righteousness, that is, conditions which are normally considered to prevail when God rules (Ridderbos 1987:128; Strecker 1988:114). Eschatological hopes are recognized to be present within the Pater Noster by a wide variety of New Testament scholars. Shriver (1983:91-2) has accordingly also summed up the hopes which are manifested in the whole prayer in the following poetic words:

"... the entire prayer, down to the doxology, leans towards a liberated human future, towards the time when

The divine name will be truly hallowed,
the divine kingdom truly come,
the divine will perfectly done,
a time when we shall see
the human need for sustenance fulfilled at the great, joyful heavenly
Banquet,
our last sin forgiven,
and evil defeated once and for all.
Then, then all the saints and all the powers of creation will join the chorus
of the kingdom come and indicative moods and declarative sentences can
take over human language for ever and ever:

The sovereignty of the world has passed to our Lord and his Christ,
and he shall reign for ever and ever! (Rev.11:15).

5.3.3. Divine and human partnership with regard to the fulfilment of the eschatological
hopes which are expressed in "Thy kingdom come"
There are certainly many factors in this petition which serve to emphasize God's role in
the fulfilment of the eschatological hopes which are expressed by the Pater Noster's "Thy
kingdom come". Some of these are:

(a) The fact that it is a prayer. Such petitions are by their very nature directed to
God. In the case of the Lord's Prayer, this is explicitly indicated by the words
employed in the Matthean opening address, namely, πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς
οὐρανοῖς (Matt.6:9).

(b) The fact that the kingdom is explicitly qualified as His by the use of the genitive
pronoun σου in both the two versions of the petition.

The petition seems also to clearly bring out the role of the church in the fulfilment of
these hopes. This is primarily expressed in that the Prayer containing this petition is
given as a duty to be fulfilled by Christ's followers. In other words, prayer is itself given
as one of the ways in which God and His people become partners in bringing these
hopes, which are based on God's promises, into full realization. Some scholars, such as
Ridderbos, also perceive the ethical dimension to be present in the fact that those who
pray the petition not only submit themselves to God but promote His reign with regard
to all spheres of their life too. Ridderbos (1987:128) states in this context:

"This naturally implies, although it is not explicitly stated, that the person
who makes the petition also is willing to make an active commitment of his
whole life to the realizations of what he asks for".

J. Moffat (in Beasley-Murray 1965:87) accordingly emphasizes this dimension of the petition by insisting:

"His (our Lord's) efforts to awaken penitence and to sustain earnest prayer for the kingdom point to a belief that the new order of things involved more than passive expectancy upon the part of men. The command to pray, Thy kingdom come, was more than an injunction to breathe a pious sigh for the future. Jesus believed profoundly in the power of prayer to effect even the will of God in the matter of the coming Kingdom".

5.3.4. Conclusion

Our examination of the petition "Thy kingdom come" confirms that it may be considered as expressing ideas which are basic to 2 Peter's hastening motif. Just as in 2 Peter, but unlike in Acts 3:19-21, this petition refers to an activity which is carried out by Christ's followers. The petition also seems to indicate that ideas associated with 2 Peter's hastening motif may be incorporated within the theme of the kingdom of God and be related with many other aspects which are taught in the New Testament about that kingdom and that this may be done by means of the styles usually associated with the salvation-history approach.

5.4. 2 PETER'S HASTENING MOTIF IN 1 CORINTHIANS 16:22 AND REVELATION 22:20

Kistemaker (1987:338) gives 1 Corinthians 16:22 and Revelation 22:20 as the first of his New Testament cross-references for 2 Peter's hastening motif when he states:

"Peter is saying that we have a vital part in shortening the time set for the coming of God's day. This saying corresponds with the ancient prayer the church has prayed since the first century: Maranatha, "Come, O Lord!"
This suggestion of Kistemaker combines these two passages, and it seems proper, therefore, to consider them together in our examination.

5.4.1. Some general remarks about 1 Corinthians 16:22 and Revelation 22:20

Both these two passages occur at concluding sections of their respective books. They also follow certain emphatic and serious final warnings in their respective contexts. Thus the \( \mu \alpha \rho \alpha \nu \alpha \theta \alpha \) of 1 Corinthians 16:22b follows close on the heels of the anathema or curse which is placed upon those who do not love the Lord in 1 Corinthians 16:22a; while the \( \varepsilon \rho \chi \omicron \omicron \omicron \nu \kappa \omicron \rho \iota \omicron \pi \epsilon \tau \varepsilon \ \zeta \eta \sigma \sigma o \delta \) of Revelation 22:20b is also connected to the plagues and ban which are pronounced on those who tamper with the contents of this last New Testament book in Revelation 22:18-20. The two passages are also followed by pronouncements of blessings in 1 Corinthians 16:23-24 and Revelation 22:21 respectively.

5.4.2. Eschatological hopes in 1 Corinthians 16:22 and Revelation 22:20

1 Corinthians 16:22b seems to be a petition for the realization of a judgmental action which will finally be fulfilled with Christ's coming. This interpretation, however, partly depends on the way in which the Aramaic word which lies behind the Greek \( \mu \alpha \rho \alpha \nu \alpha \theta \alpha \) is pointed. Scholars are agreed that the particular Aramaic word could be pointed as \( \text{māranā'ā} \) and thus accordingly be rendered, "Our Lord, come!"; or as \( \text{māran ātā} \) which means "Our Lord has come" (Moffat 1938:283-3; Groenewald 1967:237; Mundie 1976:895; Fee 1988:838). The largely diachronic study on \( \mu \alpha \rho \alpha \nu \alpha \theta \alpha \) in TWNT recognizes these possibilities when it also concludes:

"Der sprachliche Befund ergibt so drei Deutungen von \( \mu \alpha \rho \alpha \nu \alpha \theta \alpha \) als gleichermassen moglich: 1. Den Gebetsruf Herr, Komm! als Bitte um die Parusie, 2. das Bekenntnis unser Herr ist gekommen (in die welt in Niedrigkeit), 3. Die Aussage unser Herr ist jetzt da, ist gegenwartig (namlich im Gottesdienst, vor allem bei der Feier des Herrenmahls" (Kuhn 1942:473).
It is clear that Kuhn's last two possibilities primarily presuppose the confessional interpretation of \( \mu \rho \alpha \nu \alpha \theta \alpha \), that is the sense of "Our Lord has come"; while the first option is most probably based on that which follows the view which takes \( \mu \rho \alpha \nu \alpha \theta \alpha \) as the prayer, "Lord, come". Associating \( \mu \rho \alpha \nu \alpha \theta \alpha \) with the eucharist is also possible when it is taken as a prayer and in such a case it would be a petition invoking the Lord's presence in that sacrament. When it is associated with the eucharist and it is taken in the sense of the confession, "Our Lord has come", then it would be along the lines of Kuhn's third possibility. The immediate context of 1 Corinthians 16:22b does not, however, provide any indications that the eucharist could have been in the writer's thoughts in this concluding section of 1 Corinthians, and the attempts to read "the kiss" (verse 20) and "the love of the Lord" (verse 22) and "the grace" (verse 23) eucharistically have so far accordingly appeared farfetched and unconvincing (Moule 1959-60:307). In other words, the fact that \( \mu \rho \alpha \nu \alpha \theta \alpha \) is connected with the eucharist elsewhere, for example in Didache 10:6, does not necessarily imply that it is always so used. The immediate context of 1 Corinthians 16:22b seems to suggest an interpretation which relates the coming of the Lord with functions of judgement and perhaps of blessing in view of the anathema of 1 Corinthians 16:22a and the blessing of 1 Corinthians 16:23-24. The context therefore appears to rule out the eucharistic interpretation in favour of the one connected to judgmental action. It is also not really necessary to choose between whether the actions envisaged are immediate or eschatological because both aspects seem to be under consideration. Thus any visible pre-parousia effects of the placing of anathema and grace, on those who hate and love the Lord respectively, by Paul and the Christian community, may be understood as partial foretastes or guarantees of corresponding fuller realities which accompany the parousia and what it brings for those who persevere in their hate and love of the Lord respectively. This interpretation implies that the eschatological hopes which are present in 1 Corinthians 16:22b are related to the function of Christ who comes as judge. It is an interpretation which is also generally upheld by, among others, Moffat (1938:285-6), Moule (1959-60:310), and Fee (1988:839).

The eschatological nature of Revelation 22:20 seems to be even more clear and easy to establish because the whole section of Revelation 22:7-21 resembles liturgical declarations
and responses which are both orientated to the coming of Christ as judge. Thus Jesus declares himself to be coming soon with the appropriate rewards for the unfaithful and the faithful (Revelation 22:7, 12-16, 20a); while the Spirit and the church (bride) and John make the responses by confessing their assurance and longing for the fulfilment of such parousia promises (Rev.22:8-11, 17-19, 20b-21). Revelation 22:20b is therefore best understood as a prayer expressing a strong desire for the coming of Christ with a view to the final fulfilment of his judgmental function (Hailey 1979:433; Van der Waal 1981:398; Caird 1984:288).

5.4.3. Divine and human partnership with regard to the fulfilment of the eschatological hopes which are expressed in 1 Corinthians 16:22b and Revelation 22:10b

Both these two passages express the responsibility of God in Jesus Christ to fulfill the eschatological hopes which are closely associated with the parousia judgement. This emphasis seems to be primarily through the utilization of the prayer form. Such prayers manifest an attitude of looking to God and thus serve to stress that the curses or the plagues and the grace or life are finally God's prerogatives to administer. The context of Revelation 22:20b emphasizes this role of God in a most dramatic fashion by the direct announcements and affirmatives which are ascribed to Jesus Christ in Revelation 22:7, 12-16 and 20a. Both passages also seem to be emphasizing this aspect when the grace which is pronounced upon the faithful is presented in words that associate it with Jesus Christ (1 Cor.16:23; Rev.22:21).

The passages also seem to emphasize the participation of the Christian community in the same judgmental activities as well. Thus in 1 Corinthians, Paul pronounces the curse upon those who do not love the Lord and also seems to be administering Christ's grace and his own fellowship or love only to the faithful (1 Cor.16:23-24). The implication is that by her discipline, which also curses and blesses those who respectively hate and love the Lord, the Christian community participates with God in these matters. In the light of the words in 1 Corinthians 6:2-3, which the New International Version renders as follows:

"Do you not know that God's people will judge the world? And if you are
to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!";

it would seem quite appropriate to suggest that the role of God's people which 1 Corinthians 16:22 hints at embraces both present and future aspects. The responsibility of the church with regard to this ministry of discipline or criticism appears to be even more apparent in the immediate context of Revelation 22:20b. It is emphasized by the fact that the witnessing response of John, the Angel, the Spirit and the Church in Revelation 22:8-11 and 18-19 seem to be admissions of the responsibility to live in accordance with what is revealed. Thus when Jesus declares that there are blessings in store for those who keep the book's prophetic words (verse 7), John falls down to worship (verses 8-9) and the Angel instructs him on the urgency and seriousness with which the book's message should be regarded by the community (verses 10-11); and when Jesus announces the forthcoming judgement (verses 12-16), the Spirit and the Bride take up that message and echo it in their witness (verse 17). This exchange of announcements and responses continues in Revelation 22:18-21 where John exercises discipline (verses 18-19) in accordance with the earlier announcement in Revelation 22:7 - Jesus Christ then affirms that discipline as if to say, "Yes that's right, I am coming soon to completely fulfill that warning!" (verse 20a) and on which the Church responses by expressing her longing for such a coming that would realize their hopes in that regard (verse 20b).

5.4.4. Conclusion

This examination of 1 Corinthians 16:22b and Revelation 22:20b confirms that the immediate contexts of these two passages seem to justify their being regarded as expressing aspects of 2 Peter's hastening motif. They seem to highlight the aspect in which the Lord is hastening His Day by actions of governing everything as a righteous judge. The Christian community seems to be depicted as also participating in that task by practicing self-criticism (internal discipline) and a prophetic critical witness (external discipline) in accordance with the standards of righteousness and holiness as laid down by her Lord.
5.5. **2 Peter's Hastening Motif in Matthew and Mark's Olivet Discourses**

Green (1987:153) and Kistemaker (1987:338) respectively also include Mark 13:10 and Matthew 24:14 among their New Testament cross-references for 2 Peter's hastening motif. Bolkestein (1963:300) has even compared this motif with ideas which are expressed in Mark 13:20. All these passages are found in what is commonly known as the Olivet discourse and are accordingly grouped together in the examination in this section.

5.5.1. **Some General Remarks about the Passages**
The substance of Mark 13:1-37 closely corresponds to that of Luke 21:5-36 while that of Matthew 24:1-25:46 appears to be a more composite discourse. Mark and Luke have their discourses just after their narratives about the widow's offering (Mark 12:41-44; Luke 21:1-4), but that of Matthew comes after another speech, namely, the discourse of Doom and Lament (Matthew 23). Matthew and Mark connect their discourses to Jesus' departure from the temple and also explicitly mention that these messages were delivered on the Mount of Olives, while Luke is silent about these particular items (Matthew 24:1,3; Mark 13:1,3; Luke 21:5-6). All three evangelists mention that these discourses were given by Jesus while responding to some disciples' questions, but they formulate the particular questions differently (Matthew 24:3; Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7). Such differences and similarities among the three evangelists' Olivet discourses have been observed by among others, Adams (1977:110-4), Mann (1986:498-541), and Riley (1989:150-9). The possibility that the three evangelists used each other's works and/or an earlier Christian apocalyptic work cannot be completely ruled out as a legitimate and sensible hypothesis to account for these differences and similarities (Burnett 1980:6-12). The evangelists seem, however, to have utilized such possible earlier traditions or materials in accordance with the overall purposes of their Gospels.

5.5.2. **Eschatological Hopes in these Passages**
The questions to which the discourses are responses suggest that Mark 13:1-37 and Luke 21:5-36 are largely concerned with the destruction of the Jerusalem temple, while

Adams further suggests that Luke 21:5-36 should be employed to help distinguish the material concerning the temple destruction from that about the parousia in Matthew's fused discourse. He expresses himself in this regard as follows:


This suggestion of Adams, although quite interesting and to an extent also useful, does appear exaggerated and therefore not methodologically sound. The primary objection that can be raised concerning such a suggestion and procedure is that it would be such an "infallible chronological norm for distinguishing between the two kinds of prophecy" only if the Lukan discourse contained the whole 'temple destruction discourse'. There seem to be no sufficient grounds for accepting that the Lukan discourse includes all the material which may go back to the particular occasion which is alluded to by all the Synoptic Gospels in this regard. Further, it would be such an "infallible norm" only if it could also be convincingly demonstrated that the material in Luke 21:5-36 contains sayings which were used at that particular occasion alone. The fact that some sayings in Matthew 24 seem to be included in Matthew 10 may, for example, be an indication that these sayings were used at various occasions. Thus even though Luke 21:5-36 is clearly placed within the context of the temple's destruction, the sayings it contains may have been used at other occasions. This implies that Adams' proposal may be misleading; and it seems preferable therefore to consider the passages in these discourses within the contexts in which the different evangelists put them. It is also possible to understand the fusion in Matthew's Gospel as an indication of the fact that the temple's destruction is viewed as having some eschatological significance and perhaps even dimensions. Ridderbos (1987:442) appears to be making such a suggestion when he expresses himself as follows:
"Jesus' whole description of this is cast in an eschatological light; Jerusalem's destruction and the great distress that it brings are portrayed as signs of the Lord's coming and as images of the suffering of the last days. Here again things that will prove to be separated by vast spans of time are compressed by prophecy onto a single plane."

Both the contexts of Matthew 24:14 and Mark 13:10 focus on the hatred and persecution to be encountered by Christ's followers (Matthew 24:9-14; Mark 13:9-13; France 1985:338; Riley 1989:153). The theme of persecution appears to be so general within the Gospel accounts that it seems more sensible to maintain that Christ Himself may have taught about it on several occasions and that some of His popular sayings on the topic could have been repeated on different occasions (Burnett 1980:255-6). In Matthew 24:9-14 and Mark 13:9-13, these sayings appear within the context of predictions about the future. The predictive nature of the speeches seems to be emphasized by, among other things, the following:

(a) The use of the future tense especially in the disciples' questions (Matthew 24:3; Mark 13:4). If the Gospels were written after 70 A.D., their reading would serve to emphasize the reliability of Jesus' other sayings concerning the eschatological future; but even if they were composed before 70 A.D. they would serve to wean the disciples from their attachment to the temple and to strengthen their expectation of such an event along the lines of the Solomonic temple's destruction. This latter option may even link up with the theology behind the depiction of Jesus as leaving the temple as a symbol of judgement.

(b) The explicit statements about prediction in Matthew 24:25 and Mark 13:23b. The use of προείρηκα in both these passages seems to underlie the predictive character of the speeches.

(c) The use of τῆλος in the immediate contexts of these passages. Matthew employs it twice in verses 13 and 14; and Mark also employs it in verse 13. In the light of the general nature of the persecution theme and the predictive nature of the speeches, it seems quite proper to understand these two passages as being applicable to the whole pre-parousia period and thus inclusive of even the pre-70 A.D. phase. They therefore contain certain eschatological hopes which are
related to the hatred and persecution which Christ's followers encounter during the pre-parousia period. It would be also possible to consider this period as occasionally manifesting high and low moments of that persecution but then even the lowest moments, when that hatred is minimal, would not be comparable with the complete rest which will be ushered by the parousia.

The hatred seems to be connected with the Church's relationship to Christ as well as with her efforts to recruit the unbelievers into acknowledging Christ's authority. This seems to be emphasized by, among other things:

(a) The explicit statements [in Matthew 24:9b and Mark 13:13] that the disciples will be hated by all people because of Christ's name.

(b) The fact that the hatred is depicted as coming from all nations and not only the Jews (Matt.24:9b; Mark 13:13a). This seems to suggest that the spreading of the Gospel may be a source of friction between Christians and unbelievers. Burnett (1980:261) sees a slight difference in the manner in which these two passages relate persecution to mission. Thus he states:

"In Mark persecution was the occasion for witnessing, but in Matthew persecution is the result of missionary activity".

It appears, however, that the two aspects are present in both Gospels because they all seem to link the saying about endurance with the work of mission.

(c) The emphasis on endurance (Matt.24:13; Mark 13:13b). Endurance within the context of spreading the Gospel seems to be particularly intended in these passages. This implies that the promise about salvation has to be interpreted as primarily referring to deliverance during moments in which people suffer while fulfilling their tasks as Christ's followers. The help which was experienced during the pre-70 A.D. period may be viewed as strengthening the assurance in God's help for other future pre-parousia cases. Such help cannot, however, be interpreted as being exemption from death and other related sufferings in view of the explicit statements in Matthew 24:9 and Mark 13:9. In other words, God's help may at times be displayed to a greater extent in helping believers to endure
even death itself. Thus the hopes of occasional and final deliverance from these trials are aroused by these sayings. Another aspect of the relationship between endurance in Gospel spreading and hopes for deliverance from these trials seems to be the fact that the realization of promises relating to the complete rest or salvation from being hated and persecuted is connected to the spread of the Gospel. Indeed the promise of salvation appears to be one of the motivations for perseverance in Gospel spreading, and the point may also be that even if one faced death, one should be faithful. Such an understanding may not be very far removed from that which views the deaths of saints as a form of marturia.

Mark 13:20 is found in Mark's discourse alone. It is found within the context which appears to specifically concern the sufferings connected with the destruction of Jerusalem. The use of the passage beyond that particular context seems difficult to justify. The only aspect of the passage which may be relevant in this investigation seems to be the specific hint about sufferings during that destruction as not having been beyond God's control. This would imply that He can be looked to in all situations, even those as catastrophic as the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

5.5.3. Divine and human partnership with regard to the fulfilment of the eschatological hopes which are expressed in these synoptic parallels

Matthew 24:14 and Mark 13:10 primarily seem to focus on the church's responsibility to endure in spreading the Gospel. The hopes for complete respite from all forms of persecution are tied up with the fulfilment of that task by Christ's followers. Ridderbos (1987:440) therefore states:

"Jesus here revealed that the church's missionary mandate is one of the factors that determines when the world will end".

It is also possible to understand the passages as indicating that the endurance of the Church in spreading the Gospel even amidst persecution hastens the end which will be characterized by the absence of all persecutions in two senses.
(a) The success of the mission turns enemies of the Gospel into disciples. The case of Paul would be an appropriate example. Thus Acts 9:31 seems to be connecting the rest which was enjoyed by the church both with its growth and the conversion of Paul. Indeed the parallel Lukan version of Matthew 24:13 and Mark 13:13b is a saying which even the New International Version renders as follows:

"By standing firm you will save yourselves" (Luke 21:19).

In other words, the church by enduring may be conceived of as speeding up days of rest from persecution during the pre-parousia period and thus indirectly may be considered to be thereby making some contribution with regard to the realization of the complete rest which comes with the parousia.

(b) The persecution will not end, because the work of mission must go on. In this sense the passages simply explain the reason for the fact that what the church hopes for, namely the complete rest from hatred and persecution will not come until the work of mission reaches its conclusion. Endurance and faithfulness in discharging this task then become necessary in anticipating the coming rest.

It seems best to combine these two senses. It would then be possible to see the partial peace which is sometimes experienced in history during the pre-parousia period as having some relationship with the work of evangelism, while also retaining the church's anticipation of the complete rest at the end. In any case that rest, whether in its partial and temporary sense, or in that of complete final peace, would be related to the faithfulness of the believing community. In other words, through the spreading of the Gospel, the church may be viewed as being involved in a battle, which when won, will bring peace. The role of the church therefore seems apparent.

The role of God seems to be manifested in these passages by the emphasis on the help which Christ's followers are promised during the times when they have to suffer persecution. Mark emphasizes this particular aspect by the use of the sayings concerning the Spirit who will give the words to be used when the disciples are tried (Mark 13:11).
The promise of salvation to those enduring, which refers to both the partial and complete forms, certainly also refers to this role of God.

Mark 13:20 emphasizes the specific role which God exercised to limit the sufferings connected to the destruction of Jerusalem. We are not informed about anything that might indicate that the concerned elects did something to facilitate that shortening of the suffering and thus their salvation and of others during that event. It is possible that this was due to a certain amount of obedience. In any case, the idea seems to be connected to the Old Testament concept of God preserving a remnant when judging. Lane (1974:472) therefore states:

"God's maintenance of the elect is an extension of the Old Testament concept of the remnant which God leaves in Israel as an act of grace and judgement."

5.5.4. Conclusion

Ideas related to 2 Peter's hastening motif are detectable in Matthew 24:14 and Mark 13:10. It must, however, be admitted that finding them seems to involve an intensive search. In other words, these ideas are best conceived of as being not on the surface of these passages but rather as resembling a current beneath their surface. Mark 13:20 seems to be not relevant; because it seems to focus only on God's action with regard to the specific event of Jerusalem's destruction.

5.6. 2 PETER'S HASTENING MOTIF IN MATTHEW 28:19,20

The commentary of Vaughan and Lea (1988:197) also includes Matthew 28:19,20 among its cross-references for 2 Peter's hastening motif. This examination accordingly includes a consideration of Matthew 28:19-20's relevance and appropriateness with regard to the issue of whether it embodies ideas characteristic of 2 Peter's hastening motif.
5.6.1. Some general remarks about Matthew 28:19-20

Matthew 28:19-20 forms part of the closing section in Matthew's Gospel. This closing section is a narrative of the last post-easter encounter between Jesus and the eleven disciples which Matthew records. The encounter is described as having taken place in Galilee (Matthew 28:10,16), the very region in which Jesus began His ministry (Matthew 4:12ff). It is also important to observe that Matthew does not name this particular encounter by any term that might suggest its being considered as Jesus' ascension; and it seems better to understand the encounter as an important post-easter meeting at which Jesus finally commissioned the disciples, and through them the church, with regard to the discipling of the nations. The words of Matthew 28:19-20 have accordingly come to be commonly known as the Great Commission. This commission clearly embraces two universal or holistic aspects, namely, all nations are the objects of the discipling and that all the teachings of Jesus are to be used in that discipling process. These two aspects appear to be important within the context of Matthew's Gospel. Thus the universalism in terms of the nations is hinted at several places in the body of the Gospel, for example in Matthew 24:14 and especially in the parables of the tenants (21:33-44) and the wedding banquet (22:1-14). The parable of the tenants is even accompanied by the saying:

"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit" (Matthew 21:43).

The concept of keeping what God commands or doing His will is also important in the whole Gospel. It may even be related to the perspective of viewing Jesus as a teacher or one who, like Moses, is the mediator of God's law (France 1989:265-8).

5.6.2. Eschatological hopes in Matthew 28:19-20

The words of the Great Commission appear to be based on the kingship claim which Jesus makes in Matthew 28:18. This seems to be the significance of the superordinating conjunction othen in verse 19. Ridderbos (1987:554) accordingly writes:

"His words in verse 18 are the foundation of this command (hence the word
"therefore"); for the Great Commission is based on Christ’s resurrection from the dead, and the gathering of all nations into the church exhibits His victory over the powers of darkness".

It is therefore possible to perceive eschatological dimensions within the Great Commission in the sense that its execution seems to be one of the ways in which the eschatological kingship of Christ become a reality. Christ’s promise to be with the disciples "to the very end of the age" naturally calls to mind the Jewish eschatological categories about "this age" and "the age to come" (Ladd 1975:68-9). The Great Commission therefore hints at the passing nature of "this age" which will make room for the one "to come".

5.6.3. Divine and human partnership in the fulfilment of the eschatological hopes which are expressed in Matthew’s Great Commission

The role of God in Christ to bring the age to come seems to be emphasized by the kingship claim in verse 18 and also by the promise assuring the disciples of Christ’s constant presence. This kingship claim certainly means that He controls all things or has authority over everything in order to achieve or realize the kingship which He has been given. France (1985:413) draws attention to the fact that this claim virtually means that the prophecy of Daniel 7:14 is fulfilled, namely, "that the Son of Man would be enthroned as ruler of the world".

The promise about His perpetual presence until the end of the age seems to highlight the fact that Christ is not inactive but involved in the work which He commissions His disciples to undertake.

The Great Commission is even more emphatic in respect of the role of Christ’s followers. Christ’s teachings or principles of law appear to be the means of discipling the people. These teachings are presupposed to have been delivered to these disciples, and the fact that these teachings are in the hands of the disciples means that they have an important role to play in His plan of establishing His kingship or of achieving the eschatological hopes connected with the coming of the awaited age. The emphasis on Christ's presence
seems to indicate that they are to work with Him and He through them. Montague (1989:329) accordingly remarks:

"... when one considers the high ethical demands Jesus makes in the Sermon on the Mount, one wonders whether indeed it is humanly possible to do all that Jesus demands. Humanly possible, No. But Jesus does not expect His disciples to do it alone, whence the next revelation, the promise".

The Old Testament seems to be full of such promises of God being with His people, and most of these promises appear to have been given in connection with some tasks which are viewed as humanly impossible to execute on human strength and wisdom alone. Examples of these are: Isaiah 7:14; 8:10; 43:5; and Jeremiah 1:8.

5.6.4. Conclusion
Our examination into the relevance and appropriateness of Matthew 28:19-20 with respect to the presence of ideas similar to those in 2 Peter's hastening motif seems to confirm their presence. This is especially relevant because of the emphasis on the keeping of Jesus' teachings, which amounts to the fact that the ethical aspect is viewed as significant for the realization of the hopes in question.

5.7. 2 PETER'S HASTENING MOTIF IN 1 PETER 2:12

1 Peter 2:12 has also been suggested as a cross-reference for 2 Peter's hastening motif by Bigg (1961:298), Mayor (1965:161), Green (1987:157), and Vaughan and Lea (1988:197). The present section will accordingly examine the relevance and appropriateness of this passage in the present matter.

5.7.1. Some general remarks about 1 Peter 2:12
1 Peter 2:11-12 seems to be a general heading introducing the ethical exhortations which follow these verses. Commentators seem to be generally agreed that these verses are such a heading, but differ about the length of the section headed by these verses. The
consensus and differences of opinions concerning these matters are manifested in Stibbs (1959:69, 105-6), Best (1971:110), Thevissen (1973:7,51), Vaughan and Lea (1988:8,53), Davids (1990:94), and Marshall (1991:28). These verses introduce the exhortations which follow them both negatively (verse 11) and positively (verse 12). The relationship between these verses and the ones just preceding and following them may be described as follows:

"After laying down the theological basis for understanding the Christian community as the new people of God, the author now gives practical advice on the behaviour of Christians, especially toward their non-Christian neighbours. Verse 11 and 12 form a general introduction to his discussion, in which he recalls what he already has said at the beginning of the letter. He then goes on to deal with specific areas of concern: government (13-17); the attitude of servants towards their masters (18-25); the relationship between husbands and wives (3:1-7); and finally, the relationship of Christians with one another (3:8-22)" (Arichea and Nida 1980:66).

5.7.2. Eschatological hopes in 1 Peter 2:12

It is quite possible that the description of the Christian community to which the letter is addressed, by terms like "aliens and sojourners" in verse 11, is eschatologically motivated. The underlying eschatological motif of such a description may be the conception that the community has been given the new life or birth which properly belongs to the age to come in eschatological Old Testament prophetic promises (1 Peter 1:22-2:3; Ezekiel 36:25-27). It is even possible that "a day of visitation" (ἡμερανὴ ἐπισκοπῆς) in this particular verse, refers to the day of judgement. Stibbs (1959:108) and Vaughan and Lea (1988:56) tend, however, to regard it as a reference to the day in which God gives the unbelieving accusers the mercy of repentance. This viewpoint implies that the concept, "day of visitation" would have only minimal eschatological aspects. Many scholars, however, uphold the interpretation of "day of visitation" as a reference to the day of judgement (Best 1971:112; Thevissen 1973:52-3; Arichea & Nida 1980:70; Davids 1990:97). The apparent relationship between this verse and the saying of Jesus in Matthew 5:16 seems to suggest that the passage may legitimately be understood as a
reference to the effect of holy living upon non-believers prior to the day of judgement. This interpretation would further find support in that, for example, the wife's conduct is perceived to be effective with regard to winning the unbelieving husband in 1 Peter 3:1-2. Such an understanding does not need, however, to exclude the fact that such a day of visitation may be understood to also be an anticipation of the special day of visitation which is the day of judgement. Indeed, in the light of the fact that divine days of visitations, even the final one, have both aspects of mercy and of judgement, there seems to be no substantial objection against an interpretation that combines the two aspects in the manner in which we are suggesting.

The eschatological hopes embodied in this passage relate to the glorifying of God by the nations (non-believers) in history and at the end. This does not necessarily relate to the heathen's conversion, for the context in 1 Peter seems to suggest continuing darkness. This glorifying of God has most probably to do with respecting God and His people as a result of the manner in which the Christian community conducts itself. In terms of the different areas of relationships which the context draws attention to this would imply, for instance, that the non-believing rulers may be forced to respect the church and God on account of the believers' good conduct. This would apply, as already indicated, to both during the present pre-parousia period, and to the final judgement.

5.7.3. Divine and human partnership in the fulfilment of the eschatological hopes embodied in 1 Peter 2:12

The role of God seems to be primarily emphasized by the use of "day of visitation" in 1 Peter 2:12. It is an expression with Old Testament roots and which basically means manifestations of God in the world. These manifestations may bring judgement or mercy, but in most cases these aspects are both present. God's role is also certainly highlighted by the fact that He is depicted as the One who gave the believer new life.

Human responsibility seems to be even more explicit because the passage heads and introduces exhortations directed at the Christian community. There seems also to be a relationship between the good works and the envisaged effect on the unbelievers. It is not that the good works cause God to be more visible and thus to bring about the
envisaged hopes; but rather that He uses or works through and with these good works in accomplishing the desired effects and the hopes.

5.7.4. Conclusion
This examination of 1 Peter 2:12 seem to confirm the presence of ideas closely associated with 2 Peter's hastening motif in this passage. Indeed, this particular passage may be closer to 2 Peter's hastening motif because of the emphasis on good holy conduct which is clearly apparent in it and its context. 1 Peter 2:12 is therefore, in our understanding, a relevant and appropriate cross-reference for 2 Peter's hastening motif.

5.8. 2 PETER'S HASTENING MOTIF IN REVELATION 8:4

Revelation 8:4 is suggested by Green (1987:153), and Vaughan & Lea (1988:197) as being an appropriate cross-reference for 2 Peter's hastening motif. This section accordingly briefly examines this suggestion.

5.8.1. Some general remarks concerning Revelation 8:4
Revelation 8:1-5 primarily concerns the unsealing of the last and seventh seal in the vision about the sealed book which John writes about in Revelation 5 and 6. The unsealing of the other seals is described by John in Revelation 6. It is important to remember the apocalyptic nature of the book of Revelation. It is primarily composed of visions (Revelation 1:1,2,11,19). The use of εἶδον in Revelation 8:2 indicates and underscores the fact that the description in this pericope is presented as part of what John "saw" and is therefore a vision.

The interpretation of this pericope partly depends on what the sealed book is taken to symbolize. John certainly considered it an important scroll because he informs the readers about his crying when there appeared to be no one worthy of the task of unsealing the book (Revelation 5:4); and that it was a great relief for him when he learned that Jesus is able to unseal it. The titles used with reference to Jesus in Revelation 5:5 are those associating Him with kingship and this would suggest that the
ability to open the book's seals relates with His right to rule or execute some function connected with such an office. The context is further concerned about judging those who persist in defying God and who persecute the church. Thus it would seem that the particular task connected with kingship which is highlighted in these verses appears to be that of avenging His enemies and of His church. Rushdoony (1971:136) suggests that the scroll may be compared to a testament or "inheritance which God offers to the Church" as "the promise of the kingdom" while Van Daalen (1986:64) takes it to be similar to "the Book of Destiny" which features prominently in apocalypses. These two concepts, namely "the testament" and "the book of destiny", actually seem to be two ways of viewing the same phenomenon. Such a book of destiny would contain God's plan regarding the world, particularly His plan of solving the problem of evil; but such a plan may be conceived of as having benefits for God's people and therefore embodying some positive promises to them. In any event, Christ is presented as the One who executes that divine plan.

5.8.2. Eschatological hopes in Revelation 8:4

The context of this passage, namely that about the unsealing of the scroll, by its nature seems to suggest the presence of some eschatological hopes in this verse.

There are scholars who interpret "the silence" which occurred in heaven when the seventh and last seal was broken as an indication of delayed judgement. (Morris 1969:119; Ewert 1988:89). It seems, however, that this silence may simply be a rhetorical device signifying great expectation and interest in the fact that the book was now unsealed. It would seem to suggest that the awaited judgement would now begin. Such an interpretation seems to be preferable because of the following:

(a) The opening of the fifth seal in Revelation 6:9-11 reveals the martyrs still awaiting the avenging of their blood, and they are comforted by the promise that the acts of judgement which are meant to be part of avenging their blood will not tarry for a long time.

(b) The fact that the sealing or marking of the saints in chapter 7 precedes the seventh seal and therefore suggests that no judgement is symbolized before the final seal is opened. The phenomenon of the marking of saints preceding judgement in
apocalyptic visions is probably based on Ezekiel 9.

(c) The fact that the book or scroll would not be truly open before all seals were unsealed. Adams (1977:62-3) draws attention to this matter when he writes:

"Nothing in the passage prohibits the seals from being viewed as spread in a row across the overlapping edge of the scroll, ... everything points to it. ... the importance of this point is: All seven seals had to be broken before the roll could be opened. Therefore, the breaking of the seals should not be interpreted as a progressive reading of the contents of a gradually opening book. A careful study of the passage shows that during the seal breaking, no action takes place. The most that chapters 6 and 7 do is introduce the reader to the main characters, forces, and circumstances with which the rest of the section is concerned. They are preparatory to the action which will take place once the book is opened".

Thus the silence appear to serve the purpose of emphasizing that the moment which was being waited and prepared for, namely of avenging judgements, has arrived.

It is possible that this section of Revelation primarily refers to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and that this event is then viewed as God's judgement. In the event of that being the case, it would be a powerful way of emphasizing that just as God dealt with previous persecutors of His people, He will surely do so in future and especially with regard to those persecuting the church during John's days. So, the eschatological hopes embodied in this section have to do with the work of Christ as King to avenge the blood of His people by righteous judgement which includes the historical acts of judgement and also those at the end.

5.8.3. Divine and human partnership with regard to the realization of the eschatological hopes embodied in Revelation 8:4

The passage emphasizes God's role primarily by revealing Christ as the One who breaks or opens the last and seventh seal so that the expected judgement on His enemies may
take effect. In as far as these judgements also serve to establish His kingdom, their breaking by Him stress that the kingdom is brought by Him.

The prayers of the saints which are indicated as being offered to God just before the acts of judgement begin to take effect seem to suggest that Christ judges also in response or answer to the prayers of His people. This may also be symbolized by the use of the censor, which offers the prayers of the saints to God, for the hurling of the judgement fire on the earth (Revelation 8:3-4). Commentators such as Rushdoony (1971:152), Van Hartingsveld (1985:36), Brooks (1986:90), and Hughes (1990:104) have also recognized the role of the church as being indicated by this symbolism. Morris (1969:121) has accordingly commented:

"The fire comes from the very altar on which the prayers of the saints have been offered. This surely means that the prayers of God's people play a necessary part in ushering in the judgements of God".

5.8.4. Conclusion
Revelation 8:4 appears to be one of appropriate cross-references for 2 Peter's hastening motif. It emphasizes the role which the Christian community plays together with Christ in achieving the eschatological hopes which are in accordance with God's promises and plan. The passage further emphasizes that the church's role is fulfilled through prayers.

5.9. SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS ABOUT THE EXAMINATION

Some of the overall results of the examination may be summed up as follows:

5.9.1. It confirms the presence, within other New Testament books, of ideas similar to those which chapter four of this inquiry found to be expressed by 2 Peter's hastening motif. All the passages investigated, with the possible exception of Mark 13:20, appear to embody such ideas. These passages variously echo the idea of divine and human partnership in the fulfilment of eschatological hopes associated with the Lord's coming.
Some of the activities which are depicted as the means of hastening the coming of God's Day are: repentance and godly living, prayer, the discipling of nations, discipline, and endurance.

5.9.2. The evidence seem to suggest that there may be many more other passages having the same ideas within the New Testament. In other words, it would seem quite untrue to regard this motif as being in 2 Peter alone. It is of course true that 2 Peter alone uses a derivative of \( \text{σπέδω} \) in expressing hastening motif; but the other New Testament writers use other words and means to express similar views.

5.9.3. The examination also seems to indicate that the motif may best be recognized and made use of in formulating New Testament Eschatology and Ecclesiology. Other areas in which it might be given attention in order to open up useful insights include that of New Testament ethics and missions.

5.9.4. The uniqueness of 2 Peter's hastening motif seems to lie in the fact of its being explicitly stated. This implies that the study of this motif in 2 Peter provides a framework which opens up its identification or recognition in other New Testament books even at places where it is almost completely concealed.
CHAPTER 6

THE RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND OF 2 PETER'S HASTENING MOTIF

6.1. INTRODUCTION

The concern of the inquiry in this chapter is to investigate the religious background of 2 Peter's hastening motif. This investigation is conducted by examining the appropriateness of three probable religious backgrounds. The examination is made especially on the basis of those categories and ideas which chapter four of this inquiry highlighted concerning 2 Peter's hastening motif. The methodological issues involved in this examination are discussed in chapter 2 (see especially section 2.5 above).

6.2. AN EXAMINATION OF THE APPROPRIATENESS OF ZOROASTRIAN TRADITIONS

Scholars such as Mills (1913:4,37), Carter (1970:106) Boyce (1979:77), and Hinnells (1982 UNIT 27:25) have suggested that Zoroastrian traditions exercised some significant influence in the development of ideas and motifs which are found within New Testament books. This influence is generally considered to have extended to ideas and motifs which are eschatological in character (Nielsen, et al 1983:372; Finegan 1989:117; Yamauchi 1990:459). It is these suggestions which justify an examination of Zoroastrian traditions for ideas that may be analogous to those which chapter four of this inquiry highlighted concerning 2 Peter's hastening motif.

6.2.1. The relevant Zoroastrian traditions

Zoroastrian traditions are mainly found in the following two sources: (i) various types of documents originally composed in an ancient Iranian language which is usually referred
to as "Gathic Avestan"; and (ii) different kinds of works which were written in "Middle Persian", a language also known as "Pahlavi" (Finegan 1989:65f; Gnoli 1989:129f). Both the Gathic Avestan documents and the Zoroastrian Pahlavi literature are composite in their subject matter. This nature of the sources makes the task of identifying traditions which are relevant for a particular topic not too easy. The task involves perusing over diverse Zoroastrian traditions and, as far as this particular investigation is concerned, giving special consideration to those traditions which, when embodying the Zoroastrian conception of history and its consummation, also contain ideas about the roles of God and man in the process which brings about the awaited eschatological conditions. Boyce's TEXTUAL SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF ZOROASTRIANISM [1984] proved to be a helpful guide in this exercise. Some of the Zoroastrian traditions which this exercise identified as being relevant for this part of the inquiry, and which are therefore used to highlight the typical Zoroastrian categories requiring the attention of this particular study, are (i) Yasna 30 and (ii) The Greater Bundahishn.

6.2.1.1. **Yasna 30**

Yasna 30 is one of the Gathas or poems which are in Gathic Avestan (Boyce 1984:1). It is one of the most frequently quoted (Duchesne - Guillemin 1979:102). This poem primarily concerns itself with the subject of the two choices and intends to underline the importance of making the right decision. The proper decision is defined as that which places people on the side of Ahura Mazda (Pahlavi, Ohrmazd), the Most Holy Spirit; and therefore against Angra Mainyu (Pahlavi, Ahriman), the Most Wicked Spirit. Verse 3 describes these two Spirits as arch-enemies who are "in conflict" since primeval times (Bleeker 1973:101). The two Spirits are further portrayed as having freely chosen to be what they are and verse 5 therefore reads: "Of these two Spirits the Wicked one chose achieving the worst things. The Most Holy Spirit,... chose right" (Boyce 1984:35)

This Yasna also depicts these two Spirits as having allies in the Spirit world (verses 6 and 7); and the entire historical process is therefore conceived in terms of a contest between these two ultimate Spirits and their respective allies. Part of the message which this poem proclaims is that this contest will certainly not last for ever, but that it will be won by Ahura Mazda (verse 8). This victory brings power or dominion for Ahura Mazda
and his allies, renewal for the world, and some torment for the wicked, but salvation for the just (verses 8-9). The ultimate conditions after this victory are expressed in verse 10 which Duchesne - Guillemin (1979:107) renders as follows:

"Then shall evil cease to flourish,
while those who have acquired good fame
shall reap the promised reward
In the blessed dwelling of the Good Mind, of the Wise one,
and of Righteousness".

This poem does not clearly spell out the role which people play in the process which leads up to Ahura Mazda's victory. Its teaching emphasizes that their decisions and actions have post mortem implications and it is chiefly through this information that it seeks to induce people into making the right choices (verses 2 and 11).

6.2.1.2. The Greater Bundahishn

The Greater Bundahishn is part of the Pahlavi literature. It is considered relevant for the present investigation because it contains, among others, the Zoroastrian account of the world's creation, the nature of the historical process and the eschatological renovation (Boyce 1984:4; West 1987:xxii; Finegan 1989:66). Its original text was written continuously and the present investigation's chapter and verse references are based on the translation and divisions of West (1987).

The point of departure in the Bundahishn's creation story is the independent and separate existence of Ohrmazd and Ahriman (Gathic Avestan, Ahura Mazda and Angra Manyu respectively). These two Spirits and their creatures are respectively contrasted with each other by means of the metaphors of light and darkness (1:3-4); and their abodes or kingdoms are portrayed as being separated by a void or some type of neutral zone (1:5). The story considers Ohrmazd to have created the world for the purposes of using it in the conflict with Ahriman, a conflict which the omniscient Ohrmazd foresaw and will accordingly win; but this creation remained "in a spiritual state" for the first three thousand initial years of its existence (1:7-8).
The conflict between Ohrmazd and Ahriman dominates the Zoroastrian conception of creation, the historical process and its consummation; and the Bundahishn's account entertains the following four phases or chapters about this conflict:

(a) **The first three thousand initial years**: Ohrmazd's creatures remain in their original spiritual state during this whole period; but Ahriman became aware of them and their maker, and decided to attack. This initial attack was however successfully repelled by Ohrmazd, and Ahriman was forced to withdraw back into the dark abyss in order to form demons and fiends which would assist him in future (1:9-10). Aware of Ahriman's plans and movements, Ohrmazd took the initiative and met the evil spirit in the void and proposed peace on conditions which Ahriman could not accept. Ohrmazd's second proposal about a nine thousand years fixed period of conflict was accepted by Ahriman (1:13-20).

(b) **The second three thousand years period**: Ohrmazd initiated this phase of the conflict by reciting a ritual formula which is known as the Ahuna Vairya. This ritual action gave Ahriman a glimpse of Ohrmazd's eschatological victory, and had a confounding and paralysing effect upon the evil Spirit. Ahriman, therefore, became impotent and unable to harm Ohrmazd's creatures for three thousand years (1:21-22). Ohrmazd used this peaceful era of three thousand years to prepare for Ahriman's imminent future attack. This preparation chiefly entailed:

(i) Making the six Amesha Spentas. These are powerful divine beings which protect the different aspects of the world and were to be Ohrmazd's important allies during the last phases of the conflict against Ahriman (1:23,26).

(ii) Creating the material visible world which is made up of the sky, water, earth, plants, animals and people. The sky is conceived of as completely encircling these other parts of the world; and in this particular arrangement, the material world was made to ensure the defeat of Ahriman since the evil Spirit and its powers could be trapped inside it (1:25,28; Hinnells 1982 UNIT 26:31-32; Boyce 1984:16-17)
(iii) Negotiating the consent of the fravahrs (the guardian spirits of people or the heavenly parts of people) about their going to the world and contend in a bodily form with the fiend during future stages of the conflict (2:9-11).

(c) The third three thousand years period: The attack of Ahriman marks the start of this period. This attack had been earnestly desired by Ahriman’s demons and the story portrays them as having become more and more impatient about their camp’s inactivity as the three thousand years of their confusion drew to its end (3:1-7). The result of Ahriman’s onslaught was that the world entered the third three thousand years phase, a period in which the ideal condition of the world was replaced with that of a mixture of good and evil (3:27). Dangerous animals such as wolves and snakes, which were not part of Ohrmazd’s original good creation, came into existence (3:15). All parts of creation were affected, sickness and death were introduced; and the middle of the earth was turned into a dungeon or Hell by the impact of the evil Spirit’s first contact with it (3:16-27). This onslaught is, however, portrayed as having failed to achieve the objectives of Ahriman and the demons because of factors such as:

(i) The death which the evil Spirit brought upon Primeval Plant, Bull and Person (that is Gayomard) helped the process of evolution and formation of many plants, animals and people (9,10,15).

(ii) Ohrmazd fortified the sky and prevented the evil Spirit from escaping back to its original dark abyss. This action provided Ohrmazd, the Amesha Spentas and the Fravahrs with the ideal conditions for their conflict against Ahriman, the demons and the fiends (3:26; 6:3-4).

(d) The fourth three thousand final years period: The birth and ministry of Zarathushtra (Pahlavi, Zaratusht) marks the beginning of this phase. (Hinnells 1985:68); and during this period, evil is overthrown in four important stages (1:8). Zaratusht’s ministry which also introduces the first of these stages helps the process of overthrowing evil by propagating the religion which pleases Ohrmazd
among people (17:8). The second, third and fourth stages are introduced at intervals of one thousand years by the ministries of three Saviours, namely Aushedar, Aushedar-mar, and Soshyant respectively. These three special persons are also descendants of Zaratusht because according to the Bundahishn, their mothers conceive them when they bathe in a lake and are impregnated by Zaratusht's seeds which were miraculously preserved in that particular lake (32:8-9; Boyce 1984:90,91). Some of the developments illustrating the gradual overthrow of evil during this phase are: Towards the end of the one thousand year period introduced by Aushedar, wolves disappear from the earth and people no longer die of diseases but only through old age and murder; at the end of the millennium introduced by Aushedar-mah, even snakes disappear from the earth and people stop eating meat and become vegetarians; and Soshyant is actually a "Saviour" who introduces the final stage when evil is finally overthrown and the dead are raised (30:2-28; Hinnells 1985:68,69).

6.2.1.3. Concluding observations
The analysis of the Greater Bundahishn's teaching indicates that Zoroastrian traditions do give creation, and people in particular, an important role to play in the process which will finally bring history to its eschatological end. Within the context of the Greater Bundahishn's teaching in this regard, the instruction which Yasna 30 gives about choices can be interpreted as inducing people towards attitudes and lifestyles which enables them to assist Ahura Mazda in the conflict against Angra Mainyu.

6.2.2. Contacts between early Christianity and the Zoroastrian traditions
Zoroastrian traditions appear to have been part of the religious environment in which the early Christians lived, confessed and propagated their faith. Some of the factors suggesting this possibility are:

(i) The association of Zoroastrian traditions with the Achaemenian rulers
There are indications that many kings of the Achaemenian dynasty which ruled the Persian empire from 550 to 330 B.C. were associated with Zoroastrian religious traditions (Goldschmidt 1988:16). The evidence for associating Cyrus
[550-530 B.C.] and Cambyses [530-522 B.C.] with Zoroastrian traditions is, chiefly, the likelihood that some of their relatives were given names in memory of some of Zoroaster's first converts, and the probability that Cambyses's next-of-kin marriage was due to Zoroastrian influence (Boyce 1979:50-4; Finegan 1989:95-7). These practices, and all other archaeological findings which have been used to associate these two kings with Zoroastrianism, can receive sensible explanations without recourse to the Zoroastrian traditions and the evidence for the suggestion that Cyrus and Cambyses were Zoroastrian has therefore been considered inadequate by scholars such as Schwartz (1985:684) and Yamauchi (1990:410-424). The evidence for associating Zoroastrianism with Darius I [522-486 B.C.] Xerxes [485-465 B.C.], Artaxerxes I [464-424 B.C.], Darius II [423-404 B.C.], Artaxerxes II [403-359 B.C.], Artaxerxes III [4358-337 B.C.], and Darius III [336-330 B.C.] is, however, far much better because of inscriptions in which these Achaemenian kings mentioned Ahuramazda as the deity to whom they prayed and ascribed their victories and achievements (Boyce 1979:54f; Hinnells 1981:18f; Schwartz 1985:684-694; Finegan 1989:96-101; Yamauchi 1990:424-433). Some of these inscriptions also mention other deities, such as Marduk and Anahita, alongside Ahuramazda and could signify that most of these kings may have simply been pursuing policies of religious accommodation and thus encouraging syncretism within their empire (Schwartz 1985:692; Yamauchi 1990:428).

Zoroastrianism's association with the Achaemenians in any form is significant here because it could bring many non-Persians, like the Palestinian post-Exilic Jewish Community, into contact with some Zoroastrian concepts, teaching and practices. The fact that this dynasty was instrumental in ending their Babylonian exile, and encouraged and supported the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple makes it plausible that the post-Exilic Jewish community came into encounter with their benefactor's religion. Boyce (1979:77,79) has even suggested that this encounter resulted in many Zoroastrian doctrines being adopted by various Jewish groups in the post-Exilic period and that early Christianity came into contact with these doctrines through Judaism.
(ii) The alliance of Parthians and Jews in 40 B.C.

Alexander the Great's victory over Darius III in 331 B.C. dealt the ancient Persian empire a fatal blow and had consequences for Zoroastrianism because many of its priests and leaders lost their lives (Van Zyl, a.o. 1979:219; Boyce 1979:78f; Hinnells 1981:19f). Persia was, however, able to regain some of its power through the gradual rise of the Parthians, an Iranian dynasty also known as the Arsacids (Boyce 1979:81). This dynasty's coins appear to indicate that Zoroastrianism was again the empire's favoured religion which was practised with strong syncretistic tendencies (Boyce 1979:82; Finegan 1989:106f).

The emergence of the Parthians as an empire meant that by the first century B.C., they were contending with Rome for supremacy over the Middle East. Their defeat of the Roman forces under Crassus at the battle of Carrhae in 54 B.C. raised expectations of follow-up operations aimed at expelling the Romans from Syria and delivering the Jews from their rule (Van Zyl, a.o. 1979:267; Hinnells 1982 Unit 27:31). These expectations were partially realized in 40 B.C. when the Parthians invaded Syria and allied themselves with Antigonus and succeeded in helping him to take control of Jerusalem by ousting Herod the Great through military means (Filson 1975:23; Josephus 1981:60; Patten & Patten 1991:36).

The importance of the 40 B.C. events here is that Jews fought alongside Parthians as allies at the dawn of the Christian era and could therefore come into contact with some Zoroastrian beliefs which their helpers probably professed. Hinnells (1982 Unit 27:31) has even suggested that this particular encounter provided the ideal conditions for Parthians and Jews to exchange "ideas on salvation and the coming of God's Kingdom".

(iii) The Jewish diaspora and early Christian migrations

The Jewish diaspora could also facilitate early Christianity's contacts with Zoroastrian traditions. Non-Palestinian Jews residing in countries like Parthia where Zoroastrianism was more visible would easily come into contact with it. Many of these Jews regularly visited Jerusalem during important Jewish feasts such
as Passover and Pentecost, and it is possible that they would share information about religions such as Zoroastrianism with others on such occasions. It is significant that Parthians, Medes and Elamites are mentioned among the nationalities represented in Jerusalem on the historic Pentecost when the first Christian community received the Spirit and spoke in tongues (Acts 2:9-11). Jews who came from these places could easily have encountered Zoroastrian beliefs (Boyce 1979:84f; Hinnells 1982 Unit 27:32). Early Christians also migrated within and outside the Roman empire and could have come into direct contact with Zoroastrian beliefs and practices during the course of their travels.

6.2.3. The dating of the relevant Zoroastrian sources

The Zoroastrian textual sources were first put to writing during the Sasanian period (226-651 A.D.). Even the Gathic Avestan materials, like the Yasnas, were transmitted orally for centuries and "it was not until probably the fifth century A.C. that they were at last committed to writing, in the 'Avestan' alphabet, especially invented for the purposes" (Boyce 1984:1). The New Testament documents therefore circulated before Zoroastrian texts; and the writers of the New Testament books cannot be treated as having encountered written documents embodying the Zoroastrian traditions which are now available to us. It is even more plausible that those who put the Zoroastrian traditions into writing had probably encountered some Christian written documents. Scholars who, like Boyce (1979:99) and Hinnells (1982 Unit 27:35), maintain that the Zoroastrianism reflected in its late texts influenced the teachings of earlier documents belonging to Judaism and Christianity have to assume that the ideas and motifs which the late Zoroastrian texts reflect are essentially similar to those possessed by pre-Sasanian Zoroastrianism in oral form. Such an assumption leads to an approach which tends to downplay the attested syncretistic tendencies of the Achaemenians and the Parthians, and accordingly also opens the door for anachronisms.

6.2.4. Zoroastrian ideas analogous to 2 Peter's hastening motif

A Comparison between Zoroastrian traditions and 2 Peter's hastening motif reveals some similarities, but also major differences. Some of the continuities are: (i) Both portray people as God's partners; (ii) both grant people an important role to play in the process
which leads history to its eschatological day; and (iii) both envisage the coming of a saviour to usher in the final state.

Some of the major discontinuities are:

(i) The Zoroastrian concept of partnership between God and people differs from 2 Peter's in that it is entirely dominated by the doctrine of the conflict between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu. In the Zoroastrian conception, the world and people have been created to help Ahura Mazda (see section 6.2.1.2. (b) above). Such ideas are absent in 2 Peter.

(ii) 2 Peter's concept is not related to a rigid periodization of world history as in the case of Zoroastrianism. The author of 2 Peter can therefore speak of God's patience towards God's sinful people as well as of the day of God that comes like a thief when questions about its delay arise. Such questions are generally absent within Zoroastrianism.

(iii) Rituals performed by Zoroastrians and the awaited saviour-figures account for the realization of the expected ideal conditions in Zoroastrianism (see section 6.2.1.2.(b) above). This aspect of rituals is absent in 2 Peter.

6.2.5. Conclusion

The Zoroastrian ideas which appear analogous with 2 Peter's hastening motif at first notice seem to lose this dimension when viewed within the context of the broader Zoroastrian eschatological teachings which are dominated by the conflict between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu. In view of such fundamental differences and the problems around the dating of the Zoroastrian texts, it seems unlikely that 2 Peter's hastening motif is simply due to Zoroastrian influences.
6.3. **AN EXAMINATION OF THE APPROPRIATENESS OF RABBINIC TRADITIONS**

Commentators such as Bigg (1961:298), Bolkestein (1963:300), Bauckham (1983:325), Kistemaker (1987:339), and Green (1987:153) have suggested rabbinic traditions as the religious background for 2 Peter's hastening motif when commenting on 2 Peter 3:12. Bauckham has argued more elaborately for this popular suggestion in his essay entitled *THE DELAY OF THE PAROUSIA* [1980]. This suggestion is accordingly evaluated in this section.

6.3.1. **The relevant rabbinic traditions**

The relevant rabbinic traditions which are often viewed as the appropriate religious background for 2 Peter's hastening motif primarily concern the debate which is ascribed to Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus and Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah, which is a dispute concerning the delay of eschatological redemption (Bauckham 1980:11). The substance of this debate is contained in the Yerushalmi Ta'anit and the Midrash Tanhuma Behuqotai 5 (Neusner 1973b:477-9). The two Rabbis to whom the debate is ascribed were contemporaries during the immediate post-70 A.D. period and were both active at the Yavneh (Jamnia) academy. It was a period in which the foundations of the subsequent Judaism were being laid. Bokser (1973:20-21) describes the important task which faced the Javneh Rabbis in this regard as follows:

"The national crisis had made much new legislation necessary. Much of the older law existed in varying traditions and was scattered in different sources; a good deal of it was not even clear in meaning. It was obvious to the Jewish scholars under the leadership of R. Gamaliel that if Jewry was to survive the loss of a political center and national autonomy, another agent must be found for the promotion of unity and homogeneity - a common religious and social practice, a common law. They therefore undertook to re-edit the Mishnah, to transform the scattered legal opinions transmitted by tradition into an authoritative code of law."
Neusner (1973a:99) appears to concur with Bokser's evaluation of the task and importance of the Yavneh academy concerning Judaism's future when he states:

"Yavneh thus represents the crucial period in the history of ancient Judaism. For us, the work of Yavneh, carried on by rabbis who claimed to possess the oral traditions of pre-70 Pharisaism, is especially important, for it is at Yavneh that we first find attestations for rabbinical traditions about pre-70 Pharisees."

This information about the work at Yavneh appears to be important when evaluating the possibility that rabbinic materials which started to be formed with particular goals concerning Judaism's survival could have functioned as religious backgrounds for ideas within New Testament books.

6.3.2. Contacts between Jewish and Christian communities in the immediate post-70 A.D. period

Contacts between Christianity and pre-70 A.D. Judaism appear to have been initially ambiguous and may have differed from place to place. A casual reading of Acts, which purports to cover incidents of the period before the temple's destruction, seems to confirm this ambiguity. Even before the stoning of Stephan, which can be dated in 33 or 34 A.D. (House 1982:127), the Sadducees are depicted as being opposed to the Christian leaders, especially to their preaching concerning Jesus' resurrection (Acts 4:1ff) and yet the Apostles appear to have unrestricted access to the temple (Acts 5:20-26). Stephen himself appears to have been in one of the Jewish synagogues when trouble started (Acts 6:8-10). Paul also seems to have enjoyed temporary acceptance in many synagogues outside Palestine during his missionary expeditions. This appears to be supported by the fact that the Jewish synagogues were often the places at which he started preaching in most of the towns outside Palestine (Acts 13:14ff; 16:13; 17:1,10). Acts' narratives also reveal that James was killed because of the Jews during the period when Herod Agrippa 1 was king [37-44 A.D.] and that Peter had to flee out of Jerusalem after being mysteriously saved from the same king's prison during that period (Acts 12:1ff). Paul is also portrayed as experiencing the hatred of the Jews in almost
every place at which he went to preach the Gospel (Acts 13:6,45; 17:5,13).

The relationships between Jews and Christians appear to have deteriorated even further after 70 A.D., that is, the period when the Rabbis to whom the debate under view is ascribed, were active. There appear to have been a number of factors which facilitated this development. Some of them are:

James appears to have previously commanded the respect of the Jerusalem Jewish leaders and this respect may have also been for the advantage of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. Josephus ascribes James's martyrdom to the high priest Ananus whom he describes as 'of the sect of the Sadducees, who are very rigid in judging offenders above all the rest of the Jews' (Antiquities 20:200). Bruce (1980:375) has correctly evaluated this incident as a demoralizing blow to the Jerusalem church. It served to widen the gap between Judaism and Christianity during those few years while the temple was still standing. The killing of a Christian leader, who was the closest to Judaism, would be a clear signal, for those who like James had continued to closely associate themselves with their 'nation', that the Jewish Christians were not Jewish enough, that they in fact were a dangerous heretical group as perceived by some within Judaism.

(ii) The Christians' refusal to join the national struggle
It is possible that the martyrdom of James was related to the national unrest which was part of the nationalist aspirations of many Jews during those years leading up to the revolt of 66 A.D. This may be inferred from the fact that Josephus seems to depict the start of Albinus' procuratorship as having occasioned the removal of Ananus from the High Priest office, possibly because of the latter's involvement in James' martyrdom, and the punishing of many sicarii, also possibly because their offenses, which may have been related to that of Ananus, were perceived as being associated with national disorder. (Antiquities 20:201-2). One thing is, however, quite clear, and that is that the Christians emigrated from Jerusalem during the years between James' martyrdom and the outbreak of the revolt in 66 A.D.
(Hengel 1989:301). The departure of these Jewish Christians for Pella was an act of refusal to join the Jewish national struggle. M. Wilson (1989:76) aptly evaluates this action's meaning and implications for relationships between the Jews and the Christians as follows:

"The flight to Pella marks an important juncture in the gradual break between Synagogue and Church. The failure of Jewish Christians at this time to support the nationalist movement against Rome did not endear them to the general population. In the face of national crisis such aloofness and lack of patriotism branded Jewish Christians with a stigma of disloyalty and treason. Furthermore, the geographical removal of Jewish Christians from Jerusalem and its Temple area affected the growing schism by loosening their close religious connection to Judaism, the strongest potential unifying force the Jewish people had."

(iii) Early Christian interpretation of the 70 A.D. destruction

There appears to be some evidence that the emigration of the Jerusalem Christian community to Pella was theologically motivated, in the same way as the national revolt of 66 A.D. New Testament passages such as Luke 21:5-7, 20-24 appear to indicate that the early Christians considered the destruction of 70 A.D. as predicted by their Lord and may have viewed it as an act of judgement on Israel. Such conceptions would make them quite unacceptable among the Jews of Jerusalem during the years leading up to the 66 A.D. revolt. Indeed, Christian leaders who may have repeated these predictions may have ended up in a situation more or less similar to that of Jeremiah before the destruction of the first temple (see for example, Jer.26), with the only difference that unlike Jeremiah, they were leaders of a community that could be targets of terrorist acts. Even if one takes the predictions recorded in Luke 21:5-7, 20-24 as post eventu sayings, it would still be necessary to grant that they represent an interpretation of the 70 A.D. catastrophe which could not be welcomed by the Jewish leadership. Such interpretations indicated and resulted in the widening of the gap between these
two communities.

(iv) The excommunicating synagogue benediction of Javneh in 90 A.D.
The academy of Javneh, to which Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus and Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah also belonged, adopted a synagogue liturgical benediction excommunicating heretics among whom were Christians. The words of this benediction included the following statements:

"For apostates let there be no hope, and the kingdom of arrogance do Thou speedly uproot in our days; and let Nazarenes and heretics (minim) perish as in a moment; let them be blotted out of the book of life and not be enrolled with the righteous. Blessed art Thou, O Lord who humblest the arrogant" (in Bruce 1980:386).

The term Nazarenes is generally considered to be a reference to Christians, and such a benediction would make it hard for them to attend the synagogue services (Ferguson 1987:391; Wilson M. 1989:66). This benediction therefore indicates the deterioration of relationships between the post-70 A.D. Javneh-lead Judaism and Christianity.

The outbreak of the Bar Kokhba revolt in 132 A.D. helped to weaken these relationships further as Christians again refused to join the final national struggle. M. Wilson (1989:82) again aptly sums up the significance of this event as follows:

"As they had in the First Jewish Revolt, the Jewish Christians refused to fight. Failure to assist their countrymen in this final ill-fated drive for national independence alienated them even further from the Jewish community. ... A second factor which created a significant wedge between the two groups centered on Bar Kokhba. The Jewish Christians had but one Messiah, the risen Jesus of Nazareth, who could command their allegiance. Their loyalty could not be directed to both Yeshua (Jesus) and Simon. Thus
commitment to the cause of Bar Kokhba may have virtually meant a denial of the Messiahship of Jesus."

It would seem that the relationships between Judaism and Christianity especially during the period after 70 A.D., were very weak. This may not necessarily imply total discontinuity, but it appears to make it unlikely, especially in issues concerning the delay or realization of eschatological redemption, that Judaism might have still influenced Christianity along the lines of continuity.

6.3.3. The dating of the relevant rabbinic traditions

The dating of rabbinic materials also creates problems for the position that takes them as appropriate religious backgrounds with regard to the New Testament. These materials are acknowledged to have been compiled, in their present form, at a time when the latest of the New Testament books were already circulating. Ferguson (1987:391-2) has correctly summed up the general consensus of scholars in this regard by saying:

"Since the rabbinic materials were not reduced to writing until later than the New Testament, the earliest apparently not until the second century, the use of this literature for the backgrounds of early Christianity is problematic. Much material from the first century and earlier is certainly preserved in rabbinic literature, but determining precisely the extent of such traditions is not easy. Many decisions and sayings are attributed to rabbis whose dates are known, but even here one is not always on firm ground. ... Sometimes early traditions have been modified in transmission so that they contain details of later date. ... The quantity of reliable historical information for the pre-70 period in rabbinic literature is not great: even what is attributed to that period actually depends for its information on the second- and third-century situation. This question of dating has often left even specialists in dispute, but the difficulties do not mean that one should ignore the rabbinic literature. When used carefully in comparison with other sources the rabbinic writings often help to fill out the picture."
This 'date issue' could even imply that the rabbinic materials might have, in some instances, the marks of Jewish-Christian polemics as their background. The use of the Septuagint version, by Christians for example, appear to have been the background for it being less and less appreciated among post-70 A.D. Jews and for the demand for other Greek translations of the Hebrew scriptures (Bruce 1980:387-9). Bokser (1973:23) associates this specific development even with R. Eliezer and R. Joshua when stating:

"It was he (that is Eliezer), together with R. Joshua and R. Akiba, who induced Aquila, the Greek proselyte from Pontus, to undertake a new and more literal translation of the Bible which would bring the Greek text into closer harmony with Jewish tradition. Such a translation had become necessary because of the danger of Christological interpretations that the Septuagint, with its free and inaccurate renderings, had made possible."

The dating problem appears to suggest that the text of the debate between R. Eliezer and R. Joshua was most likely composed after the times of these rabbis and extends, therefore, to questions about its authenticity. Bauckham (1980:11) appears to be aware of the difficulties affecting the use of this debate in the present context when he states:

"If authentic, this debate will date from the late first century A.D. Unfortunately its authenticity cannot be assumed as uncritically as it has generally been. Neusner, in his classification of traditions of R. Eliezer according to the reliability of the attestation, places this tradition in his least well attested category, 'The Poor Traditions': this means not only that the attestation of the tradition is late, but also that its content is largely unrelated to earlier traditions. Traditions in this category are not thereby shown to be inauthentic, but their authenticity is very difficult to establish with any degree of certainty."

Although recognizing these difficulties, Bauckham proceeds to use these materials chiefly because of his conviction that such a debate is the sort of thing most likely to have taken place among the Jews in the aftermath of the 70 A.D. trauma. What Bauckham does not
seem to take seriously into account is that the influence of such a debate upon the Christian community of the time might have been quite limited or just the opposite of the degree of continuity for which he argues, especially in view of the soured relationships which were exacerbated by 70 A.D. events between Jews and Christians. M. Wilson (1989:59) draws attention to the fact that these relations were becoming more estranged precisely because of theological views concerning messianic expectations when he states:

"Prior to the fall of Jerusalem (AD 70), the messianic movement was viewed as another type of Jewish heresy. After Rome had crushed the Jewish nation, however, the Jewish establishment was more threatened by Jewish Christianity, which had no strong interest in national politics and did not support the Zealot cause. Thus its existence constituted a menace. As the Jewish national position worsened, opposition to Jewish Christianity tended to grow proportionately more violent. The issue of the messiahship of Jesus created two diametrically opposed groups within Judaism, ..."

6.3.4. The differences in content

The comparison of the content of the debate between R. Eliezer and R. Joshua, and 2 Peter's hastening motif (as highlighted in chapter four of this inquiry) seems also to suggest some problems with regard to the appropriateness of this debate regarding the religious background of 2 Peter's hastening motif.

The debate appears to centre around the concept of whether the eschatological redemption has to be merited by Israel or not. Thus R. Elieser's position in the debate appears to be summed up as follows:

"If you have merit, I shall hasten it, and if not, in its time."

while that of R. Joshua seems to be contained in the following words:

"But is it not written, You have sold yourselves for nought, and you shall be redeemed without money? You have sold yourselves for naught, for idolatry; and you shall be redeemed without money - without repentance
and good deeds" (Is.52:3).

The two rabbis cite passages from Scripture, mainly from the prophets, in support of their various positions.

It must be observed that the version of the debate is, if authentic at all, summarized to such an extent that only a few statements, attributed to the arguments for each position, are preserved. In its present form, however, the theme of merit predominates. It is different from the categories in 2 Peter where the believing community is represented as participating, as God's partners, in what God is doing while hastening the fulfillment of eschatological hopes. In 2 Peter, the Christian community is clearly depicted not as hastening the coming of the day of God by way of meriting it, but by a process of obedience which makes Christians contribute towards the creation of the righteous peaceful society which God has promised and is hastening.

6.3.5. Conclusion
In spite of the fact that no one may be absolutely certain about the historical conditions concerning first century Judaism and Christianity, in the light of the type of contacts and/or relationships existing between these two movements in the immediate aftermath of 70 A.D., and the problems associated with the dating of the relevant rabbinic materials, as well as the apparent differences between the theological content of the relevant debate and 2 Peter's hastening motif, it seems quite unlikely that the rabbinic materials are an appropriate religious background of 2 Peter's hastening motif.

6.4. AN EXAMINATION OF THE APPROPRIATENESS OF JEWISH RESISTANCE TRADITIONS
The events of 66-70 A.D. and 132-135 A.D. attest the presence and vitality of a current concerning resistance to foreign (Roman) domination within Judaism. This resistance is acknowledged to have been, at least partly, religiously motivated (Neusner 1973a:123-146; Horsely R.A. 1984:483; Rowland 1985:72,97; Bruce 1990:28). The probability that the
resistance tradition may have formed the religious background for 2 Peter's hastening motif, therefore also deserves to be examined.

6.4.1. The relevant resistance traditions
The resistance traditions are best considered to have been associated with a wide variety of first century Judaisms. It is for this reason that the written texts in which the spirit of resistance is present are varied and could have been linked to different Jewish sects. Earlier scholarship tended to associate the resistance tradition with the so-called zealots only, but such an approach seems to be untenable today, especially in view of the fact that some of the documents usually associated with the Qumran and/or the Essene groups, for example 'The War Rule (1QM,4QM), breathe the same spirit of resistance which was usually connected with the Zealots and not these particular groups. This is not to suggest that ideas connected to such a tradition were equally manifest in all sections of first century Jewish Palestinian Judaism, but that such ideas appear to have been quite widespread and in no way restricted to one particular Jewish party. There were those who were certainly more actively involved in the actual resistance activities while others were not, but such a phenomenon does not appear to warrant a conclusion that the Jewish resistance ideas expressed in their various written traditions were the sole property of the 'activists'. Rowland (1985:101) also seems to suggest that the resistance ideas should be viewed as having been associated with various forms of first century Judaism when stating:

"We have noted the historical circumstances of Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman period bred dissatisfaction and hopes for redemption. Insofar as the hopes for redemption were themselves the common property of all Jews, we may suspect that the future hope was a feature of the religious and political outlooks of all groups at this time. Nevertheless it would be wrong to minimize the difference in the emphasis placed on eschatology which confronts us in the literature, or to misunderstand the character of the political response, which is involved in it".

For the purposes of this investigation, three extracts in which the idea and categories
characteristic of Jewish resistance traditions are offered as illustrations.

(i) **The War Rule (1 QMI).** It has the following words:

"On the day when the Kittim fall, there shall be battle and terrible carnage before the God of Israel, for that shall be the day appointed from ancient times for the battle of destruction of the sons of darkness. At that time, the assembly of gods and the hosts of men shall battle, causing great carnage; on the day of calamity, the sons of light shall battle with the company of darkness amid the shouts of a mighty multitude and the clamour of gods and men to (make manifest) the might of God. And it shall be a time of (great) tribulation for the people which God shall redeem; of all its afflictions none shall be as this, from its sudden beginning until its end in eternal redemption" (In Vermes 1987:105).

Vermes (1987:104) suggests that this War Rule may be dated during the first century B.C. or at the beginning of the first century A.D. It is of course possible to spiritualize the war and carnage about which this document speaks. What is important, for our present purposes, is that the document uses the image of war in which God's people are involved and also depicts God as coming to help the sons of light in their battle with the host of darkness. In section XI of the document, the sons of light soldiers are encouraged to trust God with the following words which suggest that the document uses the analogy of previous wars fought during Israel's past history:

"Truly the battle is Thine! Their bodies are crushed by the might of Thy hand and there is no man to bury them. Thou didst deliver Goliath of Gath, the mighty warrior, into the hands of David Thy servant, ... Truly the battle is Thine and the power from Thee! It is not ours. Our strength and the power of our hands accomplish no mighty deeds except by Thy power and by the might of Thy great valour. This Thou hast taught us from ancient times, saying, A star shall come out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel. He shall smite the temples of Moab and destroy all the children of Sheth. He shall rule out of Jacob and shall cause the survivors
of the city to perish. The enemy shall be his possession and Israel shall accomplish mighty deeds" (In Vermes 1987:116).

(ii) Testament of Moses 9-10 (also known as the Assumption of Moses)
It contains the following:
"Then in that day there will be a man of the tribe of Levi, whose name will be Taxo, who having seven sons shall speak to them exhorting (them): ... And you know that this is our strength, and thus we will do. Let us fast for three days, and on the fourth let us go into a cave which is in the field, and let us die rather than transgress the commands of the Lord of lords, the God of our fathers. For if we do this and die, our blood shall be avenged before the Lord. And then his kingdom will appear throughout all his creation; and then Satan will be no more, and sorrow will depart with him. Then the hands of the angel will be filled, who has been appointed chief; and he will immediately avenge them of their enemies. For the Heavenly One will arise from his royal throne; and he will go forth from his holy habitation with indignation and wrath on account of his sons. ... For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone and he will appear to punish the gentiles, and he will destroy all their idols. Then you, O Israel, will be happy, and you will mount upon their necks, and they will be ended." (In Nickelsburg & Stone 1983:128-9).

The Testament of Moses may be dated during the Antiochus persecution in 168-165 B.C. (Nickelsburg & Stone 1983:126-7). In this extract, the concept of passive resistance in the form of 'civil disobedience' is emphasized through the story of Taxo who with his sons fasts and then prefers death rather than to disobey what they consider to be the commands of the Lord. This is, however, not the complete significance of the text regarding the spirit of resistance it manifests. Their deaths are viewed as being connected to the victory which God will grant by way of avenging their blood. In other words, the response of God is considered as being merited by their faithfulness and that divine response takes the form of judgement upon the Gentiles. Israel is also depicted as a combatant who actually
is helped by God and this appears to be apparent from phrases such as, 'Then you, O Israel, will be happy, and you will mount upon their necks.'

(iii) Psalms of Solomon 17:21-25
It is a prayer that reads:

"Behold, O Lord, and raise up for them from their king, the son of David; at the time you know, O God, to rule over Israel your servant. And gird him with strength to crush unrighteous rulers; to cleanse Jerusalem from the Gentiles that trample her in destruction. In righteous wisdom to cast out sinners from the inheritance; to shatter the arrogance of the sinner as a potter's vessel, with a rod of iron to crush all their substance; to destroy transgressing Gentiles with the word of his mouth, by his rebuke to cause the nations to flee from his presence, and to convict sinners from the thoughts of their heart." (in Nickelsburg & Stone 1983:163).

The Psalms of Solomon may be dated towards the end of the second century B.C. (Nickelburg & Stone 1983:162). This was the period when, primarily owing to the inner-dynastic feuds within the Hasmonean house and the corresponding corruption, many longed for the house of David to be reinstated over Israel. For our present purposes, it is important to note that the king for whom God is petitioned will like the David of old, fight Israel and God's wars, and be given victory by God himself. The nationalistic aspirations are particularly manifested by the strong emphasis concerning the crushing of the Gentiles.

6.4.2. Contacts between early Christianity and the Jewish resistance tradition
Early Christianity and Jewish resistance movements appear to have had some contacts with each other. Some of the factors suggesting this possibility are:

(i) The popular nature of the resistance
The resistance of the Jews against Roman domination is something that can be expected to have affected all sections of the Palestinian population during the first century A.D. Issues about the heavy load of taxation affecting most Jews appear,
for example, to have been high on the agenda of grievances which sparked off the revolts which followed Herod's death in 4 B.C. (Horsley 1987:50,51). Most forms of resistance activities usually also coincided with popular Jewish religious feasts such as the Passover (Reicke 1968:176; Bruce 1980:99; Horsley 1987:34)

(ii) The resistance’s connection with issues concerning the promised Messiah

Our extract from Psalms of Solomon (see 6.4.1. above) indicates that some Jewish traditions expected a Messiah who would as king wage war against Gentiles and cleanse Israel of unrighteous leaders. Several New Testament passages seem to be aware of this kind of messianic expectation and it manifests itself as being one of the issues over which Jews rejected Jesus. Thus at the Cross, some Jews taunted him,

"He saved others, let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One." ... "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself." ...

Some of those who lead the resistance, for example Bar Kochba, had messianic pretentions. Since such issues concerned the core of the early Christians' conviction that Jesus is the promised Messiah, it seems reasonable that the resistance movement affected Christians in a special way.

(iii) The Jewish persecution of the early Christians

The Gospel records seem to suggest that Jesus was tried by the Sanhedrin and found guilty of blasphemy (Matthew 26:63-66). It is also clear from a reading of Acts that the persecution which Christians suffered from the side of Jews often had to do with charges of blasphemy (Acts 7:55-58). This seems to suggest that the Jews might have been trying to contain and crush a dangerous blasphemous sect. It is interesting also to note that the very aspect which was the primary bone of contention between Jews and Christ received special emphasis in Christian preaching. Thus, Peter appears to demand that Jesus be accepted as the Messiah (Acts 2:36-39) and Paul's preaching is depicted as being aimed at a demonstration
that Jesus is the promised Messiah (Acts 9:22, 17:2-3). This conviction would make Christians unwilling to accept claims of other persons as being messiahs. The words which are given as predictions of Jesus in the Olivet discourse and which in the Matthean text are offered as a warning 'to watch out so that no one deceives them when coming with claims that they were Christs' (Matt.24:4-5) suggest that those who heeded these words would be unwilling to follow the resistance movement as it expressed itself especially during the years leading up to 70 A.D and 135 A.D.. This made the Christian community vulnerable to mob violence, terror attacks and the systematic persecution from Jewish leaders (see 6.3.2. above).

These contacts suggest that the Christian message would contradict that which was the religious basis of the resistance at certain points while still being related to it because it was derived from the same texts. In other words, it was a matter of the manner in which the Old Testament Scriptures were being interpreted within the two movements.

6.4.3. The dating of the written traditions embodying the resistance spirit
The documents from which the three illustrative extracts come (see 6.4.1. above) were composed and probably circulated before the New Testament books. It is even possible that some New Testament writers and their audiences were aware of these documents. Jude 9, for example, has been suggested as being a citation of a lost section of the Testament of Moses (Ferguson 1987:364). The probability of these and other such books influencing some New Testament texts, therefore, may not be ruled out, especially because they antedated the writing of New Testament books and also because the Jewish Canon was only finally fixed by the Javneh rabbis around 90 A.D. (Wilson M. 1989:78). It is, however, unlikely that the New Testament writers would share much of the understanding concerning the heart of the Jewish resistance’s messianic hopes. Many New Testament passages such as Luke 24:13-27,32,44-48 and Acts 1:6-8 seem to suggest that early Christians ascribed their new understanding to Christ’s orientative teaching. Their refusal to join the nationalist struggle might have been motivated and promoted by the theological justification which the Jewish activist prophets gave for that struggle.
and was therefore also a theologically motivated stance of non-participation (see section 6.3.2. above).

6.4.4. The content of Jewish resistance categories

There are important differences between the conceptions manifested in the Jewish resistance traditions and those which the present inquiry highlighted concerning 2 Peter's hastening motif (see chapter four). Some of the most apparent differences are:

(i) The nationalistic aspects of the Jewish resistance traditions are absent in 2 Peter's hastening motif

Both the Testament of Moses and the Psalms of Solomon explicitly mention the Gentiles as those over whom victory is to be gained while the War Scroll (Rule) also implicitly contains similar notions. The latter document particularly brings these aspects to the fore by its analogies to the wars fought by David in Israel's history. Ferguson (1987:374) therefore observes concerning the War Rule that

"the 'sons of light' are the 'exiles of the wilderness'. The 'sons of darkness' are the traditional enemies of Israel in the Old Testament, plus their Jewish allies (the wicked of the covenant) and the Kittim."

These nationalistic aspects appear to be absent in 2 Peter's hastening motif, that is at least as we understand it, because the knowledge of Jesus Christ appears to be the dividing line in 2 Peter. (2 Peter 1:3,8). Accordingly the Day of God, in 2 Peter, brings privileges accessible to all who know Christ and the nationalistic dimensions expressed in the Jewish resistance traditions are not obvious.

(ii) The nature of the struggle

Also related to the nationalistic aspects within the Jewish resistance traditions is the nature of the struggle which they envisage. It is a struggle that appears to be a literal holy war in which the blood of some people may and has to be shed. Those who attempt to spiritualize this aspect away still have to reckon with the fact that the Sicarii, for example, went to religious feasts in Jerusalem with hidden
small daggers which they often used against those whom they considered to be
This dimension which involves the shedding of human blood appears to be absent
from 2 Peter's hastening motif to the extent as to require quite a lot of imagination
to find this in 2 Peter. 2 Peter's struggle is, in our understanding, accordingly more
in the ethical sphere than the areas of terrorism, banditry and/or the military.

There are, however, important continuities between the two conceptions. Some of these
similarities are:

(i)  **Concern for justice**
Running through the Jewish resistance traditions is a strong concern to see
righteousness established. Horsley (1987:145) appears to be correct when
expressing this concern within the Jewish resistance as follows:

"In the general circumstances of oppression the people generally
could hope for the renewal of their society because God was about
to effect a decisive "revolution" (i.e., judging and removing the alien
imperial regime and giving dominion to the people themselves). In
the particular circumstances of persecution the faithful
scholar/teachers in particular could endure and suffer martyrdom
because God would vindicate them."

(ii) **The concept of partnership with God**
The resistance traditions of Judaism also portray God as being involved in their
struggle. The illustrative extract from the War Rule therefore has the words:

"Truly, the battle is Thine! ... Truly the battle is Thine and the
power from Thee! ... Our strength and the power of our hands
accomplish no mighty deeds except by Thy power and by the might
of Thy great valour" (see section 6.4.1. above).
6.4.5. Conclusion

In spite of the similarities, the differences between 2 Peter's hastening motif and the categories of the Jewish resistance traditions appear to be so significant that they alone cannot be considered as an appropriate background for the former. It does, therefore, not seem possible that this particular background alone would account for the meaning of 2 Peter's hastening motif.

6.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND SOME SUGGESTIONS ABOUT THE RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND OF 2 PETER'S HASTENING MOTIF

The three probable backgrounds examined in this chapter provide some important insights into some aspects of 2 Peter's hastening motif within the context of the early Church's life and context. These insights seem to suggest the following matters which may be advanced as a possible religious background for 2 Peter's hastening motif.

6.5.1. The early Christians and the writer of 2 Peter probably arrived at their concept of hastening motif by interpreting the Old Testament imaginatively or creatively. Sandmel (1969:84) has drawn attention to this imaginative capability within the early Church as follows:

"I have raised the question of the legitimacy of assuming an antecedent source for everything in the New Testament in general, ... for I have contended that this procedure seems to ignore the large element of creativity within the New Testament writers".

This creativity probably did not operate in a vacuum but within the diversity of categories afforded by the Old Testament as interpreted by Christ and by the apostles and the New Testament prophets in the light of Christ's life and work; and within the context of their circumstances. The basis of this suggestion is our failure to find appropriate continuities which would support the hypotheses about simple borrowings from the three probable religious backgrounds which are examined in this chapter; and the fact that 2 Peter itself
refers to Old Testament incidences in a variety of ways (See, for example, the remarks about its use of the flood typology in sections 4.2.2.7 and 4.2.2.8). It is however possible that contacts with the religious traditions represented by the backgrounds just investigated may have stimulated and helped such creative interpretations along discontinuous lines.

6.5.2. That 2 Peter’s hastening motif may have been the point on which the Christian community differed from Judaism. It seems possible that it was both contrary to the merit idea in the rabbinic traditions and the war talk within the resistance movement. It is further suggested that in the years leading up to the revolts of 66 A.D. and 135 A.D., a message such as the one expressed by 2 Peter’s hastening motif may have provided important guidance to the Christian community through providing alternatives which were discontinuous with what was being offered by important segments within Judaism. Within such a context, 2 Peter’s hastening motif may have been a way of reminding the Christian community that the Christ had already come and that the righteous society for which they look for is on the cards and that God has through faith in Christ made them His partners in the realization of these eschatological hopes. Their involvement in that process was not by way of the war associated with the resistance traditions but was one to be achieved through obedient service especially in the ethical spheres.

6.5.3. That a religious background in the context of Palestine prior to 66 A.D. may explain the reason for its being ascribed to the Apostle Peter, the apostle for the Jews and ties up very well with the rhetorical situation of the letter. This does not, although it certainly would provide strong support for these, necessarily have to imply the authenticity of 2 Peter and an actual early date of composition because a later writer might possibly have offered a typical authentic message for which the apostle was known. Thus even in the case of a later date, it would still be a meaningful way of accounting for the reason of someone actually composing the letter in the apostle’s name.
CHAPTER 7
THE CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

7.1. INTRODUCTION

New Testament study is, like all other scientific studies, orientated to the life world. This implies that these studies are propelled by problems encountered in daily life which they try to explain and resolve. It is also true, however, that these studies do not only often fail to resolve and explain all the problems at which they are directed, but also that they may make other problems more acute which then lead to other studies being a necessity. It is accordingly not correct to consider scientific endeavours, like the present one, as being mere armchair-, laboratory-, and ivory tower-exercises which have no bearing to the problems encountered in the life world. Of course these allegations are not made just out of the blue, because they may be compared to a smoke that often indicates the presence of some fire. Thus when people allege that a particular study is a mere ivory tower exercise they may have some reasons which, although invalid, have to be taken seriously. Such allegations may, for example, be made as a result of the fact that a particular study became too technical and conceals its relationships with the life world to the extent of leaving a lot of people, including fellow scholars, wondering about what these expensive exercises have, after all, to do with their problems out and in there. It is within this context that the present chapter of our inquiry has, as its primary objective, the indication of some areas in which the present study appears relevant today. We restrict ourselves to the following spheres:

(i) New Testament study in general,
(ii) 2 Peter research in particular.
(iii) The general calling of the Christian Church (and in this last section we cannot but write as part of that Church).
7.2. THE PRESENT INQUIRY AND NEW TESTAMENT STUDY IN GENERAL

The present study observes the apparent neglect of 2 Peter’s hastening motif in formulations of New Testament theology, eschatology and ethics (see Section 1.2.2). It is hoped that our contribution, in spite of its limitations, will promote an understanding of this aspect within New Testament theology, eschatology and ethics.

One of the problems confronting New Testament study in general concerns the integration of the various New Testament disciplines. In an age of specialization, this problem appears to get more acute by the day. Our study has attempted to integrate New Testament Lexicology, Exegesis, Hermeneutics and Theology, etc. in attempting to address the problems involved in 2 Peter’s hastening motif. It is hoped that the study’s distinctive style, although not the only valid one, does in this regard offer one valuable and relevant possibility in which the various New Testament disciplines may be integrated for the interest of studying different issues within the New Testament field of study.

The study also makes apparent the need for interdisciplinary partnership with sciences outside the domain of New Testament study. Thus it confirms the importance of Linguistics, Philosophy and the History of Religions when thinking through various aspects of New Testament interpretation. In this regard, the relevancy of the study appears to lie therein that it adds its voice for the need to broaden the horizons of New Testament study by critically drawing on the insights which other sciences are making. It is of course true that, in this context, New Testament study is not only a borrower but also an important enriching partner and there are therefore also important insights by which our study could benefit other sciences. For example, the matters highlighted concerning eschatology being a motivation for service and morality have consequences for:

(a) Education, where there are serious debates concerning the education of young people for responsible actions; and

(b) Sociology, where people are concerned about the ways and means of healing many social ills.
7.3. THE PRESENT STUDY AND 2 PETER RESEARCH IN PARTICULAR

Our study's special contribution is in the sphere of 2 Peter research in particular. This contribution concerns the following aspects:

(a) Apart from being one of the few works on a neglected theme within a neglected book, we view its particular contribution as being in the area of the rare studies which focus on specific theological aspects of 2 Peter's message. It is therefore hoped that, other more specific studies of this nature can be undertaken. Motifs like corruption are dominant within 2 Peter and yet have not as yet been isolated for substantial study. It seems that the scarcity of such studies focusing on specific issues partly accounts for the fact that the long-raging debate about the letter's authenticity has as yet not been finalized.

(b) The study is also relevant in offering new insights regarding the exegesis of various difficult passages in 2 Peter. The two sections which were isolated for special exegetical study are among some of the exegete's nightmares and it is therefore relevant that this study focused on them with quite a fresh style.

(c) There are various attitudes about 2 Peter which this study seriously questions. The myth that 2 Peter contains no interesting problems is one of them. Another is that which regards 2 Peter as a document upon which other New Testament books have to throw light but which never takes it seriously as an equal partner of the other books within the New Testament canon. We trust that our study, especially where 2 Peter's hastening motif is taken as a point of departure in studying other New Testament passages, provide some valid and relevant evidence that 2 Peter may throw much illuminating light on other New Testament texts outside it. In this regard mention must also be made of the habit of situating 2 Peter's message in the late first century and even within second century problems. This study, we hope, has demonstrated that aspects of 2 Peter's message could make much sense within the politically tense context of pre-66 A.D. days among Jews. Indeed, although we cannot be dogmatic in this regard, it seems that the motif of hastening
the day of God as manifested in 2 Peter's message may have been the theological justification (or the reason) for most Jewish Christians deciding not to join their nationalistic counterparts in that well-known political struggle.

(d) The study is also important in the area of explaining certain phenomena which are relevant to 2 Peter's hastening motif. Our study noted that the use of σημείοντα in 2 Peter 3:12 is almost unique within the New Testament but that the motif it indicates is not at all unique within the New Testament. A possible hypothesis to explain the statements of some previous New Testament scholars that hastening the parousia is itself unique to 2 Peter may in the light of chapter 3 and 4 of our study be suggested and it is that such opinions may have been due to some failure to distinguish between a word and a concept. A concept may not necessarily be expressed by one word and thus, although our study of the distribution pattern of σημείον derivatives within the New Testament appears to confirm that they are not explicitly used with eschatological concepts such as the day of God, it does not imply that other words and means may not be used in expressing such a teaching.

(e) The structural pattern of 2 Peter suggested in the study is, although the result of using scattered insights of certain New Testament scholars in this regard, unique in that such a pattern has not been proposed for the whole of 2 Peter. It therefore contributes a meaningful, and in our judgement, a useful alternative to other possibilities which have been suggested. In this way, the study not only promotes scholarly discussions about details of exegesis in 2 Peter but also concerning its structural pattern.

(f) The hypothesis put forth, that 2 Peter's hastening motif refers or draws attention to partnership between God and His people in the achievement of the promises which are the basis of eschatological hopes, is also an important contribution within 2 Peter research.
7.4. THE STUDY AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH'S CALLING TODAY

The study also offers insights concerning an understanding about the role of the church within the context of today's many problems. Our study into 2 Peter's hastening motif seems to reveal a strong emphasis on the comprehensive responsibility of the Christian church with regard to the ills which trouble fallen society. Hastening the day of the Lord entails, among other things, that effort (diligence) is made to establish peace and righteousness in anticipation of the parousia; it implies that the Christian community exercises a critical prophetic and diaconal ministry with regard to the world. Our world, full of violence and fear, urgently needs this. This study makes clear that just as God is not peripheral, so must the church not allow itself to be marginalized when solutions for these ills are sought. The eschatological vision of a world full of the knowledge of God and peace and righteousness is to be foreshadowed through the Christian church's endeavours. In this regard, our study of 2 Peter's hastening motif suggests that repentance is due when we have failed to throw all our effort into the realization of this goal. It is in this context, that God's patience is meant to lead the church to repentance but also to rededication to this cause for which faith, and all things necessary for life and godliness, and the precious and very great promises have been given. Even as we pray μαρανθανε! May we seriously ponder what His coming yesterday might have implied for our works and worlds? Yes - His patience is amazing! It is therefore fitting that we make good use of it! It is hoped that this study has underlined the importance of realizing that to pray 'Thy Kingdom come!' must, if prayed in spirit and in truth, be accompanied by, 'Lord help us to be your good and faithful servants!' Then when that Day of Days arrives, we shall with all the saints with freedom approach our Great Redeemer to thank Him for the victory He will have given! But as we will be doing that we shall hear angels proclaiming: 'The Lamb overcame "because He is Lord of lords and King of kings" - and with Him in the struggle for the Kingdom were "His called, chosen and faithful followers" ' (Rev. 17:14). Indeed, from His own lips, as we thank Him for that victory, then we may expect to hear the amazing words of grace, "Well done, good and faithful servant(s), you have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:21). And as we will be approaching Him to ascribe to Him the Honour and Glory for the victory, then
from His very own lips we may hear the words, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." And as we in the spirit of true partners insist on ascribing all the glory to Him by saying, 'Lord when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' His amazing reply will be: "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me." (Matthew 25:34-40).

2 Peter's hastening motif is a message that is meaningful for our today with its violence, Aids, refugees, poverty, famine and on the other side the rich, and affluent who play and gamble and often throw away and waste God's gifts, as well as of the healthy who often do not think of themselves as mere mortals. In this day, and this world lie our mission of which 2 Peter's hastening motif is a powerful reminder. Others fight with destructive weapons of power, they shed blood; the church on the other hand is called upon to practice comprehensive love! If there was ever such a thing as a New Testament ivory tower study, we contest that this one on 2 Peter's hastening motif is surely not such a one! It is a quest for meaning and direction and mission and, in our judgement, it surely does satisfy these needs.
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