

Chapter 3

THE SOCIAL LOCATION OF MATTHEW'S COMMUNITY

3.1 Introduction

The perspectives of the Matthean scholars regarding the community of the First Evangelist have been studied in the previous chapter. Through their endeavours, these scholars have attempted to explain the circumstances of Matthew's inclusive community. It is essential to obtain clarity regarding Matthew's emphasis on inclusiveness prior to any discussion about Matthew's social situation at a macro-sociological level. This chapter refers to the social location of the Matthean community. This topic will be considered in four sections.

In the section 3.2, the date on which Matthew communicated with his community is considered. The date is important in order to understand the inclusiveness of the situation within the community. If the date of the ministry of Matthew were to be determined, it would have to be after 80 CE, the community would have been separated from its parent body (consult Chapter 2 in this regard). It is therefore assumed that this community was no longer operating within the synagogical tradition without tension, as well as that the salvation was accessible to all nations. Moreover, a date after 80 CE would be supported by the location of the Matthean community. If the date of Matthew's Gospel was before 70 CE, the community would have been situated somewhere in Palestine in a traditional Israelite context. If we accept this view, the Matthean community would probably not be in a situation of inclusiveness. Israelite society was not inclusive of all people. Therefore, whether Matthew's Gospel was written before 70 CE or after 70 CE is an important factor.

In this section, we will also deal with the location of the Matthean community. Matthean scholars (see 3.2.2) have suggested many places where the First Evangelist's community could have been written. All the places, which have been suggested by Matthean scholars are looked at. The reason for this is that the location could imply that Matthew's social situation was either inclusive or exclusive of both Israelites and Gentiles. Therefore, I will look at all the places suggested for the Matthean community and attempt to confirm which location was

home to Matthew's community's inclusive situation.

In section 3.3, the social stratification of Matthew's community is considered. This social stratification provides some clues as to the social structure of the community. Many Matthean scholars suggest that the community was an egalitarian society (refer to Chapter 1), but if Matthew's community had strong social stratification, it would be necessary to argue that the community was not an egalitarian structured society, but rather hierarchically socially structured. This survey attempts to determine the social stratification within the inclusive situation of the local community at hand.

In section 3.4, the community-related social stratification of the members of the community is addressed with regard to what kind of social classes were present within that community. The characteristics of the community to whom Matthew ministered would reveal whether this community was indeed inclusive of all social classes or not.

In section 3.5, the social circumstances of Matthew's community in the city of Antioch are considered. The city of Antioch was a large city of the East Roman Empire and the Israelites in diaspora had already settled there. Hence, the city of Antioch was subject to both Israelite and Gentile influences. It is assumed that Matthew's community was a mixed group of people and that the social stratification (of Israel) was reflected in the social organization of the city of Antioch.

These four foci are regarded as essential for an understanding of Matthew's Gospel at a macro-social level and especially of the community as an inclusively structured society.

3.2 Date and location

Most scholars agree that Matthew's Gospel may have been written in the period between 60-100¹CE (see Davies & Allison 1988:127-138). However, it is still being debated whether the Gospel was written before 70 CE or after 70 but before 100 CE. Confirmation for either of these views can be considered in terms of both the internal and the external evidence to the Gospel. The perspective of the early church tradition regarding the date of Matthew is very different from, and as a matter of fact directly opposed to, that of modern scholars. The early

church believed that Matthew was the First Gospel to have been written. The first clear statement of the order of writing of the Synoptic Gospels occurs in a document from Irenaeus, *Adv Haer* III.1.1. According to France (1992:26), the priority of Matthew was accepted by at least a part of the church before the end of the second century. He argues that Matthew produced his Gospel in Hebrew, which is the language of Israelites, while Paul and Peter were ministering in Rome. Mark produced his Gospel after the death of Peter and Paul, with particular reference to the preaching of Peter. Moreover, Luke recorded the Gospel as having been preached by Paul, without any chronological connection to Matthew and Mark (France 1992:26).

From that time on, the tradition of the priority of Matthew was accepted until the early 19th century. In contrast to this view, most modern scholars deny this earlier perspective, saying that Matthew was written after Mark. This perspective indicates that the Gospel of Matthew was not written earlier than 70 CE (France 1992:83). Consequently, there are two possibilities for a date for Matthew, either before 70 CE or after 70 CE.

3.2.1 Date of writing

3.2.1.1 Before 70 CE?

Various recent scholars have supported the dating of Matthew before 70 CE (Michaelis 1948:15; Reicke 1972:121-34; Robinson 1976:100-109; Maier 1979:9-11; Ellis 1980:487-502; Gundry 1982:599-609). In this section, the Gospel of Matthew is considered to have been written before 70 CE.

First, one needs to determine whether the Gospel of Mark was written earlier than the Gospel of Matthew. This question gives rise to the notion that Mark may have been the most original Gospel, rather than Matthew. One of the reasons for this argument is that Mark's literary style is less complicated than that of the other Gospels. The theory of the priority of Mark was proposed by Wilke (1983), Weisse (1983), Holtzmann (1863) and Lachmann in 1835 (see France 1989b:21). According to Stoldt (1980:147-54), Lachmann suggested that both the Gospels of Matthew and Luke depended on Mark's literary style. He also maintained

that the order of the narratives in the Gospel came from Mark. All these views support the assumption that the Gospel of Mark has literary priority. This theory was developed by Holtzmann and the idea spread quickly (see France 1992:21). For that reason, Mark's literary priority is considered here.

The first argument is that the Gospel of Mark seems to be the shortest of the Gospels, compared to the other Gospels such as that of Matthew and Luke. Why would Mark omit so much material if Matthew and Luke were his basic sources? Of the 18,293 words that appear in Matthew, are there 7,392 that have no parallel in Mark, and of the 19,376 words that appear in Luke, 10,259 have no parallel in Mark (Tyson & Longstaff 1978:169-71). Moreover, if Mark copied all of the material in his Gospel from Matthew and Luke, it remains hard to understand why Mark would omit so much material from his Gospel.

Stein (1988:49-50) has a very good explanation for the argument of Mark's omission. He suggests that Mark's omissions confirm that his Gospel was not an abridgement of Matthew and Luke. The most important evidence is that the Gospel of Mark is, in its total length, considerably shorter than that of either Matthew or Luke. However, when one compares the common pericopes of the Synoptic Gospels, it becomes evident, as Stein (1988:49-50) mentioned, that of the fifty-one examples of narratives listed in the Synoptic Gospels, Mark was twenty-one times the longest. Of the fifty-one examples, Matthew had eleven times the longest, while Luke had ten times the longest.²

Streeter (1961:157) argued in line with Augustine's view that Mark could not be regarded as having abbreviated Matthew, because Matthew's pericopes are usually shorter than Mark's when the two Gospels are compared. An analysis by Sanders (1969:85) raises two principal arguments against Streeter's view. In the first place, if Mark used Matthew, he would have omitted Matthew's teaching material for the sake of a purely verbal expansion. However, Mark's "pure verbal expansions" are not equal in value to the length of Matthew's teaching material. He expanded the narrative verbally. Notwithstanding, Mark included a lot of Matthew's teaching material without producing a Gospel longer than Matthew's and Luke's. Streeter (1924:158) maintained that Mark's omission was not possible and that if Mark is the

oldest Gospel, “the verbal compression and omission of minor detail seen in the parallels in Matthew has an obvious purpose, in that it gives more room for the introduction of a mass of highly important teaching material not found in Mark”. Thus, Mark is the priority Gospel and the argument is that Matthew and Luke used certain extracts of which Mark made good sense.

The second argument concerning Mark’s literary priority is Mark’s poor writing style. Mark’s writing style contains incorrect grammar and colloquialisms. When one compares the Synoptic Gospels, there is clear evidence that Mark has lesser writing skills. There are several instances of incorrect grammar and colloquial expressions in the Gospel of Mark, which are not contained in Matthew and Luke. So for example, Stein (1988:52-3) discusses the question put to Jesus by the rich young man concerning the commandments. He analyses the statement in Mark 10:20 “all these you observed (ἐφύλαξάμην) since my youth.” The verbs which are parallel in Matthew 19:20 and Luke 18:21, “observed” (ἐφύλαξα), are different. Mark used an incorrect verb form: “an aorist middle, while Matthew and Luke changed the verb form to the correct aorist active.” This change of the verb by Matthew and Luke is more understandable than it would be namely in the case of Mark. Stein (1988:53) mentions another example, word “pallet (κράβαττον)” in Mark 2:4. Mark used this term as a slang expression for “pad”. However, Matthew and Luke changed this term to the more satisfactory “bed (κλίνη)” in Matthew 9:6 and “bed (κλινίδιον)” in Luke 5:19. These different words were Markan terms and were far more acceptable when they were later used by Matthew and Luke. The above examples show that the later writers improved on the grammar and style of the source. Therefore, the poor writing style in the Gospel of Mark supports the argument that Mark’s Gospel was written prior to those of Matthew and Luke. Another argument regarding Mark’s poor writing style is the Aramaic expressions in the Synoptic Gospels. The Gospel of Mark contains more Aramaic expressions than that of Matthew and Luke. Stein (1988:55-7) analysed seven clear Aramaic expressions in Mark.

As part of my reasoning, I will deal with some examples in this analysis. The most prominent is the expression used in the naming of the disciples. Matthew 10:2 says: “The names of the twelve apostles were these: first, Simon, who was called Peter, and Andrew his

brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother.” Luke 6:14 says: “Simon, whom he named Peter and Andrew his brother, and James and John.” Mark 3:14-17 comments: “James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, whom he surnamed *Boanerges*, which referred to sons of thunder.” The second example is “the deceased daughter of the synagogue ruler, Jairus”, Matthew 9:25 says: “But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose.” Luke 8:54 states: “But taking her by the hand he called, saying, child, arise.” Mark 5:41 says: “Taking her by the hand, he said to her, ‘*Talitha Cumi*’”, which means, little girl, I say to you arise.” The first two narratives introduce Aramaic expressions used by Mark (Stein 1988:58). Of course, Matthew also used Aramaic expressions such as “*Golgotha*” (Mt 27:33; 15:22). However, there is no such strong evidence stating that it is used in the Gospel of Mark as well. For instance, in Mark 11:11 the word *Corban* is used, in Mark 14:36 *Abba*, in Mark 15:34 *Eloi Eloi*.

Why are these examples of various Aramaic expressions found in Mark and not in Matthew and Luke? One can assume that the Aramaic expressions are omitted by Matthew and Luke, because Matthew and Luke were trying to make sense in their parallel accounts from their point of view in the light of the circumstances of their Greek-speaking audiences (Stein 1988:58). It is commonly accepted that Greek was the common language at that time in Palestine. Moreover, many places and people’s names were changed to Hellenistic names. One example is the names of Jesus’ disciples. Some of them were called by their Hellenistic names, like Andrew and Philip. Even where Luke omitted the Semitic word or translated it into Greek, he used similar qualifications, “the mountain called Olive-yard”, “the place called Skull”, “the gate of the temple called Beautiful”, “the so-called Zealot” (Cadbury 1968:128). The Synoptic Gospels were written in the common language of Koine Greek. Matthew and Luke avoided Aramaic expressions. Matthew and Luke therefore used more proper Greek expressions, suggesting again that Mark’s was the first Gospel.

The final argument concerning Mark’s priority is the various difficult readings in Mark. This implies that the Gospel of Mark is more difficult to understand than that of Matthew and Luke. Two instances of Mark’s “hard” readings are considered here. Firstly, some of Mark’s

narrative underscored the apparent limitation of Jesus' power or influence. The same healing narrative of Jesus is portrayed in a different way in the Synoptic Gospels. According to Mark's portrayal, Jesus lacked enough power to heal all. For instance, Matthew 8:16 mentions that Jesus healed "all" who were sick. According to Luke 4:40, "Jesus laid his hands on 'every one of them' and healed them". But Mark 1:34 says "and he healed 'many' who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons". The above comparison reveals Mark's limiting references to the healing power of Jesus. Matthew and Luke mention the healing power of Jesus to "all" or "every one of them", while Mark mentions this power as only having pertained to "many". This expression therefore implies that Jesus did not heal all the sick people. Mark underscored that the people he ministered to, thought that Jesus was not able to do miracles. They therefore did not accept those miracles he had performed. Nevertheless, they believed Jesus had laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them, as Mark 6:5 attests.

Another instance of Mark's harder readings is the negative descriptions of the disciples. Matthew and Luke usually abstain from negative descriptions of the disciples, even though Mark describes many in an antagonistic way, for example, in Mark 4:13 ("and He said to them, do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all these parables?"), Mark 10:14 ("when Jesus saw it, he was indignant, and said to them..."). It is clear that the image of the disciples portrayed by Mark was more negative than that of Matthew and Luke. Matthew and Luke consequently omitted or changed the negative impression Mark left regarding the disciples in the narratives he mentioned.

Mark's literal priority is not accepted by F C Baur and his associates. According to the perspective of Baur, the Gospel of Matthew was regarded as the most primitive among the Synoptic Gospels. Because of this perspective, especially concerning the teaching material, he expected to find some authentic evidence for Jesus among all the later and fable additions (see France 1992:21). Baur did not support his conclusions on literary grounds. His view originated from his historical reconstruction of the pattern of early Christianity. He concluded that the Judaistic character of Matthew represented the original Palestinian Christianity.

However, Baur's theory of the priority of Matthew is not supported by modern scholars, because many of the modern Matthean scholars have not accepted his perspective on the origin of Matthew. He believes that Matthew originated from primitive Judaism. Many Gentile sources on Matthew's Gospel are available. During the later 19th century, the belief in the priority of Matthew was overthrown. Current scholarship has accepted the priority of Mark's Gospel.

Because of the above reasons, the priority of Mark has been confirmed but the question that still remains is when the Gospel of Mark was written. Mark has been dated to three different decades. These include 40 CE, 50 CE or 60 CE. The view that the Gospel of Mark was written around 40 CE has been supported on the basis of historical and papyrological considerations. One of these considerations is the phrase; "When you realize the abomination that causes desolation standing with it" (Mk 13:14). One can carefully evaluate this phrase on the basis of historical considerations. According to Torrey (1947:261-262), the historical background of the words "abomination causes desolation" is the attempt in 40 CE of the Emperor Caligula to have his image set up in the Jerusalem temple. Torrey believes that the Gospel of Mark was written after this event.

Another argument comes from O'Callaghan (1972:91-100), who has compared the Gospel of Mark and three papyrus fragments among the Qumran texts (7Q5; 7Q6,1; 7Q7), dated 50 CE. He claimed that these three papyri were similar in content (see Mk 6:52-53, 4:28 and 12:17). In his view, the Gospel of Mark is older than the above Qumran papyrus fragments. However, most scholars have argued that even if O'Callaghan's view is correct, it would only prove the existence of the above manuscripts at this date of tradition at which time they were incorporated into Mark (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:97).

The strongest case for the dating of Mark to 50 CE does not come directly from Mark, but from the relationship of Mark to the Luke-Acts. The argument is that the final pericope of Acts was that of Paul languishing in prison, even though he was a Roman citizen. This is very important, because according to Carson, Moo and Morris (1992:97), Luke published his work at about 62 CE. This would imply that the Gospel of Luke was written sometime before 62

CE. If we accept the perspective of the scholars mentioned above that Luke has used the canonical Mark, Mark must have been written at the latest before 60 CE (see Harnack 1911). Many contemporary scholars favour the argument that Mark was written in the sixties (Hengel 1985:12-28; Stock 1989:6-8; see Guelich 1989:xxxii). They propose two reasons for the date of Mark. Firstly, the words that refer to persecution may be important for internal evidence in Mark. Mark has strongly emphasized the principle that the disciples followed on the way as Jesus was taken to the cross. This emphasis most probably came from some situation where Christians were persecuted in Rome. Nero's famous persecution of Christians in 65 CE (Hengel 1985:12-28; cf Telford 1999:12-13) is especially relevant here. Secondly, the reference to Mark in chapter 13 regarding the destruction of the temple is important. The background situation of this chapter may be found in Palestine during the Jewish revolt against Rome and thus it must be dated between 67 and 69 CE (Hengel 1985:14-28).

The final argument concerning Mark's dating for the late seventies (Guelich 1989:xxxii). This view argues that Mark 13 reflects the actual experience of the sacking of Jerusalem by the Romans (see Kümmel 1975:98; Vorster 1988:112-113). However, this is not accepted by some and is disputed by others because Mark 13 does not appear to reflect any situation concerning 70 CE in Jerusalem (for example, the Jewish War). The prediction of Jesus concerning the war is read as a stock image from the Old Testament and Israelite imagery about the besieging of cities rather than as referring to the situation of the siege of Jerusalem (Reicke 1972:121-33; Robinson 1976:13-33). Another argument is that Jesus could not have predicted the course of the events of the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE. According to Guelich (1989:xxxii), the best interpretation of Mark 13 suggests that the Roman military actions against Israel referred to, the occurrence in 67 CE, before the final siege of Jerusalem under Titus in the summer of 70 CE. Moreover, Marxsen (1966:134-136) held the view that Mark 13:14 refers to the Jewish War. This view is supported by Perrin (see Vorster³ 1988:113), the prophecy of the devastation (Mk 13:2) alludes to the Jewish War, and that Mark wrote his Gospel after the event.

From the above arguments regarding the dating of Mark, it is obvious that several dates

have been proposed for the late fifties, the middle sixties or seventies. Some scholars have accepted the middle sixties as the date by which Mark's Gospel was written. However, if one considers the assumptions regarding the end of Acts and the priority of Mark to be valid (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:99), one is led to conclude that Mark wrote his Gospel during the late fifties. Mark did not mention the persecution (which was pertinent to the known circumstances of his readers) because it was always possible for Christians during New Testament times to endure some kind of persecution (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:99). If one considers accepting the above perspective regarding the literary priority of Mark, it is probable that Mark may have been written during the late fifties, sixties or somewhere in the seventies. Meanwhile the only confirmation that we have is that Mark is the priority Gospel. The assumption remains that the Gospel of Mark was written earlier than the Gospel of Matthew. Hence, Rist (1978:5-7) argues that the only important reason why one would favour a date for Matthew after 70 CE would be the assumption that the matters depended on Mark.

Whichever date is considered for the Gospel of Matthew, there is no clear evidence to substantiate such a date. There is no convincing evidence pertaining to any specific time. However, several conclusions can be drawn as to what the most likely setting for the Gospel of Matthew was in the Israelite and Gentile Christian scene during the first century (France 1992:90)

One more argument to deal with, is to determine how early the Gospel of Matthew was written. Robinson (1976:101-107) is of the opinion that Matthew's Gospel was written before 62 CE. He points out two forms of evidence. Firstly, we are aware of Christians who lived in the period of 50 to 60 CE. The second form of evidence is the discourse concerning the temple tax (Mt.17:24-27). According to Robinson, the Christians endured persecution in the period preceding 70 CE. This is confirmed by the records of Eusebius and Josephus regarding the martyrdom of James, the Lord's brother in 62 CE, but this is not echoed in the New Testament. Another issue is the names mentioned in the New Testament. These names confirm the fact that these people were living at that time.⁴ However, the name of Simeon was never mentioned. If Simeon was the "son of the man" who led the mother church at Jerusalem

after 62 CE, this is not mentioned in the New Testament (Robinson 1976:106-107).

The other argument concerns the Matthean community's attitude towards the offering of the half-shekel tax for the maintenance of the temple (Mt 17:24-27). Looking at the date of the Gospel of Matthew on the basis of allusions in the discourse is crucial. Robinson's perspective is partly founded on the statement Jesus made to Peter regarding tax payment. This implies that Matthew's Gospel might have been written prior to the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 CE. After that date, the Israelites had to pay temple tax to the temple treasurer, Jupiter Capitolinus, in Rome (Josephus *BJ*. 218; Robinson 1976:104).

Based on evidence such as this, it is indeed possible that the Gospel of Matthew may have been written prior to 62 CE. Most of the New Testament scholars do not agree with Robinson's perspective. However, none of the arguments presented above are conclusive, even though a date prior to 70 CE appears to be the most probable date, given internal evidence in the Gospel, together with relevant external evidence. The date of Mark is probably around early 70 CE.

3.2.1.2 A date after 70 CE?

The discussion regarding the time of the composition of the Gospel of Matthew is dominated by two important independent pieces of evidence, namely the influence of the Gospel of Mark on Matthew and Matthew's discourse on the destruction of Jerusalem (Mt 22:7). Scholars agree that the Gospel of Mark was written round about the time of the Jewish war of 66 to 70 CE (see 3.2.1.1). This fact, however, is not sufficient evidence to confirm that Mark knew of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (Hengel 1985:7-28). The claim that the composition of the First Gospel occurred after 70 CE is supported by scholars such as Kilpatrick (1946:7), Luz (1989:93), Harrington (1991:8), Hill (1972: 48-50), Meier (1979:13; 1983:17), and Sim (1998:33-40).

Hagner (1993:ixxii-ixxv) points out two perspectives relating to the Gospel of Matthew as having been written prior to 70 CE. Firstly, it is generally accepted that the final break in the relationship between Matthew's community and the synagogue took place around 85 to 90

CE. There are references to the hostility between Israelite and Christians, particularly around 85 CE. This dating is not a drastic oversimplification. The hostility had already arisen when the Gospel was written (France 1989b:100; Hagner 1993:ixxiii; Gundry 1994:601). Secondly, Matthew's Gospel reveals that the author had some knowledge of the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE. The thrust of the argument is that Matthew 22:7 does not provide the sole and sufficient proof that the Gospel of Matthew as a whole, needs to be dated after 70 CE. The reason is that the temple and Jerusalem were not yet destroyed (Hagner 1933:ixxiv; Gundry 1994:602-606; Robinson 1976:19-25). The main argument of these scholars is that the emphasis of the First Evangelist is on both the temple cult (Mt 5:23-24; 9:13; 12:5-7; 17:24-27; 23:16-22) and the Sadducees (Mt 3:7; 16:1, 6, 11-12; 22:23, 34). This suggests that the Gospel of Matthew was written prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. The Sadducees were yet to sustain a potent political-religious force (Gundry 1994:436).

Scholars' view on Matthew 22:7 is that this is not sufficient evidence that the First Evangelist wrote his Gospel after 70 CE. The reference to "having burned the city" may be an indication of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE, but according to Gundry (1994:436), Matthew's editorial insertion in verse 7, referring to the destruction of the city, did not mention the fate of Jerusalem at the hand of the Romans. While verse 7, on the basis of Isaiah 5:24-25, concerns the burning of the city, this was standard language of both the Old Testament and the Roman world, describing punitive military expeditions against rebellious cities (see Section 3.2.1.1; Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:77). In addition, Gundry's (1994:437) interpretation of Matthew 22:1-14 is that the first two invitations refer to the Old Testament prophets, while the burning of the city is a symbol of God's judgment on his people. This invitation refers to the mission of the community to all nations, after the resurrection of Jesus. These verses seem to indicate that the Gospel presupposed the period when Jerusalem and its temple were still standing. Gundry (1994:607) points out the hypothesis that the date of Matthew may have been prior to 65 to 67 CE (Gundry 1994:607).

However, this verse may have been redacted by Matthew after the destruction of Jerusalem at the close of the Jewish war. This reflects some transparency for the disciple's community

(in the post-paschal period). The Gospel of Matthew formed the basis of the records during the period of the life of Jesus. Matthew narrates a story which had a historical setting prior to 70 CE and which needed to have credibility amongst his readers. The First Evangelist wrote his Gospel with proper knowledge of the 70 CE pre-historical context of Judaism, which was considered to have been a temple cult, apart from the influence of the Sadducees (see Sim 1998:36). Sim did not accept this perspective, as he proposed, contra to Gundry, a date for Matthew's Gospel in the period between 70 to 100 CE. He argues that Matthew incorporates earlier material. This would imply that when the First Evangelist composed his Gospel (after 70 CE), he inserted all the early documents (Sim 1998:36). Sim (1998:36) also claims that Matthew was a creative author who composed the narrative according to a story, which had a set historical context, prior to 70 CE.

In the parable of the wedding feast (Mt 22:1-10), a king sends his servants to call those who are invited to the wedding feast of his son. Some refuse the first invitation. Then he sends more servants with the same invitation. The intended guests again refuse to come. They pay no attention; instead, they go off, one to his field, another to his plan of business. The others seize the king's servants, mistreat them and kill one of them. The king is very angry because of this and sends his army to destroy those murderers and burn their city. The servants then go out into the streets and gather all the people they can find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall is filled with guests. Sim (1998:34) distinguishes three invitations in this narrative. The first invitation is that of a king who sends his messengers to call those who are invited to the wedding feast. Those who are invited reject the invitation. The second invitation is that of a king who sends, a group of his messengers to extend this same invitation. Unexpectedly, these guests also reject the invitation, in fact, they persecute the servants and kill some of them. With the third invitation the king sends his messengers to call many people, both good and bad, to join in the ceremonial feast he has prepared. Sim's (1998:34) perspective is that "the king and his son represent God and Jesus respectively and that the wedding feast symbolize the kingdom of heaven". He considered the messengers of the king to have been Christian missionaries, on the first and second occasions respectively. These

missionaries invited Israelites to accept God's salvation (Sim 1998:34). The reason for the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans was the severe mistreatment of these missionaries. The third invitation contained a new mission in the post 70 CE period, the Gentile mission. Consequently, Sim interprets the third invitation as a sign that Matthew looked back on two important historical events, the failure of the Israelite mission and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Matthew then related these historical events to one another in his own mission plan, with the effect that Matthew's Gospel should then be dated to after the Jewish war.

In the parable of the wedding feast, the king "sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city" (Mt 22:7). This narrative of the destruction of their city could be considered to be a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem at the end of the Jewish war (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:76). The parable of the wedding feast most probably depends on reality. If the above view is correct, the Gospel of Mark should have been written around 65 to 70 CE and the Gospel of Matthew could probably have been written at least some time after 70 CE.

Other scholars attempted to use the wedding banquet parable to determine the date of Matthew as between 70 to 100 CE. Meier (1983:11-86) argues that the first Christian generation of the Antiochene church setting surfaced around 40 to 70 CE. The second Christian generation of the Antiochene church emerged around 70 to 100 CE. He believes that the community of Matthew formed the second Christian generation. Hence, he claims that the best choice of date for Matthew's Gospel is between 80 to 90 CE. He notes that the parable of the wedding banquet of Matthew's Gospel (Mt 22:1-14; contrast Lk 14:15-24) does seem to contain some suggestion of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Meanwhile, Matthew's church had already broken away from the synagogue (see Chapter 2). In view of the above, Mt 22:7 was rewritten to make explicit reference to the destruction of Jerusalem (Kilpatrick 1946:6; Meier 1979:13; Luz 1989:92). The reason for the above perspective is that Matthew's Gospel was not written immediately after the Jewish war and the destruction of Jerusalem. In this case, 85 CE should be considered as a possible date for Matthew's Gospel (Meier

1983:16). Moreover, Ignatius of Antioch used the Gospel of Matthew in his letter at a date far into the second century. Ignatius died no later than 117 CE (Meier 1983:17). Meier (1979:13) also postulates that Matthew's community in the beginning consisted largely of Israelite Christian members, but that the community had already included Gentiles (Mt 28:16-20). Therefore, the best choice for the date of Matthew is between 80 and 90 CE, when the community was a mixed one.

To summarize, the date of Matthew's Gospel was probably around 80 to 90 CE. The reason for the conclusion in this study is that the Gospel of Mark was probably written earlier than the Gospel of Matthew. If one accepts that the date of Mark was about 70 CE, it is logical that the Gospel of Matthew was written after 70 CE. This would best fit the argument for the inclusive structure of the Matthean community (including Israelites and Gentiles). In the next section, the location of the Matthean community is explored.

3.2.2 Location of Matthew's community

The Gospel of Matthew does not mention explicit information regarding the actual location of where the Gospel was written. There is a general agreement among scholars that the Gospel was written in the eastern part of the ancient Mediterranean, somewhere in Palestine (which includes Palestine, Trans-Jordan, Caesarea Maritima, Phoenicia, Alexandria, Syria and Antioch). Various scholars have done extensive research on all of the above-mentioned areas. It is, however, not easy to confirm where and what the original location of Matthew's community was. It should be noted that the circumstances at the date of the writing of the Gospel were in direct relation to the location of Matthew's community. The location of the Gospel is important for this study, as it is important to show which location would provide the best example for Matthew's inclusive structured society. The social situation of the inclusive structure of the Gospel is therefore considered in terms of the location of Matthew's community. The different places proposed as Matthew's location are discussed below.

3.2.2.1 Palestine?

According to ancient perspectives, the Gospel of Matthew was written in Palestine. The Ancient Fathers said that the Gospel of Matthew was initially written in Aramaic (Wenham 1978:112-34). Hence, they also presupposed that it was written in Palestine. The surmise was based on the tradition that Matthew wrote in Hebrew or Aramaic. One can see many features of Palestinian origin, for example, the inclusion of Aramaic words without any translation or explanation (Mt 5:22; 6:24; 27:6), the assumption of a certain amount of Israelite background, the bilingual character of the text forms when the Old Testament is cited, as well as the adoption of figures of speech for literary purposes that are typically Semitic rather than Greek (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:75). According to France (1989:91), a Palestinian origin would apparently fit the Jewish character of much of the contents of the Gospel and its particular concern with the teaching of the Pharisees. Another scholar, Overman (1990), holds the view that the location from which Matthew's community originated was Galilee. According to Overman (1990:153), the stage of Matthew's community was in direct conflict with formative Judaism and its emerging authorities. Matthew and his community claimed the same tradition, the same authority and the same roles as formative Judaism. Matthew's community came into direct confrontation with formative Judaism. The central members of such formative Judaism were the Pharisees, who were strongly influenced by the situation in Galilee. One could therefore conclude that Overman's view regarding the origin of Matthew's community supports Galilee.

However, there are some problems regarding the above perception. Of course, the Gospel of Matthew contained some Aramaic words and the language of the text also reflects the location of the Gospel, but Matthew was actually written in the ordinary, common language of the members of his church, namely Greek (Meier 1983:19). While one cannot deny the fact that Aramaic was the primary language of most of the people in Palestine (Sim 1998:41), Matthew appeared to have written to a more widely Greek-speaking area outside Palestine. It might be that some Aramaic words have been used in the Gospel due to the fact that the author was a Greek-speaking Israelite Christian.

One needs to look at the perspective of France (1989:84-85) regarding Matthew's Israelite characters. It is not necessary to accept the notion that the Israelite characters in Matthew refers to Palestine as a context of its origins. A possible perspective may be that if Matthew's community originated outside of Palestine, they could still, as a group of people, have had their own character. Hence, the perspective of France is only one of the possible arguments.

Finally, one needs to look at the idea that Matthew's community was situated in Galilee. Overman's (1990:158-159) argument dealt with the real conflict between Matthew's community and formative Judaism (especially with regard to the Pharisees) in Galilee. He believes that Galilee was an attractive place for formative Judaism, due to the central role it played in early rabbinic Judaism. Apart from this, one should consider the circumstances of the Pharisees who were living outside Palestine. According to Sim (1998:60), the Pharisees had already moved right across Gentile countries. The Pharisees were well known outside the holy land, not just in the Diaspora. One could therefore assume that the formative Judaistic movement was not only present in Palestine, but that it also had source influence on the Israelite community in the Diaspora. This is a possible reason for the conflict between Matthew's community and formative Judaism in Galilee. Hence, Palestine is not regarded as the best option for the inclusively structured community of Matthew.

3.2.2.2 Alexandria?

Brandon (1951:217-43; see Van Tilborg 1972:172; France 1989b:93) was the first to suggest that the place of origin of the community of Matthew was located in Alexandria. Based on this argument, he argues that Matthew is an expression of the peculiar situation of the "Jewish-Christian" Jerusalem church after 70 CE. This hypothesis was only formed after the rejection of Streeter's view that Matthew was located in Antioch (Brandon 1951:217-21). His rejection is formulated on the basis of two considerations. In the first instance, in the city of Antioch, the Christians were at the centre of various liberalizing movements. The circumstances of liberal Christianity in Antioch was not in harmony with the limiting of the Israelite and anti-Gentile sentiments within Matthew's Gospel (Brandon 1951:219). Secondly,

“when full weight is given to the fundamental differences which exist between the Lukan and Matthean records, the fact of Luke’s connection with Antioch irresistibly demands that the sphere of Matthew be located far from the Syrian city.”⁵ If one assumes that Brandon is correct regarding the place of the origin of Matthew’s community, Alexandria, a city far from “the Syrian city”, seems to be a good option. Alexandria was a city with a large Israelite population. Moreover, these Israelite communities were wealthy. Indeed, they had many synagogues and accordingly they possessed special advantages (Brandon 1951:221). Furthermore, some evidence in favour of Alexandrian “anti-Semitism”, as described by Philo and Josephus, was, to a certain extent, present in the circumstances within the community of Matthew’s Gospel (Brandon 1951:221).

Brandon’s view has nevertheless not gained wide acceptance in the scholarly circles today. There is no agreement about the Christian movement in Alexandria after the “Jewish war”. The main problem with this argument is our almost total lack of knowledge about the origins of the Christian community in Alexandria (Davies & Allison 1988:139; Meier 1982:19). Sim (1998:50) provides an analysis of Brandon’s perspective regarding the origin of Matthew’s community. According to Brandon (1951:25), the Christian tradition in Alexandria in the New Testament can be traced to the narrative of Apollos in Ephesus in Acts 18:24-25. Apollos is mentioned as an Alexandrian Jew with a good knowledge of the Scriptures. He had presumably acquired his knowledge of Christianity from his own city.

I would like to raise a particular problem arising from Brandon’s view. It is difficult to accept the narrative of Apollos as evidence of the Christian movement in Alexandria. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, but he knew only of the baptism of John the Baptist. Following this instruction relating to the teaching of Jesus, some additional instruction was granted to him by Priscilla and Aquilla. This would imply that Apollos did not yet know much about Israelites and Christianity. From this passage in Acts, it seemed clear that no information regarding any particular Christian movement in Alexandria has been granted to us. This narrative reveals an apologetic movement on Luke’s part to promote the superiority of the Pauline Gospel over its Alexandrian counterpart, which was represented by the

influential Apollos (Sim 1998:50). However, one should not disregard the reminiscences in the tradition of Philo, which portrays both Israelites and the Israelite Christians in Alexandria.

It appears thus that the evidence regarding a Matthean community in Alexandria is slight. There is in fact no sufficient evidence to prove that the location of Matthew's community was there (Sim 1998:50). The above discussion clearly indicates that the location of Alexandria does not lend itself to an inclusive structure of society. There is no strong evidence of a Christian movement or Christian community there.

3.2.2.3 Caesarea Maritima?

Viviano (1979:533-546) suggests that the great harbour city of Caesarea Maritima could have been the location of Matthew's community. The city was originally situated in Samaria. This city, however, did not have any long-standing historical association with Samaria, because this port became the capital of the province of Judea (Viviano 1979:534). Viviano (1979:542-543) mentions four reasons why he thinks Matthew's community was in Caesarea Maritima. Firstly, the city was close to Jamnia. This implied that it would have been easy to establish contact with Matthew's community and accordingly with formative Judaism. He believed that this was a very possible reason for Matthew's conflict with Judaism, which in the Gospel is best explained by Matthew's community being in close proximity to Palestine. The late Patristic tradition in itself provides a reference to the above view. However, this is not concrete evidence for the location of Matthew's community. The universal ascription of Matthew to Palestine is derived from a problematic tradition regarding the Semitic origin of Matthew's Gospel. Moreover, Viviano himself observed the uncertainty of this tradition, as Eusebius does not connect the school at Caesarea with Matthew or Matthew's school, and, of course, he lived in that city (Viviano 1979:543-544; Davies & Allison 1988:141). Therefore, this view fails to provide conclusive support for Caesarea as the ideal place for the translation and redaction of the Greek text of the Gospel of Matthew.

Viviano's (1979:541) second argument in favour of Caesarea Maritima as an important centre in Samaria is, according to him, that the history of Christianity in Caesarea began with

the ministry of the apostles. This is related to some narratives of particular Christian activities at Caesarea, which included the ministry of the evangelist Philip, as recorded in Acts, as well as the narrative of Cornelius and his family in relation to a vision given to Peter, including the imprisonment of Paul (Acts 8:40; 9:30; 10:1, 24; 11:11; 12:19; 18:22; 21:8-16; 23:23, 33; 25:1-4, 6, 13). Philip's enthusiasm to evangelize seemed evident as he went to a city in Samaria to proclaim the good news regarding Christ (Acts 8:5); he also appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea (Acts 8:40). Furthermore, the narrative by Peter regarding the conversion of Cornelius bore proper evidence regarding the Gentile nature of the Christian movement in Caesarea (Acts 10:1-11:18) (Sim 1988:46). Several visits of Paul to Caesarea were also mentioned in Acts. His activities there included discussions and debates with, for example, a Grecian Israelite, with the effect that people of Caesarea tried to kill Paul, after which his brothers consequently took Paul down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus (Acts 9:30). When Paul landed at Caesarea from Ephesus, he went up and greeted the Caesarean church and then went down to Antioch (Acts 18:22). Paul and his company reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the Evangelist, one of the Seven (Acts 21:8). All of the above passages from Acts underscore an active Christian movement, including formal evangelism amongst the Gentiles, as arranged from Matthew's local community.

Over and above those passages, there is Luke's perspective regarding the Christian movement in Caesarea. Regarding this issue, two problems arise. The one is that if one considers accepting the account by Luke as historically accurate, it should be assumed that his church had a Law-free orientation. This argument does not appear convincing as proof that the church at Caesarea was part of Matthew's community. Matthew's community was still a continual Law-observing community (see Sim 1998:47; Chapter 1 and 2). Meier (1983:20) expressed a similar view:

If one holds that some sort of historical event lies behind the narrative of the conversion of Cornelius in Acts 10, then the church at Caesarea Maritima arose

partly through the conversion of a pagan centurion and his household. This early state of Caesarean Christianity was difficult to have reconciled with some of the early strata of the Matthean tradition, which were stringently and narrowly Jewish.

The Christian movement was thus probably present in Caesarea, but there is no sufficient proof of a connection with the composition of Matthew's Gospel in the first century.

Thirdly, prior to the Israelite revolt, the city of Caesarea was predominantly Gentile and accordingly a Greek-speaking city, even though there was a large Israelite population. The revolt in 66 CE also caused some political tension there. This view was due to Caesarea being the location of the origins of Matthew's Gospel. Viviano (1979:540) himself suggested this view, and Forester was similarly convinced. According to Forester (1975:17), the Israelite population in the city was at this stage very limited. Josephus recorded a massacre of Israelites in Caesarea Maritima in 66 CE. Josephus (*Jewish War* 2. 284-292) narrates that the Gentile neighbours performed a massacre on the Israelites in Caesarea at the start of the first revolt. This massacre resulted in the moving away of all the Israelites from Caesarea to a safer place. It was thus impossible for Matthew's community to live there continually. Accordingly, I have reservations regarding Matthew's missionary discourse, which concerns his avoidance of the towns of the Samaritans and other Gentiles (Mt 10:5). It is possible to conclude from this that Matthew's community did not have a proper relationship with any Samaritan town (Streeter 1924:502).

It is very difficult to accept Caesarea Maritima as the exact location for the origin of Matthew's Gospel. The conflict situation with Judaism is reflected in the Gospel of Matthew. Moreover, the Matthean community was Law-observing. These objections show that the Matthean community did not have contact with this Samaritan town. Hence, Caesarea Maritima is not a possible location for the Matthean community, which was a mixed state of Israelites and Gentiles as an inclusively structured community. Viviano (1979:533-546) has made only one positive proposal in this regard and this was based on a somewhat contrived argument from a few Patristic statements.

3.2.2.4 Trans-Jordan?

Slingerland (1979) suggests that the Trans-Jordan was most probably the location of Matthew's community. According to Slingerland (1979:18-28), the Trans-Jordan referred to some location across the Jordan River to the east side. This view may support the two texts in Matthew 4:15 and 19:1. These represent Matthean redaction and reflect the geographical perspective of the First Gospel. One other point of evidence is Matthew 4:25.

The first text cited the geographical perspective of Matthew 4:15 which comes from an Old Testament source, the Masoretic text of Isaiah 8:23. Slingerland's (1979:23) view is that if the source of Matthew 4:15 is the LXX of Isaiah 8:23, then Matthew has removed the Greek word *καί* before *πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου*. Then he changed the perspective to an eastern one. This implies that the omission of the Greek word has created the same impression as it would if one replaced "beyond the Jordan" with the "region of Zebulon", "Galilee of the Gentiles", etcetera. All these details suggest that they shared a western perspective of looking across the eastern river (Slingerland 1979:22-25). The second issue is that if Matthew 19:1 is Matthew's source, it confirms that Matthew's Gospel was written somewhere east of the Jordan. Slingerland's evidence of this view is that Matthew has followed the Marcan source, which is Matthew 19:1 *Καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς λόγους τούτους, μετήρην ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς τὰ ὄρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου* ("when Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan"). This verse is based on Mark 10: 1: *Καὶ ἐκεῖθεν ἀναστὰς ἔρχεται εἰς τὰ ὄρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας [καὶ] πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου* ("Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan").

Slingerland's (1979:21-22) argument is that Matthew and Mark had different geographical perspectives. Mark's Gospel mentions the traditional western perspective that Jesus in Mark has two destinations, one on "this" side of the Jordan (Judea), and the other one across the Jordan (*trans Iordanem*). Judea is not on "this" side of the Jordan, but Judea is across the Jordan (*Iudaea trans Iordanem*) on the west side of the river. Matthew has omitted the

Μαρκαν καί, - this omission in Matthew's Gospel indicates that the Gospel was written somewhere on the eastern side of the Jordan River. Therefore, Slingerland (1979:26) suggests that Matthew was composed at Pella, a city of the Decapolis, after the Jewish war. The city of Pella represents the continued struggle with Judaism, as well as the internal struggle between Christians and Gentiles regarding the Law.

Slingerland has strongly argued that those two Matthean texts, if both of them were redactional, provided significant indications regarding the location of Matthew's origin. Matthew 4:15 do not necessarily represent Matthew's geographical setting, due to the fact that this verse is a quotation from the Old Testament (France 1989b: 94). Matthew 19:1 provides one possible view regarding the location of Matthew's community to be the eastern side of the Jordan River. Sanders (1992:352 n 13), however, says one cannot decide whether Pella was indeed the place of the origin of the Gospel of Matthew. Moreover, Matthew 19:1 merely repeats Mark 10:1, even though the original Mark 10.1 does not include the Greek word καί, "the mountains of Judea (and) beyond the Jordan."

Slingerland's interpretation of πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου is certainly plausible in Matthew, even though another interpretation of this text is also possible (Sim 1998:43). The expression "beyond the Jordan" was probably generally used for the territories to the east of the Jordan River (Hagner 1993:73). This means that one finds this expression in a number of contemporary texts, which include John 1:28; 3:26; 10:40; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 7:198; 12:222; 14:277. This phrase stands independently and indicates those areas on the east of the river in the Trans-Jordan (Sim 1998:43), even though without the καί in these two passages "beyond the Jordan" is not used to qualify either "Judea" in Matthew 19:1 or "Galilee" in Matthew 4:15 (Davies & Allison 1988:383).

Davies and Allison had a solution to this problem and suggested that "beyond the Jordan" indicated the area south-east of the river, as described in this text. This would imply that Matthew's perspective of these geographical regions are divided into four sections. The centre of this world view would be Jerusalem, while the surrounding four areas is Galilee to the north-west, the Decapolis to the north-east, Judea to the south-west and "beyond the Jordan"

to the south-east.⁶ This interpretation is the most logical explanation for Matthew's redaction in this passage (Sim 1988:44). Slingerland's interpretation of these two passages has therefore provided a sound basis for other scholars.

One more problem is that this text indicates a possible situation for the composition of Matthew's Gospel after the "Jewish war" in the region of the Decapolis. This argument was suggested by Sim (1998:45), who asserted that the environment of the Trans-Jordan was not influenced by the circumstances resulting from the conflict between the Israelites and the Romans. Josephus reported that all the cities (which included Philadelphia, Gerasa, Pella, Scythopolis, Gadara and Hippos) in the Decapolis were attacked and damaged by violent Israelite forces (*Jewish War* 2.458-9). These events caused them to turn to violence once again, which led to the killing and imprisonment of many Israelite citizens by the Gentile residents in these cities (*Jewish War* 2.466-8, 478). This would most probably not have been the ideal context for the writing of Matthew's Gospel, or for the establishment of any Israelite community. In his hypothesis Slingerland does not accept such a historical consideration, but it strongly suggests that Trans-Jordan is not an inclusively structured society as was the Matthean community.

3.2.2.5 Phoenicia?

The southern Phoenician coastal cities such as Berytus, Tyre or Sidon were suggested by Kilpatrick (1946:124-34; see Blair 1960:43) as the province where Matthew's community originated. Kilpatrick formulated this perspective after he had rejected the Antiochean hypothesis. He refutes both the arguments of Streeter's Antiochene hypothesis (see 3.2.2.2 Alexandria). The first argument is that the city of Antioch was an important Pauline center, but this fact has only become clear as the influence of Paul became evident in Matthew. Secondly, Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, had no thorough relationship with the Israelite Gospel of Matthew (Kilpatrick 1946:133-134; Sim 1998:43). It is important to look at the relation between the thought of Matthew and Paul. Most scholars dispute the claim that Matthew's perspective does not always correspond with that of the apostle (Sim 1998:199, see Chapter 1;

Matthew and Paul agree on most of the theological perspectives, but this was not always accepted). According to Meier (1983:62-63), the theologies of Matthew and Paul are amazingly similar. He has analysed certain aspects of their theology to confirm this perspective. This includes (a) that they accept the mission to the Gentiles without circumcision, which implies that they shared a perspective similar to that of the universal mission; (b) that they made radical moral demands centred on radical love; (c) that “both consider the death and resurrection of Jesus to be the pivotal eschatological event of salvation history”; (d) that “both sustain to the revelation of God in Jewish history and the Jewish Scriptures, while exalting the definite revelation brought by Jesus Christ.” He therefore found strong Pauline elements in Matthew’s Gospel, even though they basically stood in agreement on the fundamental issues of the state of Jesus Christ. Matthew was more conservative than Paul and each of them accordingly supported a different Christian perspective in the early church (France 1989b:111). The location of Antioch will be considered at a later stage.

Kilpatrick (1946:130-134) rejects the perspective regarding the location of Antioch and he suggests a number of arguments, which support a Phoenician province. His first suggestion for the location of Matthew’s community is that it was situated in a harbour city. One significant point regarding this perspective is that Matthew was written in a harbour city, somewhere amongst a community like that of Phoenicia. This argument is based on Kilpatrick’s (1946:132) interpretation of the parable of “the healing of the two demon-possessed men” in Mark 5:13 and Matthew 8:32. Mark described the sea of Galilee as ἡ θάλασσα Matthew described the waters as ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι. Kilpatrick argues that Matthew did not use θάλασσα to indicate the Sea of Galilee, but the Mediterranean. His second suggestion related to the narrative of the Canaanite woman. She was described as “Ἑλληνίς, Συροφαινίκισσα τῷ γένει” (a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia), that is, a woman living in Phoenicia with pretensions to a Greek background (Mk7:26). In Matthew 15:22, she was described as “γυνὴ Χαναναία” (a Canaanite woman). This would therefore imply that this term is “not with the Greek but with the Semitic World”. Why did Matthew alter the term in this way, to describe her as a Canaanite woman? This term in Matthew related to the more

Semitic country-side, referring to the less Hellenised inhabitants of the Phoenician peninsula (see Jackson 2002:83-84). According to the argument, Matthew was produced in one of the coastal Mediterranean cities, while he has in effect redirected the non-favourable implications of the story from his own community to the conservative villagers somewhere in Phoenicia (Kilpatrick 1946:133). Kilpatrick (1946:132-133) proffers one more argument, that the province of the Phoenician ports was Greek-speaking, while the country-side of that province still had a Semitic character and speech. Matthew was therefore written in Greek, with a Semitic explanation.

In response to these arguments of Kilpatrick, one notes that in his first argument, he referred to the story of the Gadarene demoniacs (Mt 8:32). His interpretation of Matthew's description was that the complete herd of pigs rushed down towards the water of the Mediterranean Sea, where they drowned. It is, however, difficult to accept such a view, due to the fact that the Sea of Galilee is here clearly indicated to us as a sea, with no clear distinction between Matthew and Mark to be discerned at this point (Sim 1998:49). Therefore, this perspective does not provide strong evidence that Matthew's community was situated at a coastal city in Phoenicia. One should, furthermore, consider Kilpatrick's arguments regarding the Canaanite woman as related to Semitic character and speech. Matthew has changed the words to "Canaanite woman," because he himself mentioned his community as having been in a Semitic world (cf Jackson 2002:84). If one agrees with the above view, one must still resolve the question of whether the province of Phoenicia was only of a Semitic background during the first century Palestine. At that time all Palestine was under Roman power and speaking Greek with a Semitic accent. Kilpatrick's argument regarding Matthew was that Matthew changed the Semitic word because it was not accepted in Matthew's community in Phoenicia. Moreover, we do not have much knowledge regarding the Christian communities at Phoenicia during the first century (Sim 1998:49). If there were Christian communities, they were most probably very small, due to the fact that only one passage in Acts referred to a Christian having lived in Tyre (Acts 21: 3-7) and Sidon (Act 27:3). Therefore, it is not easy to accept Kilpatrick's view regarding the location of Matthew's origins to have been in

Phoenicia.

The above argument indicates that the location of Phoenicia is only a reflection of the Semitic background and it had very small Christian communities. This means that Phoenicia is not likely to have been the location of the Matthean community as a mixed state and inclusively structured society.

3.2.2.6 Syria?

A more popular location of Matthew's community among Matthean scholars (Kümmel 1975:119; Hill 1972:50-52; Goulder 1974:149-152; Filson 1977:14-15) was somewhere in Syria (outside Antioch). This would imply that the statement "somewhere in Syria" did not include the city of Antioch, but that it referred to some part of the Syrian countryside. There was a stronger argument for a location in Edessa and its surroundings, which was supported by the view that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Greek, and also presupposed a Greek readership (Sim 1998:52).

Bacon (1930:15-23) suggests that Matthew was written in a city in the north-eastern Syrian hinterland, probably Edessa. His main argument for this hypothesis is that Matthew informed some "targuming" explanation in his Gospel. This is regarded as evidence for him to be responsible for conspicuous Christian communities in north-eastern Syria.

Kennard (1949:243-246) also suggested the location of the Matthean community to have been a north-eastern Syrian city; he believed that the gospel spread to this north-eastern Syrian city from Antioch. The above perspectives became apparent after the rejection of Streeter's hypothesis regarding Antioch. More recently, Osborne (1973:220-235) has supported the notion that Matthew was composed in Edessa, which was part of the Aramaic-speaking Diaspora in the border area between Palestine and Syria. Osborne's view is that the city of Edessa was the most important place in towns of Matthew's original material and that it was the meeting place with eastern religious traditions. He suggests that eastern religious traditions influenced Matthew in the writing and composition of his Gospel. Therefore some narratives (M materials) of Matthew's Gospel do not appear in the other Gospels.

The above scholars claim that Matthew's community was in Edessa, but there is not enough evidence for the origin and development of the Christian movement in this city. None of these scholars produce any necessary evidence for the location of Matthew's community in Edessa or in the Syrian countryside (Sim 1998:52). Matthew wrote in the most commonly used Greek language of ordinary people in the city of Antioch, because that city was the main Hellenistic learning centre. The ordinary people did not use Greek in the countryside, with the result that the common language of Edessa was Syriac (Meier 1983:21). Moreover, Meier's (1983:21) point of view is that "the earliest full literary texts preserved from Edessa are in Christian Syriac, and references and fragments indicate that pre-Christian literature was also written in Syriac."

To refer to Osborne's (1973:222-223,225) arguments regarding the eastern religious traditional influences at Edessa, he claims that Peter might have been the founder of the Edessa church, that the story of the Magi in Matthew 2 came from Zoroastrianism, while the five precepts in Matthew 5:21-48 were borrowed from Buddhism. However, to me, it seemed like all of them have merely indulged in speculation (see Davies & Allison 1988:143). It is unnecessary to accept the Edessa hypothesis in terms of Matthew's location of origin.

Gnilka (1986:515) has suggested one more city in the Syrian countryside, Damascus, to be a possibility. The city of Damascus was an important centre of commerce for the Israelites. Damascus was also an important place in New Testament times, as this was where Paul met Jesus Christ as Lord, and after his conversion he became a member of the Christian communities. However, Paul no longer stayed there, even though later on it developed into a center of rabbinic learning and Scriptural study. Moreover, the Greek language was not commonly used in Damascus (Meier 1983:20-21)

The evidence is that the common language of the countryside of Syria was not Greek, but Matthew wrote in the most commonly used Greek language of ordinary people of the city of Antioch. Moreover, there is not enough evidence for a Christian movement in Syria. For that reason, Matthew's community could not have been somewhere in Syria as it was a mixed and inclusive community.

3.2.2.7 Antioch in Syria?

The most interesting support favours Antioch, the capital of Syria, as the place of origin for the composition of the Gospel of Matthew (Kraeling 1932:130-60; Metzger 1948:69-88; Meier 1983:22-27; Luz 1985:73-74; Kingsbury 1988b:115; Sim 1998:53-61). The surroundings of Antioch included ordinary people who spoke Greek, a large population from the Israelite Diaspora, and Antioch had one of the earliest Christian communities outside of Palestine and a church founded by Israelite Christians, around 30 CE (Longenecker 1985).

The classic statement that Matthew's community was located at Antioch, came from Streeter (1924:500-23). He had seven main reasons for the location at Antioch, which I will consider in the following discussion. The first argument, from the patristic tradition, is that the witnesses of both Papias and Irenaeus had a negative predisposition towards Matthew's community as having been located in the vicinity of Palestine. They do not accept it as a fact that the Gospel of Matthew was produced in Rome or in Asia Minor, due to the fact that they most probably thought that it came from the eastern part of the Roman empire, having Greek as a basis.

The second argument of Streeter was that the Gospel of Matthew was originally anonymous. This anonymity suggests that it was originally compiled from various sources for the use of certain churches with reliable witness or authority, and then some people or committees produced it with a special title. Moreover, in Streeter's view, Matthew's Gospel would not have been accepted by apostolic authority and it was not sponsored by one of the great churches such as those in Rome, Ephesus or Antioch.

The third argument presented by Streeter is that the role of Peter is important in Matthew's Gospel, as is his status in Antioch (Gal 2:11, according to church tradition Peter was the first bishop there) (Davies & Allison 1988:144). His main argument concerns the role of the Petrine church in Antioch, where Peter is standing between the leader of the Jerusalem church (James) and its Judaic influence and the antinomianism of certain followers of Paul (Sim 1998:53-54). Peter was moderate in Antioch and he is also prominent in Matthew.

Fourthly, there was a large Israelite population in Antioch. At that time, the city of Antioch was the main base for the earliest Christian Gentiles mission. Antioch was therefore a mixed state, including both Israelites and Gentiles. These dual pictures are clear in Matthew, which unified the Christian mission message, as well as the anti-Gentile missionary message.

Streeter's fifth significant argument was the interpretation of the term "monetary" in Matthew 17:24-27. This implied that Antioch was the location of Matthew's Gospel, due to the fact that Antioch and Damascus were both considered to have been the official starting places of origin to the two equal didrachmae.

Sixthly, Ignatius, who was the bishop at Antioch during the early second century, cited Matthew in his epistles. Streeter (1924:500-523) claims that in Ignatius' seven short letters there were about fifteen passages, which looked like reminiscences of Matthew, together with the fact that the use of his language was normally closer to Matthew's vision. When Ignatius wrote about "the gospel" (*Phil* 5:1-2; 8:2), it might just be that this was a reference to the Gospel of Matthew (Davies & Allison 1988:144). According to Sim (1998:54), this means that Ignatius recognized only one Gospel in his time in Antioch, and Streeter considers this to have been Matthew's Gospel. One further interesting argument, according to Streeter (1924:500-523), was the fact that Streeter had examined "the Gospel" (*Didaché* 15:3). The result of his study was that "the Gospel" according to Matthew had certain references to "the Gospel" by Ignatius. Therefore it is probable that the Gospel of Matthew was the only accepted Gospel in Antioch at that time.

The six arguments mentioned above formed the basis of a considerable cumulative force for two further arguments. His first hypothesis was the critical analysis of the sources of Matthew's Gospel as "the Petrine Compromise" (Streeter 1924:511). This means that the dogmatic position of Matthew was considered to have been in between the Law-observant party of James in Jerusalem and the Law-free gospel of Paul in Antioch. According to Sim (1998:54), Matthew was following the earlier example of Peter in order to make peace between the two factions. Therefore, Streeter's argument is clear that the very nature of Matthew's Gospel itself contains the proof for its composition in Antioch. Another argument

he was concerned about was that after the Jewish war, an upsurge was evidently present due to an apocalyptic speculation. In this case, the apocalyptic features of the Gospel of Matthew suggest that the best place for the apocalyptic circumstances of the community was in Antioch.

Streeter's hypothesis of Matthew's location at Antioch is supported by several modern scholars and it has also been accepted internationally (Meier 1983:22-7; Gundry 1994:609; Davies & Allison 1988:143-7). However, all of Streeter's arguments were not valid for Matthew's community in Antioch. Therefore, one can examine Streeter's arguments pertaining to this issue. With regard to his first argument regarding the patristic tradition, if one does not accept Palestine to have been the location of the Gospel, one has to look for some eastern provenance (Sim 1998:55; Davies & Allison 1988:144).

Streeter's next argument concerns the anonymity of Matthew. The original readers did not concern themselves with the issue of the authorship of the Gospel, as it was the only significant thing to the Christian community. Consequently, Streeter made a useful point in that the apostolic authority of the Gospel must have been supported by a major and influential church. Whether it was not accepted by the important churches to the west of Jerusalem and at Caesarea in the east, Antioch does seem to be the only plausible alternative (Sim 1998:55).

The third argument, which dealt with the position of Peter in Matthew's Gospel has been disputed. It is true that Matthew gives a special place to Peter in his composition, including the fact that Peter was also active at Antioch, where Paul described his conflict with Peter (Gal. 2:11-14) (Meier 1983:24). Matthew's concrete explanation of Peter provides the evidence for the location of his community to have been in the capital city of Syria. This position was questioned by Luz (1985:74). Whether Matthew's community in Petrine Christianity was not necessarily in Antioch. According to Sim (1998:56), Luz's argument is not sufficient proof that Peter was an important member of the church at Antioch and accordingly also influential in the Jerusalem church during the apostolic council. This is not significant evidence at all for a position of importance in any other Christian church in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. This would therefore imply that Matthew's representation of the Petrine Christian traditional picture was the only one, which seriously maintains the

location of Antioch. Therefore, Streeter's view of Matthew's community does not necessarily place it in Antioch, but it is still a matter of probability (Luz 1985:74).

Streeter's fourth proof for the location of Antioch concerned the large Israelite population. This large population in itself could not be sufficient evidence that Matthew's community was indeed situated in Antioch. In the first century Israelites were widely spread all over the Roman Empire, in areas which were under Syrian control and in Alexandria among other places. This may therefore imply that the large Israelite population in Antioch could be a possible indication that Matthew's community was situated there, even though it is not really possible to confirm that Antioch was indeed the city of the location of Matthew's community (Sim 1998:56).

Fifthly, Streeter himself has very limited evidence regarding an official start (which is the didrachmae in Mt 17:24-27) at Antioch and/or Damascus. Streeter's argument regarding the actual commencement was the exact equivalent to the two didrachmae, to have been in Antioch and Damascus only. This point is not easily accepted by scholars, because Streeter did not mention any evidential documents (France 1989b:93 n27).

Sixthly, Ignatius was the first father of the Antiochean church who used Matthew. He cited Matthew's material at least three times (Meier 1983:24-5). Ignatius considered Matthew's Gospel to have contained proper evidence favouring the location of the community in Antioch. This is indeed a possible view regarding Matthew's location, even though this theory does not necessarily provide support to the place at which Matthew was written. It is thus most probable that Ignatius had an acceptable knowledge of the Gospel, excluding a reference pertaining to the geographical setup of the territory.

In the following discussion, Streeter's final two points are considered. His argument is that according to Matthew, the function of Peter was that of a mediator between James at Jerusalem and Paul at Antioch. Accordingly, one can accept that Matthew described the function of Peter in his Gospel very prominently. However, Matthew's description of Peter's role was inconsistent (see Nau 1992:112-138). The three larger and unique Matthean Petrine passages are the episodes of Peter walking on the water (14:28-31), Peter's confession to

Christ (16:17-19), as well as the episode of Jesus and Peter addressing the issue of temple tax (17:24-27). Bacon's (1917:1-23) observation of the above passages was that Matthew portrayed Peter as a surrogate Paul, dispensing Paul's answers to questions and conditions prevailing in his community. Kilpatrick (1946:37-40), who was the first to publish a redaction-critical approach to Matthew's Gospel and who also investigated Matthew's portrayal of Peter, concluded that Matthew described Peter according to legal regulations in the church, even though Matthew did not even mention the relationship between James and Paul. However, Streeter's real claim was not that Peter acted as the mediator between James and Paul. His argument was that an Antiochene provenance was suggested by Peter's status, in that the church and Matthew strongly promoted Peter. This probably indicated Peter's status in Antioch in accordance with a deep and proper relationship with Matthew's community.⁷

Streeter's final argument for Matthew's location in Antioch related to the development of the eschatology within the Gospel. This view was related not only to Streeter's own perspective, due to the fact that many Matthean scholars agree with Matthew's emphasis on the apocalyptic eschatology (Sim 1996:181-221). However, Streeter's argument regarding Matthew's eschatological orientation does in itself not render as sufficient proof, due to the fact that he was not completely successful in his attempt to explain the apocalyptic eschatology in a convincing way. One problem was the resurrection of the apocalyptic conjecture, which was the result of the "Jewish war". The war was hardly limited to Antioch. This provided evidence regarding the location of Matthew's Gospel, even though it did not definitively place it there. Moreover, it is not certain whether Matthew's emphasis on apocalyptic eschatology has sufficiently explained the local circumstances of Matthew's Gospel (see Sim 1998:57).

Streeter's arguments are thus in favour of the location of Matthew's Gospel in Antioch. The above arguments for the Antiochene provenance with reference to the Matthean community can be summarized as follows: It distinguishes between negative and positive arguments. The negative arguments relate to Antioch and Damascus and pertain to the question as to whether

the same two financial officials have an identical status or not, as Matthew 17:24-27 does not support such evidence. His other arguments regarding Matthew's location in Antioch were not convincing (Sim 1998:58). It might be that many scholars have agreed with this view, without any intense investigation. However, the number of arguments Streeter presents provides adequate evidence to favour Matthew's location at Antioch. Streeter's positive arguments are these: they confirm the Petrine connection to the Gospel. Peter fulfilled an active role in Antioch, and the later Patristic tradition has confirmed his long-standing association with the church there (Sim 1998:59). Therefore, Matthew in his Gospel promotes the prominent function of Peter. Streeter presents another good piece of evidence, namely that, according to the Patristic tradition, the original production of Matthew came from the Eastern Church (see Davies & Allison 1988:142). Matthew probably seemed to have been written from an eastern perspective, which came from and included a large Israelite population, as well as a Greek-speaking city, even though one cannot confirm that this was indeed the place of origin and location of Matthew's community.

3.2.2.8 Summary

In section 3.2 the date and location of the Matthean community was discussed. The date of Matthew's Gospel was probably after 70 CE. I argued that Mark was written around 65 to 70 CE, as the Gospel of Mark was written earlier than Matthew. Therefore, the Gospel of Matthew was written somewhere between 80 to 90 CE. This is important for the location of Matthew's community. Whether one accepts that the date of Matthew is earlier than 70 CE or not, one cannot explain the conflict between the Matthean community and formative Judaism. It is a very strong reflection on the Gospel of Matthew. Formative Judaism arose after the "Jewish War" in 70 CE. It is not possible to view the mixed state of the Matthean community as writing before 70 CE. The result of the above discussion implies that the location of the community is in Antioch. All other locations, which scholars have suggested as the place for Matthew's community seem problematic. Some places have no evidence of a Christian movement. Other places have no Israelite or Hellenistic background. The best option is

Antioch. However, the city of Antioch was not Israelite territory, but it was an important city to Israel and Israelite culture was reflected there. This means that the population of Antioch was a mixed state similar to the Matthean community. In addition, the Matthean community was hierarchically structured like the society in Antioch. However, the hierarchically structured community was not egalitarian in nature. These findings support my hypothesis that the Matthean community, located in Antioch, represented the characteristics of the social stratification of Israelite tradition. Below, the social stratification of the Matthean community is discussed in detail.

3.3 The social stratification of the Matthean community

According to Lenski (1966), the Roman Empire of the first century CE represented a typical agrarian society. An agrarian society displayed a gap between those who belonged to the elite (classes with authority) and those who had little or no access to any authority. Also in Matthew's community, a huge gap existed between rulers and subordinates within a set of hierarchical positions (see Vledder 1997:98; Saldarini 1988a:20-27, 39-45; Duling 1992:101; 1993:650-651; cf Rohrbaugh 1993a:383). Matthew's community shared the characteristics of an advanced agrarian society (see Duling 1992:101; 2002:526-532; Vledder and Van Aarde 1994:511; cf Van Eck 1995:211-214).

The difference between simple and advanced agrarian societies is that advanced societies went beyond the so-called horticultural societies, because of large advances in technology and production, which in the field of agriculture refers to instruments and processes such as ploughs, weed control, the harnessing of animals (see Lenski 1966:190-193; Lenski, Lenski & Nolan 1991:158-201; Duling 1992:100). However, advanced agrarian societies were not very different from simple agrarian societies, but were more advanced than simple agrarian societies in some areas. For instance, advanced agrarian society was the first to have used ordinary everyday tools and implements. Secondly, advanced societies could more adequately combat the disadvantages caused by famine, plagues, poor sanitary conditions, and mortality. Finally, regional and local economics were more specialized in an advanced society than in a

simple agrarian society. The economy was connected to political power and the urban elite. Vledder (1997:99) refers as follows to such a society: “This group was strengthened by taxation, growth in commerce, weakening kinships and the growth in expendable people.” Exploitation of the peasants was the rule (Vledder 1997:99; see Duling 1992:101). One of the outstanding features of an agrarian community was the hierarchy that existed between people in upper class positions and the common people. One can assume that the Matthean community also displayed large differences in their stratification, as a typical advanced agrarian society of the first century Mediterranean community.

From the perspective of social stratification, people who occupied a certain class were distinguished from those in another. According to Eldridge (1971:87), class status could basically have been divided into three basic classes in the following way: the proper class refers to the state of the differentiation of property holdings, an acquisition class referred to class situation of the class members as primarily determined by the opportunities with reference to the exploitation of services on the market. The social class structure was composed of the plurality of the class statuses of the members. Thus, a society was divided into a number of social strata and was hierarchically arranged (Bryant 1983:366). Lenski (1966:3) outlined such a social stratification in the following way: those who belonged to a class were connected to some strata according to their structural relationships of society. Hence, social stratification referred to the structured inequalities between groupings of people (Giddens 1996:212).

In this section, the social stratification of Matthew’s community as well as its hierarchical structure is dealt with. This study is based on the works of Rohrbaugh (1993a; 1993b) and Vledder & Van Aarde (1994). Before entering upon a discussion of the social stratification of the Gospel of Matthew, one has to confirm that the location of Matthew’s community was urban (see above 3.2.2.7, which postulates that the Matthean community was located in Antioch). However, according to Meeks (1983), Jesus’ ministry often reflected the village culture of Judea and Galilee, even though Matthew’s community was urban (Brown & Meier 1983:23; Stark 1991:189; White 1991:218).

3.3.1 The urban elite⁸

The Matthean community as an advanced agrarian society was divided into upper and lower classes. The upper classes included the rulers, retainer, merchant and priestly classes (the urban elite).⁹ The lower classes were the peasants, artisans, the unclean class and the expendables (the urban non-elite) (Lenski 1966:214-296; Rohrbaugh 1993a: 383; Saldarini 1988a:39-45). Lenski (1966:215-216) said that the agrarian rulers enjoyed “proprietary rights in virtually all the land and business in their realm, with differences existing in the magnitude of these rights.” The rulers controlled all the classes and had far-reaching powers in their territory. They were separated from the other classes. Due to the fact that kings and emperors never ruled all by themselves, they were in need of support from the governing classes (a small governing class always shared the responsibilities of government with them) (Lenski 1966:220). The governing class was around two percent of the population and benefited directly from important offices in the central government (cf Lenski 1966:219, 225; Saldarini 1988a:40; Rohrbaugh 1993a:383; Van Aarde 1993:532). According to Duling (2002:528), the ruling class and the governing classes in Palestine included procurators and their families, the Herodian client kings together with their families, some high priests and a few other priests, which included a few Sadducees, lay aristocrats, including a few Pharisees (Van Eck 1995:213-214).

In the case of Matthew’s narrative, the ruling class included the chief priests and the elders. The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees were mentioned with the chief priests and elders, but were part of the retainer class (Rohrbaugh 1993a:384 cf Saldarini 1988:161,172; Vledder & Van Aarde 1994:514). In the passion narrative, the scribes are mentioned twice as part of the complete leadership within Judaism (Mt 26:57, 59; 27:41), who with the elders and chief priests (Mt 16:21; 20:18) were the enemies of Jesus in Jerusalem. The scribes fulfilled a political function (Saldarini 1988a:161). Vledder & Van Aarde (1994:514) demonstrated that the Pharisees did not belong to Jerusalem’s urban elite, for the same reason, that they only fulfilled a political function in the passion narrative. This perspective was supported by Van

Tilborg (1972:5; see Vledder & Van Aarde 1994:514). The Pharisees were closely connected with the chief priests (Mt 21:45; 27:62); “the chief priests and the Pharisees” have to be identified with “the chief priests and the elders of the people” (Mt 21:45; 21:23) and the “chief priests that met with the elders” (Mt 27:62; 28:11-12) in the context of the Gospel. However, one cannot ignore Duling’s view (see above) that a few of the Pharisees and the scribes also belonged to the urban elite.

The ruling class and the governing classes in the Gospel of Matthew included (see Duling 1992:103; Vledder & Van Aarde 1994:513): Herod (Mt 2:1), the Magi (Mt 2:1-12), the rulers of Judea (Mt 2:6), the chief priests (Mt 2:4; 16:21; 20:18; 21:15, 23, 45; 26:3, 14, 47, 51, 59; 27:1, 3, 6, 28:11), Archelaus (Mt 2:22), the rulers’ families (the crowd maybe regarded as the family of the ruler) (Mt 9:18,25), the King (Mt 10:18; 11:8; 18:23; 22:2, 5, 11, 13; 25:34, 40, 45), Herod the tetrarch and Philip (Mt 14:1, 3), Antipas (Mt 14:1, 9), the rulers of the Gentiles and high officials (Mt 20:25), men going on a journey (Mt 25:14, 21, 23, 26), and the high priest Caiaphas (Mt 26:3, 57, 62, 63, 65). This governing class included in the second place the chief priests and the teachers of the Law (scribes) (Mt 2:4; 20:18; 21:15), a physician (Mt 9:12), the owner/landowner (Mt 13:27; 20:1,11; 21:33), elders (Mt 15:2; 16:21; 21:23; 26:3, 47, 57; 27:1, 3, 12, 20, 41; 28:12), the elders, chief priests and the teachers of the Law (scribes) (Mt 16:21; 27:41), a wealthy/rich young man (Mt 19:16, 22; 27:57), the chief priests and the elders (Mt 21:23; 26:3, 47; 27:1, 3, 12, 20; 28:11-12), the chief priests and the Pharisees (Mt 21:45; 27:62), the chief priest and the whole Sanhedrin (Mt 26:59), and Pontius Pilate (Mt 27:2, 13, 15, 19).

3.3.2 Retainers

About five per cent of the population belonged to this group, those who served the ruling and the governing classes. The urban elite usually employed a small army, and consisted of bureaucratic government officials, various kinds of servants, religious leaders, educators etcetera. These individuals and their families constituted what might be called the retainer class (Lenski 1966:243; Vledder & Van Aarde 1994:514). They did not have the same power

as the elite, but to some extent they shared the life of the elite, as some retainers became very powerful, after which they moved into the governing class (Saldarini 1988:41). Whenever an individual retainer lacked power, one person could easily be replaced by another. Many scribes and the Pharisees were members of the retainer class in their capacities as bureaucrats, minor officials and local leaders. Levi (Matthew) the tax collector, for example, fitted into this class (Saldarini 1988a:42; Rohrbaugh 1993a 385; Van Aarde 1993:532; see Van Eck 1995:211).

The retainer class (see Duling 1992:103; Rohrbaugh 1993a: 380-395; Vledder 1997:123) is mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew in the following contexts: as teachers of the Law (scribes) (Mt 2:4; 5:20; 7:29; 8:19; 9:3; 12:38; 13:52; 15:1; 17:10; 23:2, 13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29); Pharisees (Mt 3:7; 9:11, 14, 34; 12:2, 14, 24, 38; 15:1, 12; 16:1, 4, 6, 11, 12); Sadducees (Mt 3:7; 16:1, 4, 6, 11, 12); as an officer (Mt 5:25); as a Centurion (Mt 8:5, 8, 13; 27:54); as tax collector(s) (Mt 5:46; 9:9, 10, 11; 10:3; 11:19; 17:24; 18:17; 21:31, 32); as teachers/scholars (Mt 23:24); as attendants of Herod (Mt 14:2); as foremen (Mt 20:8); as Herodians (Mt 22:16); as disciples of the Pharisees (Mt 22:16); as those who arrested Jesus (Mt 26:57); as soldiers (Mt 27:27; 28:12) and as guards (Mt 26:58; 28:4,11).

The centurion and the tax collectors were the retainers of the Roman Empire, but they were regarded as part of the so-called unclean class as far as the Israelite community was concerned (see Chapter 4; Vledder 1997:123 n33). One needs to merely consider Matthew's depiction of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Scribes in their communities. Van Tilborg (1972:6) states that Matthew did not wish to create any distinction between the various groups. All of them were considered to be leaders amongst the Israel people, as they formed the most constant opposition to the ministry of Jesus, which was inclusive of all urban classes but not necessarily of the elite. Some of them (the Israelite leaders) belonged to the urban elite class; they had no independent power, but they had indirect political power. Lenski (1966:243-248) stated that this group of retainers often gained their political power when the governing classes ceased to be effective and the rulers left matters in their hands. They used this power to oppose the ministry of Jesus, but remained part of the urban non-elite class, and they

therefore maintained the stratification within their society.

3.3.3 The urban non-elite

The urban non-elite was the underprivileged classes of advanced agrarian societies. They consisted of the merchants, the peasants, the artisans, the degraded, unclean and expendables (see above, Van Eck 1995:212). These are discussed in the section regarding the merchants, the peasants and the artisan class.

The merchant class could not be clearly distinguished from either the ruling or the lower class as the merchants generally belonged to a low prestige group without any direct power. However, the merchant class stood in a marketing relationship to the governing class, while the ruling class also needed them to provide the materials required to continue their luxurious lives (Lenski 1966:250-256; Saldarini 1988a:42-43).

The peasant class supported the state and the privileged classes. This class consisted of a substantial majority (the labour force) of the population. They were heavily taxed (around 30 to 70 percent) and were kept under control, but they gained power whenever a labour shortage occurred and they were in this sense also of invaluable military importance during times of war (Lenski 1966:266-276; Saldarini 1988a:43; Van Eck 212).

The artisan class was not very different from the peasant class, and a considerable overlap always existed between these two groups. Lenski (1966:278) puts it as follows: the artisan class was “originally recruited from the ranks of the dispossessed peasantry and their non-inheriting sons and was continually replenished from these sources.” This class consisted of not more than three to seven percent of the population and along with the unclean class, discussed below, (Lenski 1966:279; Saldarini 1988a:43), most of the artisans were probably employees of the merchant class. They were not wealthy and did not have power (Lenski 1966:279-280). Jesus was from this class, together with the fishermen, like Peter, Andrew, James and John, who were considered not to have any influence in society (Saldarini 1988a:44).

Members of the urban non-elite in the Gospel of Matthew included (see Duling 1992:103; Rohrbaugh 1993a: 380-395; Vledder 1997:126) the following: Joseph (Mt 1:18-Jesus was a carpenter's son), and carpenters were considered to be part of the peasantry, so that Jesus was considered to have been a peasant, Mt 13:55), Mary (Mt 1:18; 27:56), Simon Peter and Andrew as fishermen (Mt 4:18), James and his brother John, sons of Zebedee (Mt 4:21), the city-dwellers (Mt 8:34; 11:20), a merchant (Mt 13:45), the fishermen (Mt 13:48), as Peter (he alone mentioned, Mt 14:28,29; 15:15; 16:16,22,23; 17:24-26; 18:21; 19:27; 26:33-37,58,69,73,75), Peter, James and John, the brother of James (Mt 17:1), the mother of Zebedee's sons (Mt 20:20), money exchangers (Mt 21:12), Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons (Mt 27:56). The urban non-elite class fulfilled an important function in the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus included these kinds of people as disciples in his inclusive ministry.

3.3.4 The unclean, degraded and expendable classes

Two classes are discussed from this section: the unclean and the degraded and expendable classes. There is not a big difference between them. The unclean and degraded classes were clearly in a lower and more inferior class than the common people (Lenski 1966:280-281). This class engaged in lower class and heavy work under dangerous conditions, such as rickshaw pullers, carriers, miners, the poorest of labourers, tanners, and prostitutes (Lenski 1966:281; Rohrbaugh 1993a:387; Van Aarde 1993:533). It has already been mentioned that the centurion (Mt 8:5-13) and the tax collector (Mt 9:9-13) were a part of the retainer class, but were made members of the unclean class as far as Judaism were concerned (see above 3.3.2).

The expendable class was at the bottom of this class system in the agrarian society. They constituted around five to ten per cent of the population and had no place or function in society. This class was landless and itinerant with no normal family life and a high death rate (Saldarini 1988a:44). According to Lenski (1966:128), the expendable class included "a variety of types, ranging from petty criminals and outlaws to beggars and underemployed

itinerant workers, and included all those forced to live solely by their wits or by charity.” Both of these classes lived outside the city walls in an agrarian society (see Vledder & Van Aarde 1994:517).

The unclean, degraded and expendable classes in the Gospel of Matthew (see Duling 1992:102-103; 1995:369-370; Vledder 1997:128) were the following: the sick (Mt 4:23, 24; 8:16; 9:12, 35; 10:8; 14:14, 35), the paralytic (Mt 4:24; 8:6; 9:2, 6), the demon-possessed (Mt 4:24; 8:16; 8:28-34; 12:12; 15:21-28), the epileptic (Mt 4:24; 17:15), the poor (Mt 5:3; 11:5; 19:21; 26:9, 11), the man with leprosy (Mt 8:2; 10:8; 11:5; 26:6), Peter’s mother-in-law, a sick woman (Mt 8:14), a sinner (Mt 9:10,11; 26:45), a bleeding woman (Mt 9:20-22), the blind men (Mt 9:27,28; 11:5; 12:22; 15:14,30-31; 20:30; 21:14), a dumb man (Mt 9:32; 15:30,31), the deaf (Mt 11:5), the lame/crippled (Mt 11:5; 15:30-31; 18:8; 21:14), the man with the withered hand (Mt 12:10), the Canaanite woman and the demon-possessed woman (Mt 15:22), the eunuch (Mt 19:12), children (Mt 19:13), the tax collectors and the prostitutes (Mt 21:31-31), robbers/bandits (Mt 21:13; 27:38,44), and Barabbas (Mt 27:16,21).

3.3.5 The rural peasants

The rural peasants were part of the lowest class, together with the urban non-elite, with the only difference being that they lived in the rural areas. They were engaged in primitive industries like farming and extracting raw materials. They comprised of the freeholders, tenants, day labourers and slaves (Vledder 1997:128-129). This class had the burden of supporting the state and the privileged classes, with the result that this responsibility fell on the shoulders of the common people, the peasant farmers, who constituted a substantial majority of the population (Lenski 1966:266). The rural peasant class is important for this study as the religious movement of Jesus started in these rural areas, and members of this peasant class became his disciples.

The peasants in the Gospel of Matthew included the following: Jesus (the protagonist of the Gospel story), people (Mt 3:5; 8:27; 22:10; 13:27; 18:23-25; 20:27; 21:34, 36; 22:3-10; 24:45-50; 25:14-30), the crowds (Mt 5:1; 7:28-29; 8:1, 18; 9:8, 33, 36; 12:46; 13:2, 36; 14:13-

19; 15:10, 30-39; 17:14; 19:2; 20:29, 31; 21:8-11, 46; 22:33; 23:1), different women, bandits, eunuchs, slaves, tenant farmers, as well as fishermen (Duling 1995a:369-370), slaves/son (Mt 8:6, 8; 12:18; 14:12; 21:15), Peter's mother-in-law (Mt 8:14), the disciples of Jesus (Mt 8:21-25; 9:37; 10:1; 12:1, 9, 49; 13:10, 36; 14:15-18; 15:2, 12, 23, 32, 33, 37; 16:5, 13, 20, 24; 17:6, 10, 14, 19, 24; 18:1; 19:10; 14:23, 25; 20:17; 21:1-2, 6, 20; 23:1; 24:1, 3; 26:8, 19, 20, 36, 40; 26:56; 27:64; 28:7, 8, 16), the disciples of John the Baptist (Mt 9:14; 11:2,7; 14:12), day labourers (Mt 9:37, 38; 10:10; 20:1, 8, 9), the twelve apostles (Mt 10:2-4), fishermen (Mt 13:48), those who were in the boat (Mt 14:33), tenants (Mt 21:35-41), the servants of the high priest (Mt 26:51), Simon who came from Cyrene (he contacted the Gentiles in Cyrene, see Vledder 1997:130 n71), the bystanders at the cross (Mt 27:39, 47) and Mary Magdalene (Mt 27:56; 28:1).

3.3.6 Summary

The community to which Matthew ministered was an advanced agrarian society, as well as a highly stratified society. The Matthean community was trapped in a hierarchical state, as different interest groups were present (see Duling 2002:528). Various groups called the urban elite (the rulers and governing classes), formed the upper classes in Matthew's community. The urban elite class was prominent and controlled the society. Examples from this class is Caesar (the ruler of the Gentiles), Herod (the ruler of Judah), Archelaus (the high priest), Caiaphas-a landowner, as well as other high officials (see 3.4.1). The retainer class was not the same as the urban elite, but they were also regarded as an upper class. The function of the retainer class was to support the urban elite. This group comprised of people such as the Pharisees, the Scribes, the Sadducees, the centurion, the tax collector, the disciples of the Pharisees, as well as a soldier (see 3.3.2). Most of these classes did not accept the teachings of Jesus on his inclusive ministry. The Pharisees, Sadducees, and the Scribes were the antagonists in the Gospel of Matthew.

The lower classes of this advanced agrarian society were formed of the unclean and degraded class, as well as the rural peasantry. The urban non-elite, called ministerial

instruments, were Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John, the fishermen, Mary, the mother of James and Joseph. The human vessels considered to have been unclean were classed together with the Gentiles, the man with leprosy, Peter's sick mother-in-law, the bleeding woman, the demon-possessed, the paralytic man, the blind, the sinner, the dumb and deaf, the Canaanite woman, the prostitutes, the robbers, the centurion (as seen from the perspective of Israelism), and so on. The peasant class included Jesus and his family, the disciples of John the Baptist, the people, Jesus' disciples, the slaves, the tenants, the day labourers, Mary and Magdalene, as well as the other Mary, together with the servants of the high priest. Jesus' position as a peasant was discussed by Crossan (1991), and Vledder and Van Aarde (1994:521). The evidence in support of this view is that Jesus' father was a carpenter, and thus as a result he and his family were considered to be part of the lowest strata of their society. This is, however, not important for this study, even though it did in fact confirm that Jesus came from the lowest strata in Palestine society.

This clearly implies that, indeed, the Matthean community was highly stratified. The argument is that a stratified community is not an egalitarian one. Rather, it was a hierarchically structured community. One can conclude from the above discussion that the date of the Matthean community was around 80 to 90 CE, while the location of the community was possibly the city of Antioch. Its stratified structure is reflected in the Gospel of Matthew. Furthermore, the city of Antioch was a mixed state consisting of Israelites and Gentiles. It was the best place for an inclusive ministry.

3.4 The constitution of Matthew's community

Scholars have argued that Matthew's community consisted of a mixture of Israelites and Gentiles who had been cut off from the main Judean community (see Chapters 1 and 2). It is therefore important to consider what kind of Israelites and Gentiles there were in this community. The social stratification of Matthew's community was closely related to the composition of his community. In Section 3.3, the discussion of the social stratification of the community provides important background information regarding the various interest groups

involved in the quest for inclusiveness, which is to be investigated. The aim is to consider the attitudes of the various members of the community with regard to the inclusion of the urban elite and the urban non-elite as related to the teaching of Jesus in Matthew's narrative.

3.4.1 The Israelite leaders

To define a leader in the first century Israelite world, is not simple. In Matthew there is little or no distinction between the Israelite leaders, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Scribes, the High Priests and the Elders (Van Tilborg 1972:1-6; see Kilpatrick 1966:101-123; Winter 1961:111-113). The High Priests and elders do not appear centrally in Matthew's narrative (in his framework their function was not considered to be very important). The High Priests and elders probably controlled issues that affected the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Scribes (Mt 26:3; 27:47). Hence, they are not considered to have been in direct connection with the ministry of Jesus, unlike the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Scribes, who were generally intensely related to the ministry of Jesus. The Israelite leaders who were prominent included the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Scribes and functioned as the antagonists in Matthew's narrative. The function of the antagonist in a narrative is usually to obstruct the protagonist's mission (Van Aarde 1994:76). Moreover, Saldarini's (1988b:200) point of view is that "the Pharisees, Scribes and Jesus were all integral parts of the Galilean society. Their religious activities were embedded in the political organization of the society and had immediate and important political, social and economic repercussions for all social classes."

In this narrative more emphasis has been placed on the Pharisees as opponents of Jesus than in the Gospel of Mark. This opposition against Jesus emerged around his teaching pertaining to the observance of the Sabbath, together with his prescriptions on the utilization of food and guidelines regarding purity in Matthew (Mt 9:6-13,14-17; 12:1-14). The Pharisees in Matthew's narrative had a wider function and a closer relationship with the Scribes than was the case in the Gospel of Mark. The Pharisees as a group challenged the authority of Jesus, having been declared and generally acknowledged as religious and social leaders, and they henceforth argued with him regarding the interpretation of the Law (Mt 9:31-34; 12:22-

30; 19:3-9). The Pharisees as a group had a huge influence in their society and it was this power that they used to indoctrinate the people with reference to their acknowledgment and adherence to the various social norms. When Jesus started his religious movement and the crowd followed him, the religious authority and the social power of the Pharisees was challenged. That Matthew described the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees in his Gospel seems obvious. Jesus condemned the insincere and ostentatious public behaviour of the Pharisees (Mt 5:20; 16:6; 23:1-39). He regarded them as the spiritually blind who led the people astray (Mt 23:24). Another issue regarding the Pharisees, which Jesus condemned was their lack of love. In his ministry, Jesus included both tax collectors and sinners, even though these were excluded by the local religious leaders (Mt 9:9-13). Hence Matthew depicted that Jesus called upon the Pharisees to be the leaven amongst the people (Mt 16:6-12). One can thus conclude that the conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders arose due to the fact that they had disregarded the main teaching of Jesus, which of course included the love commandment in Matthew's narrative (Saldarini 1988a:170; see Du Rand 1998:284).

In the Gospel of Matthew, the Sadducees are mentioned only twice, in relation to the Pharisees¹⁰ (Mt 3:7; 16:1-12). Matthew designed that the Sadducees and Pharisees united to oppose Jesus. Matthew's account regarding this issue is different to that of Mark and Luke, which only records that the Sadducees questioned Jesus concerning the resurrection (Mk 12:18-27; Lk 20:27-40). According to Saldarini (1998:167), in his account relating to these passages, Matthew did not make a particular distinction between all the Israelite groups as evidence for his personal conviction in his narrative. It seems evident that two leading Israelite groups represented the mainstream of opposition against the ministry of Jesus in and through the early church (Hatina 1995:74; cf Meier 1976:19). Matthew did not combine the two groups whenever the opportunity arose, but appears to have selected a gulf between Jesus and his followers on the one hand and a variety of Israelite groups with their leaders on the other, in order to develop a broad based narrative (Stanton 1993:136-137).

In the first place, John the Baptist attacked the Sadducees and Pharisees as the crowd came to him for baptism (Mt 3:7-10). The crowd knew that the Sadducees and Pharisees were

groups who formed a part of the leadership, which articulated and promoted a perspective on Israelite life in competition with Jesus and John the Baptist (Saldarini 1998:167). John the Baptist immediately attacked them as a brood of vipers (Mt 3:7). This implies that both groups opposed Jesus and the community of his disciples.

In the second place, Jesus warned his disciples against the false teachings of the Sadducees and the Pharisees, which formed the leaven of religious deception (Mt 6:12). This verse can be compared with Mark 8:15 and Luke 12:1. In Mark, the leaven represents the Pharisees and Herod, while in Luke the leaven refers to the Pharisees only. Hence, Matthew depicts the two leading groups as symbols of erroneous teachers and therefore as enemies of Jesus.

Matthew granted the Scribes¹¹ more importance in his narrative than the Gospels of Mark and Luke. The Scribes were the main opponents of Jesus in the narratives, even though they were exclusively described as members of the community to which Matthew ministered. The Scribes were, amongst other things, teachers, jurists, lawyers and even members of the Jerusalem Council. According to Matthew, they often sought the company of the high priest and were therefore associated with Jerusalem, where they were associated with the government (see Mt 2:4; 21:25). The Scribes themselves only appear in a couple of passages (Mt 7:29; 8:19; 9:3; 13:52; 17:10), but they also appear in Matthew's narrative together with other Israelite leaders at other stages.

The verses in Matthew 7:29, 9:3, 13:52 and 17:10 describe the function of the Scribes in relation to Jesus as negative. The authority of the Scribes conflicted with the teaching of Jesus (Mt 7:29), while their teaching related to Elijah (Mt 17:10). They thought that Jesus had blasphemed when he told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven (Mt 9:3) (Saldarini 1988a:159). Only in two passages are the Scribes (Mt 8:19; 13:52) mentioned together with Jesus in a positive sense in Matthew's Gospel. When a "Scribe" came to Jesus, stating that he would follow Jesus, Jesus replied by stating the difficulty in following him. This passage indicates the way in which Matthew depicts some of the Scribes as having a positive relationship with Jesus and consequently being interested in becoming his disciples. This means that the Scribes accepted Jesus as a fellow educated person and as a superior from

whom they could learn (Saldarini 1988a:159).

Moreover, Matthew refers to the Scribes who had accepted Jesus as follows: “every teacher of the law has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 13:52). This implies that there were Christian Scribes in Matthew’s community and that they most probably had a teaching function within the Christian community. This assumption seems evident because the Scribes were accepted as teaching authorities within the Israelite society (Saldarini 1988a:160). Matthew chapter 23 also mentions the function of the Scribes as legitimate teachers within both the Israelite and Christian societies. These Scribes were in general rejected by the Jews: “I send you prophets and wise men and Scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town” (Mt 23:34). This statement also has a parallel in Luke, as “prophets and apostles” (Lk 11:49). According to Saldarini (1988:160), the prophets were also originally rejected, as is evidenced from part of Q’s polemic against the rejection of the prophets in Judaism. The wise men and Scribes were a reflection of this, as Matthew and Luke adapted this statement in order to fit the Christian circumstances during the late first century. Matthew conceived the prophets, the wise men and the scribes as being leaders and teachers within Matthew’s community prior to formative Judaism. Henceforth, the office of a Scribe remained an important one within Matthew’s community (Saldarini 1988a:160).

It is clear that some important Israelite leaders were opponents of Jesus in Matthew’s narrative. However, there was not one single character or group amongst the religious leaders (the upper stratification of the Matthew Gospel) that opposed Jesus: his antagonists were combined in Matthew, from amongst several groups, and his opponents shared similar traits¹². The Israelite religious leaders were portrayed in an unfavourable light from the beginning to the end of Matthew’s narrative. They were depicted as religious leaders, but they had no God-given authority to lead the people (Carter 1996:240). Moreover, they had rejected God’s plan of salvation for the people. Hence, no Israelite leaders belonged to Matthew’s community except for a number of Scribes.

3.4.2 Other members from the upper stratification

The Gospel of Matthew also mentions other members of the community who came from the upper levels of the social hierarchy. Examples of these include the rich young man (19:16, 22), the rich man Joseph of Arimathea (Mt 27:57), the centurion (Mt 8:5,8,13; 27:54), as well as the tax collectors (Mt 5:46; 9:9, 10, 11; 10:3; 11:19; 17:24; 18:17; 21:31, 32). The rich young man and Joseph of Arimathea probably came from the governing class, while the centurion and the tax collectors came from the retainer class. In this section, the centurion and the tax collectors are not considered due to the fact that they were seen from a Jewish perspective and they also belonged to the non-urban elite class (see above 3.3.2). The non-urban elite class members who had been present in Matthew's community will be considered, however.

The rich young man came up to Jesus and asked: "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" Jesus replied that he should obey the commandments. The young man responded by stating that he had kept to them since he was a boy (see Mk 10:20). Jesus answered, "go and sell your possessions and give to the poor and come, follow me". We are told "When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth" (Mt 19:16-22). The young man had kept the commandments since he was a boy, which therefore implies that the young man's framework of reference was Judaism. In comparing this same parable with the accounts of Mark (10:22) and Luke (18:23), it seems clear that the young man never became a member of the Christian community. Neither of the Synoptic Gospels mentions that this young man actually became a disciple of Jesus.

However, one additional passage does grant us an insight about the rich man, as a member of Matthew's community (Mt 27:57). The Gospel of Matthew states that Joseph of Arimathea was a rich man and indeed a disciple of Jesus. According to Mark (15:43) and Luke (23:50,51), Joseph of Arimathea was a prominent member of the Jerusalem Council (who had not consented to their decision and action regarding the crucifixion of Jesus). He gave his own tomb for the body of Jesus to be buried in (Mt 27:60). Matthew recalls from Isaiah 53:9 that "they made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death" (see France 1985:403). This upper class man followed the teaching of Jesus and became his secret disciple in the

Matthew narrative. We can assume that Joseph of Arimathea had a high and profound authority because he “attended to Pilate, during which he asked for Jesus’ body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him” (Mt 27:58). This scene is most probably intended to let us know that some of the members of the upper class also followed Jesus.

It seems quite evident that some members of the urban elite did follow the teaching and ministry of Jesus in Matthew’s narrative. In Matthew’s narrative, however, the majority of them were opponents of Jesus. We have learned that Matthew portrayed a few of the Scribes, (enemies of the historical Jesus) who, together with the rich man, became followers of Jesus. The upper classes on the whole excluded themselves from Jesus’ religious movement.

3.4.3 The non-urban elite members of Matthew’s community

The purpose of this section is to determine whom Matthew depicted as the non-urban elite members of the community to whom he ministered. It seems clear that the non-urban elite classes included peasants usually living in rural areas, apart from the degraded, unclean and expendable classes. The members of the non-urban elite in Matthew’s community are divided into three sections, namely the peasants, the unclean (the degraded and expendables), as well as the Gentiles. Recent social historians have concluded about Matthew’s community that his followers were a sectarian group. One of the important arguments in this regard was that any sect was considered to be a marginal¹³ group (Overman 1990; Balch 1991). Dulling (1995a: 358-359) believes that Matthew’s community was a marginal group and that the author of Matthew was deeply concerned with them. Hence, marginal figures in the Gospel of Matthew are considered below.

3.4.3. 1 The crowds

In the Gospel of Matthew there are fifty references to crowds. The crowd was considered to be a peasant class in the agrarian society (see Carter 2000:127). Kingsbury (1969:26-27) recognizes that Matthew distinguishes the crowds from their leaders and the crowds, as sharing directly in the ministry of Jesus. Most of the peasant class followed Jesus and even

though the crowds did not belong to the Christian community, they were to be associated with their leaders (Kingsbury 1969:28). Kingsbury's arguments have raised some questions regarding the crowds. Two such questions are: Was the crowd Israelite or Gentile or possibly a group consisting of both Israelites and Gentiles? In which way were the people in the crowd related to the ministry of Jesus, considering the fact that the crowd had gone along with the leaders of Israel?

One can consider the first argument concerning the identity of the crowd. Certain Matthean passages such as Matthew 4:25 appear to presuppose that at least some sections of the crowds were Israelites, while other passages like Matthew 15:29-39 probably represent Gentile crowds in the ministry of Jesus. One should consider Matthew's geographical references to the Gentile world. The examination below takes into account a variety of data within the Gospel of Matthew.

When Jesus started teaching in the synagogues and preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God and healing sicknesses among the people, the news about Jesus spread all over Syria and large crowds from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him (Mt 4:23-25). In Matthew's selection, the regions of Galilee, Jerusalem and Judea are accepted as "Israelite" places, while the debate as to whether Syria, the Decapolis, as well as the area beyond the Jordan where Israelite or Gentile still continues. The region of Syria is mentioned only once in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 4:23-25). According to Trilling (1964:135; see Cousland 2002:56), Matthew only mentions Syria in the context of a limited region in the north of Galilee. He argues that Matthew mentions Galilee together with Syria to the north, after which he then refers to Galilee (lower Galilee) and Syria (upper Galilee) respectively. Moreover, Matthew describes the nature of Jesus' ministry and added these references to Syria that the ministry of Jesus was spreading across the country. Matthew 4:24 refer to the healing by Jesus, while Matthew 4:25 identifies the provenance of these followers of Jesus (Cousland 2002:57). Hence Syria is not mentioned in this context as a proof of the origins of his followers. However, the inclusion of Syria by the evangelist is simply an indication of the provenance of the Gospel. According to Carter's

(2000:125) interpretation, Matthew's reference to Syria may reflect the Gospel's origin, as a significant Israelite population existed in both Syria and its capital Antioch. The reference to Syria also continued to include the Gentiles, who were last noted in the phrase "Galilee of the Gentiles" in Matthew 4:15. Matthew might have referred to Syria in the context of Jesus' ministry because he started his preaching at Antioch in Syria. The teaching and preaching of the good news through the ministry of Jesus was not only for the Israelite crowd. Matthew narrates that the ministerial activities of Jesus reached outside of the Israelite environment to the whole of the Gentile environment, including Syria. The missionary activities of Jesus attracted Israelite and Gentile people from Galilee, Jerusalem and Judea, as well as from Syria (Davies 1993:48).

Matthew also mentions the city of Decapolis in Matthew 4:25. The region around the city of Decapolis was Hellenistic in its cultural orientation within a Semitic setting (Du Plessis 1998:64). According to Cousland (2002:58), ten Greek cities were involved, namely Damascus, Philadelphia, Raphana, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippo, Dion, Pella, Galasa and Canatha. Alexander Jannaeus had conquered and imposed Israelite customs upon the cities of Dion, Scythopolis and Gadara. Pompey operated amongst these cities, which were re-established as Greek cities and granted municipal autonomy to them (see 3.3.4; Josephus, *Ant.* 13:393-397, 14:74-76). Hence, the population of the region of Decapolis was mixed, with both Israelites and Gentiles (see an extended discussion regarding this below). Members of both of these groups followed Jesus in Matthew's depiction on the narrative. During the reign of Herod the Great, both the cities of Hippo and Gadara were under his authority, but after his death, the city of Hippo became an independent state, which was later attached to the province of Syria (Cousland 2002:58). The above discussion has attempted to show that Matthew understood the crowds to have been primarily Israelite, even though many Gentiles were included in his community (see Van Aarde 1994:82; Minear 1974:39-40).

In Matthew's Gospel, the term "Israel" fulfils an important function, as Israel refers to the people of Israel (Mt 2:6; 9:33; 10:6; 15:24,31; 27:9) (see Chapter 2; Harvey 1996:234-238). The first reference is in Matthew 2:6: "who will be the shepherd of my people Israel". The

majority of the other references to Israel in the Gospel were in the context of Israel's being the people of God. Two more instances of Israel being associated with crowds occur, namely Matthew 9:33 and 15:31. In Matthew 9:33, the crowds had observed the miracle healing of Jesus together with the casting out of a demon; after which the people replied "never was anything like this seen in Israel" (Mt 9:33). This reference to Israel did not only include the geographical context of Israel (Harvey 1996:235 n34), but most probably also included the totality of God's dealing with his people through the ministry of Jesus in Matthew's depiction (Hummel 1966:144). Hence, these crowds were examples of God's including the Gentiles in the people of Israel in Matthew's community.

The pericope of Jesus' teaching of the four thousand (Mt 15:29-39) also indicates an association of the crowd with Israel, where the crowds glorified the God of Israel in Matthew's community. According to Cousland (2002:71; France 1989b:234), "the use of the appellation God of Israel has frequently been taken as an indication that the crowds here were Gentiles, since, it is alleged [that the] Jews would simply praise God." The feeding and healing took place from the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. Hence, this place is situated in a Gentile territory (cf Mt 8:28-34; 16:13). However, the argument about the "God of Israel" is not accepted by many scholars, due to the fact that while the Israelites themselves hardly ever used the term "the God of Israel", the non-Israelites almost never used this expression (Cousland 2003:71). It is, however, a fact that Jesus attended to certain areas of the Gentile world during his ministerial journeys in the Matthew's Gospel. One cannot ignore that crowds followed Jesus from these Gentile provinces. Moreover, many Israelites lived within some of these Gentile provinces. The crowd was therefore mainly Israelite, even though it included an admixture of Gentiles (see Sabourin 1982:305-306; Smillie 2002:86-87).

Next, one needs to discuss the geographical location of the inclusive ministry of Jesus in Matthew's depiction. The key concern is whether the geographical location belonged to Gentiles or Israelites. According to Lohfink (1983:276; see Wire 1991:100), Matthew regarded Galilee, Judea and Perea as Israelite, and he did not mention Tyre, Sidon and Idumea, due to the fact that these other places were Gentile. This view is not accepted by Krieger

(1986:98-119). The name “Palestine”, mentioned in the first Gospel, was only a reality in the period of the post-70 CE period. Judea was a Roman province’s name in Matthew’s Gospel and the Gospel reflects a post-70 situation. Judea, Samaria, Perea and Idumea were then consolidated into Palestine. This consolidation accounted for Matthew’s not having mentioned Idumea and Samaria in and through his reference to and mentioning of the area beyond the Jordan (which was also the region of Judea). Moreover, Matthew 19:1 (“Jesus left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan”) does provide some evidence that Matthew, in his time, referred to the area beyond the Jordan as Judea (Krieger 1986:104-105). This perspective is nevertheless not sufficient evidence for a proper conclusion.

The Gospel of Matthew does not provide much reflection on the political situation of the post-70 CE period. Matthew was at that stage most probably more concerned with the political topography of Judea than with the idea of the spiritual wealth of God’s people. This would imply that the territory of Palestine was no longer important at that time, as Judea was already under the rule of the Roman Empire, as well as influenced by Greek culture. For instance, Galilee had a mixed population of Israelites and Gentiles, and Matthew called Galilee the countryside of the Gentiles (Sim 1998:220).

The mixed crowd consisting of the multitudes described in Matthew had followed Jesus since the beginning of his inclusive ministry. The multitudes came from various places such as Syria, the Decapolis, Trans-Jordan, Galilee and Judea (Mt 4:25). This verse reflects the ethnic character of the Christian community near the end of the first century, as it would appear to the Israelite purists to whom Matthew ministered (Smillie 2002:76; see Mcknight 1990:93-94). Moreover, Smillie’s (2002:88) interpretation of Matthew 4:24-25 is that Galilee and the ten Greek cities as well as Jerusalem and Judea and the area beyond the Jordan (all of the above cities do by way of a historical excursus grant some indication of the number of non-Israelites in the area) are a description of an inclusive people (a detailed discussion on this issue follows in Chapter 4). The crowd, which followed Jesus in Matthew’s depiction 4:25, composed of mixed peoples, can be linked to Matthew 5:1 (“so seeking the crowds”).

According to Smillie (2002:88), “the multi-racial crowds of Matthew 4:25 were the crowds of Matthew 5:1 who made up the audience for the Sermon on the Mount.” Smillie (2002:88) believes that there is no break in the syntax of the verses between Matthew 4:25 and Matthew 5:1. Hence, the crowd in this narrative in Matthew consisted of both Israelites and Gentiles, with the Israelites of course forming the majority.

The above views are supported by Van Aarde (1994:80-86) and Minear (1974:39-40). Minear (1974:39-40) argues that the Israelite crowd includes the Gentiles as a group in the pre-paschal period and that the mission to the Israelite crowd is a continuation of the Gentile mission during the post-paschal period in Matthew’s narrative. Van Aarde (1994:82) understands Minear’s argument as signifying no “discontinuity” between the pre-paschal level and the post-paschal level. Van Aarde (1994:82) believes that “the mission to the Jewish crowd on the pre-paschal level fulfills a type of *transparency* which relates to the disciples-commission during post-paschal period.” This discussion clearly confirms that in the Gospel of Matthew, the crowds include both Israelites and Gentiles in their community.

3.4.3.2 Gentiles (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη)¹⁴

One can now move to another important question. Were there any people with some Gentile background within the Matthean community? This issue has been debated for years and is still debated today. The Israelite Christian community did not have any Gentile missionary projects and did not have much contact with the Gentile world. It does, however, seem apparent that at least some people with a non-Israelite background belonged to the Matthean community. The Gentiles as such were portrayed reasonably positively in Matthew’s narrative, as, for example, with the centurion of Capernaum (Mt 8:5-13), the Canaanite woman (Mt 15:21-28), as well as everybody else included in the universal mission (Mt 28:19). Most Matthean scholars agree that Gentiles were present within Matthew’s community. Nevertheless, there is a problem with this latent presence of some Gentiles, together with a certain anti-Gentile perspective in Matthew’s Gospel (cf Mt 18:17). This anti-Gentile perspective creates the impression that the community in general did not like the Law-free

Gentile community. Any members of the Matthean community who were not Israelite by birth must have converted to Judaism in general, since Matthew clearly supported the Law-observing mission to the Gentiles (Sim 1998:247-248).

Before discussing this subject, one should consider the Gentile characters in Matthew's Gospel. The Galileans fulfill a very important function in the narrative and they symbolize the relationship of the Matthean disciple-community with the non-Israelite world, as signaled by the presence of certain Gentile members in this community.

Sim's (1995:21; see Senior 1998:8) point of view is that Matthew and his Israelite community were open and friendly towards the Gentile world in his narrative, even though the community largely avoided contact with the surrounding Gentile society. Sim has analysed this Gentile story within Matthew's Gospel as the genealogy of Jesus (Mt 1:1-17), and certain anti-Gentile sentiments (Mt 5:46-47; 6:7-8, 32; 18:15-17). The first four women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus are Gentiles who were brought into the messianic line and viewed favourably by Matthew in the Gospel, a preview of the church's future with the Gentiles. Possibly one or more of the women were converts to Judaism in the later Rabbinic tradition. It is therefore misleading to accept these women as Gentiles, even though they were not fundamentally Israelite. Hence, Matthew's inclusion of these four women in the genealogy of Jesus was designed to emphasize something other than their Gentile origin (Sim 1988:220; see Johnson 1988:152-179; Brown 1979:71-74). However, the genealogy defines the relationship of the main character to the past and shows something important about the present time of the Matthean community. It provides information about the setting or the origin of Jesus, and suggests that his followers were at the centre of God's purpose for his people (Carter 2000:53). The genealogy of Jesus is inclusive, as it extends from Israelite to Gentile territories (for example, Babylon), encompassing males and females, Gentiles and Jews, powerful kings, as well as little, powerless women (Carter 2000:54). Hence, the genealogy of Jesus suggests that the writer had a theological agenda, a sociological and pastoral motive, as well as making a narrative contribution.

In respect of the women in the genealogy, it is not clear whether all of them were indeed

Gentiles. We are, of course, sure that Rahab (Josh 2) was a Canaanite, that Ruth (Ruth 1:4) was a Moabite and that Tamar (Gen 38:1-6) was a Canaanite. Bathsheba might have been an Israelite, but she married Uriah, the Hittite, which linked her to the Gentiles (2 Sam 11:3). Sim (1998:218-219) does not clearly mention that these women in the genealogy of Jesus were included due to the fact that they were from a Gentile background. Matthew's intention regarding the genealogy of Jesus was inclusive of both male and female, Gentiles and Jews, members of the elite and the non-elite, as part of his community. The Gentile women in the genealogical narrative were clear signs from Matthew that at least some members of his community were Gentiles.

Other passages that include an anti-Gentile trend were linked to the admonition to love your enemies (Mt 5:46-47), the Gentile manner of praying (Mt 6:7-8), the Gentiles, who were anxious about worldly issues, being frowned upon (Mt 6:31-32), the treatment of the tax collector and the Gentile (Mt 18:17). Sim (1995:28) believes that these verses reflect Matthew's very negative attitude toward Gentiles, namely that they were irreligious people who provided a negative role model. Sim concluded that one problem was avoided here, namely that these verses were redacted in terms of the current viewpoint. This means that these anti-Gentile verses represented older, more traditional material, which Matthew included in his Gospel (Senior 1999:9). The references to Gentiles in Matthew are surely authentic. Smillie (2002:76) believes that this perspective needed support from "the late first century *Sitz im Leben* of Matthew's redactional activity, which would have sought some justification for a Gentile mission within the lifetime of Jesus." This view is based on the fact that Matthew's community moved out from within Judaism. Of course, this historical assumption suggests that there might not have been many Gentiles during the lifetime of Jesus, although it is asserted that the depiction of the positive behaviour of Jesus towards the Gentiles has been influenced by Matthew's contemporaries, who had a positive policy towards the Gentiles (Smillie 2002:76).

Jesus' positive attitude towards the Gentile ministry was transparent within the community amongst which the disciples lived and ministered. Moreover, according to Sabourin

(1982:307), the life and ministry of Jesus in Galilee was proleptically announced with reference to the future development of the disciple community for the great mission to all nations.

The positive statements concerning Gentiles in Matthew's Gospel are explored next. This would imply that one needs to reach a more subtle understanding of Matthew's perspective regarding the Gentiles and the Gentile mission's requirements. Senior (1999:14-18) has provided a detailed analysis of 18 texts related to positive statements regarding Gentiles in Matthew's narrative.

(a) In the opening verse of the Gospel, Matthew declares that Jesus is the "son of Abraham" (Mt 1:1). The function of Abraham as the father of the nations in the New Testament text presupposes that Matthew intended to stress the mission of Jesus as including the Gentiles.

(b) The genealogy of Jesus in Matthew includes women who were both Gentiles and "outsiders." This implies that Matthew also intended the group (to whom Jesus ministered) to include Gentiles. It is easy to determine positive statements about Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew, as has already been discussed above.

(c) The infancy narrative also mentions the Gentiles (Mt 2:1-12) in a positive manner, with the Gentile magi first seeking Jesus, after which they offered gold and incense and myrrh to Jesus. A further emphatic support of this conviction was that Jesus and his mother escaped to the Gentile land of Egypt (Mt 2:13). The fact that the Gentile magi was the first to worship Jesus, together with the fact that the land of Egypt protected Jesus, is included in Matthew's huge and important positive perspective on the Gentiles. Some Gentiles fulfilled a special function in the foreground of Matthew's narrative (Saldarini 1994:82).

(d) When Jesus prepared for his ministry in Mt 4:12-16, Matthew referred to Galilee as the country of the Gentiles¹⁵, with reference to those who sat in darkness, having signalled the future inclusive mission of Jesus to the Gentiles (see Chapter 4).

(e) Matthew 4:23-26 (see 3.4.3.1) has already been discussed. It serves as proof that the crowd also included some Gentiles.

(f) Jesus' healing of the centurion's servant in Matthew 8:5-13 offers a striking difference between Matthew and Luke. Luke 7:1-10 emphasizes that the centurion had a proper relationship with Israelites, as well as that he intended to build a synagogue. According to Matthew, the centurion came directly to Jesus, without any interceding Israelite friends. Both Matthew and Luke record Jesus' surprise and praise for the centurion's faith and accordingly contrast his faith with the lack thereof anywhere else in Israel (Smillie 2002:92). Matthew adds some more important details, stating "I tell you that many from the East and West shall come and sit down at the table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the utter darkness" (Mt 8:11-12). This story suggests that Matthew's situation was an actual extension of Jesus' healing ministry, with the inclusion of the Gentile soldier.

(g) Jesus reflected where he had preached, favourably contrasting the probable reaction of Gentile cities like Tyre, Syre, Sidon, and Sodom with that of the Galilean towns which showed a lack of response. Matthew thus mentioned the Gentile cities (Mt 11:20-24) in a positive light.

(h) Matthew's fulfillment quotation from Isaiah 42:1-4 portrays Jesus as the Servant "proclaiming justice to Gentiles" and predicts that in his name the Gentiles will have hope (Mt 12:18-21).

(i) Jesus stated that his mission was only Israel, even though he finally acclaimed the great faith of the Canaanite woman and healed her daughter (Mt 15:21-28). The main theme of this passage was thus the fact that the Matthean Jesus included the Gentiles in his ministry. His plan for salvation was the same as Matthew's for his community (Kopas 1990:18; cf Jackson 2002:85).

(j) In the parable of the labourers (Mt 20:1-16), even though the labourers all started working at different times, they were all paid equally. The mention of the labourers who had reached the vineyard late most probably referred to the Gentiles.

(k) In Matthew 21:43, the parable of the vineyard most probably included a reference to those who would respond to Jesus and thus most probably included the Gentiles (the kingdom of

God would be given to a “people who will produce its fruit”), as well as the Israelites.

(l) In the parable of the wedding banquet, the invitation was extended to the Gentiles (Mt 22:1-14). This parable strongly hinted that the invitation of Jesus was rejected by the Israelites, after which Jesus then extended his invitation to include the Gentiles. The mission of Jesus thus found its complete intention and meaning in this.

(m) The apocalyptic discourse (Mt 24:14) clearly states that the universal proclamation of the salvation in and through Jesus includes all nations (Gentiles).

(n) In the parable of the sheep and the goats (Mt 25:31-46), the parable indicates that Matthew’s community was a mixed one¹⁶, including both Israelites and Gentiles (“all the nations will be gathered before him,” verse 32).

(o) Pilate’s wife attempted to persuade Pilate not to condemn Jesus (Mt 27:19). Matthew portrayed this Gentile woman as attempting to rescue Jesus, while, by contrast, the chief priests and the elders condemned Jesus.

(p) The centurion and his soldiers confessed Jesus as the “Son of God” (Mt 27:54).

(q) Jesus proclaimed the Gospel to all nations (Mt 28:19).

All seventeen of these texts provide evidence that the attitude of Matthew’s narrative was positive toward the Gentiles. These texts lead on to conclude that Matthew’s concern for the relationship between Jesus and the Gentiles may not be on a par with his concern for Jesus’ relationship with Israel (Senior 1999:18). Moreover, the Gentile mission, according to Matthew, clearly included the Gentiles who were to become members of his community (Tagawa 1969-70:162).

It has been argued in this section that the Matthean community also included Gentile members. The Matthean community had a close and open relationship with the Gentiles and the world of the Gentiles. This also confirms that Matthew’s portrayal of Jesus’ positive mission toward the Gentiles in his life time had been influenced by the disciples’ community (the post-paschal disciples’ community), which included the Gentiles and the mission to the Gentiles.

3.4.3.3 Women

About two decades ago, Matthean scholarship began to focus on women in the Gospel. Social sciences and literary criticism have influenced Matthean feminist criticism.¹⁷ Matthean feminist scholarship includes a literary approach (Anderson 1983, 1987), a feminist historical perspective (Selvidge 1984, 1987; Schaberg 1987; Blomberg 1991) and a social scientific focus (Levine 1988; Wire 1991; Corley 1993; Love 1993, 1994). These feminist approaches rose up against the dominant male perspectives in the reading of Matthew's Gospel. When one reads the First Gospel, women do not seem particularly significant. They usually appear as background personalities or in association with men (see Wire 1991:103). However, this section is not intended to present a feministic approach to women within the Matthean narrative. Instead, Matthew's depiction of the relationship of Jesus with women and their membership in the community are considered, as well as the social stratification of women within the community.

The following references to women characters occur in Matthew's Gospel (Anderson 2001:50):

- Mary, Jesus' mother (Mt 1:18-25; 2:13, 19-21);
- Mother and brothers (Mt 12:46-50);
- Mary, brothers and sisters (Mt 13:53-56);
- Peter's mother-in-law (Mt 8:14-17);
- The ruler's daughter (Mt 9:18-19, 23-26);
- The woman with the haemorrhage (Mt 9:20-22);
- Jesus' feeding of the five thousand men besides women and children (Mt 14:21; 15:38);
- The Canaanite woman (Mt 15:21-28);
- The mother of the sons of Zebedee (Mt 20:20; 27:56);
- The woman at Bethany (Mt 26: 6-13);

- Pilate's wife (Mt 27:19);
- The maid who confronted Peter (Mt 26:69);
- The women at the cross and tomb (27:55-56, 61; 28:1-10) including Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, Magdalene and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

Some of the women mentioned above have already been discussed because of their Gentile background.

In Matthew's narrative, women appeared to belong to the community of believers even though they were excluded from being recognized in its history and activities in the key areas of public power. Women shared the Israelite tradition and heritage, even though they were not usually regarded as equal in status to men (Kopas 1990:14). It is assumed that Matthew's description of women sees them as embedded with their male relatives (see above). Pilate's wife and the mother of the Zebedees can be regarded as connected to their male relatives. Moreover, while women were the witnesses to Jesus' death, burial and empty tomb, these facts did not in themselves make them disciples. After the resurrection of Jesus, he first appeared to women, whom he had sent to inform the disciples (Mt 27:55-56, 61; 28:1-8) (Wire 1991:102; Anderson 2001:45-50). Hence, women were the true participants in the founding of the Christian community from the inside, even though their social status was always lower than and submissive to that of males. Women were thus not equal to men, due to the fact that they were part of a patriarchal¹⁸ community.

There is no doubt that the author of Matthew's Gospel designed and based its content on a patriarchal point of view. There is much evidence of Matthew's patriarchal stance, such as the fact that Joseph is at the centre of the birth story; that the power-groups in Matthew's Gospel were Israelite leaders; that the disciples were male; and that Jesus' teaching often assumed only a male audience (Anderson 2001:29). Hence, Matthew's phraseology is very important for a proper understanding of the status of women. Matthew's depiction of women is presented according to a cautious and traditional perspective. Traditionally, women had little importance in the community in the period of Jesus (Kopas 1990:13). Women are mentioned

in Matthew's Gospel as examples, but these examples are significant, due to the fact that they involved some cultural reflection on the status of women. For instance, when Jesus discussed divorce (Mt 5:31-32), the social-cultural setting of a woman's status in divorce was clearly outlined. Israelite society did allow divorces, but was based on a unilateral decision by the husband (Kopas 1990:14; see Du Plessis 1998:310-311). Mark's statement on divorce revealed a more positive view for women (Mk 10:10-12), as Mark stated that if a man divorced his wife and married another, he committed adultery. In the same vein, if a woman divorced her husband and married another, she committed adultery. These intimations of equality pave the way for a more pervasive equality. It has been confirmed that marriages were generally structured along patriarchal lines, founded on the power and interests of men (Carter 2000:147). The status of women was not considered equal to that of men, and their actions were always considered to be under those of men.

Women are not named among Jesus' disciples, even though they were prominent in the stories demonstrating faith, as exemplary faith was considered most wonderful in Matthew's Gospel (Mt 8:14-15; 9:18-26; 14:21; 15:21-28, 38). One can consider Matthew's broader treatment of women as examples of faith and as an incentive to good works. Matthew described the faith of a woman to have been better than that of the twelve disciples. Jesus said to a Canaanite woman (also a Gentile); "You have great faith" (Mt 15:28). This woman was, in the face of the instructions of Jesus, greatly challenged in terms of ethnic, gender, religious, political as well as economic barriers. The narrative of the Canaanite woman stands as an example of the faith required of the true member of Matthew's community (cf Jackson 2002:20). The faith of the woman was important in her overcoming all ethnic, religious, gender and patriarchal-familial barriers (Wainwright 1991:251). The story of a nameless woman who anointed the feet of Jesus in Matthew 26:6-13 is another example. The woman, through her actions, proved her deep care and respect for Jesus. The disciples of Jesus did not understand his death (Mt 26:8-9), but she had recognized that Jesus would suffer and die at the hands of his enemies in Matthew's depiction (Carter 2000:502-503). Wherever this Gospel is preached throughout the world, the woman would be remembered for her symbolic

act (Duling 2002:555). It is clear that the faith of these women was indeed vast, while the disciples had little faith (Mt 6:30; 8:26; 16:8; 17:19-20) (Corely 1993:175). Peter's reluctance to accept that the Messiah must suffer and die was rebuked by Jesus (Mt 16:22-23) and Peter denied Jesus in the passion narrative. Matthew showed that the faith of this woman was great and should be regarded as a model for the community.

Women characters were the followers of Jesus from the beginning of his ministry at Galilee to its end in Jerusalem. According to Munro (1982:231; see Malbon 1983:41), women are to be identified as disciples. In the case of Matthew's Gospel, Mattila (1999:154-160) included some women disciples. The word "disciple" was a technical term for a pupil of a teacher in the world of the New Testament. The meaning of discipleship involved adherence to a great teacher and his particular way of life. In Matthew's Gospel, the disciples were often specified as twelve specific followers, even though sometimes a large undefined group of followers was mentioned. The term disciples most probably indicated a limited inside group very close to Jesus (Mt 13:11). This limitation to the "inside" was not an indication only of the twelve disciples in Matthew's narrative. Matthew mentioned that Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple of Jesus as well (Mt 27:57). This is an indication that some nameless disciples, who were not part of the group of the twelve disciples, followed Jesus. Both groups had a different attitude toward Jesus in Matthew 26-28.

According to Mattila (1999:157-158), the group of women appears to be more dominant than "the twelve disciples" in the passion narrative, where women were the witnesses of the death and the resurrection of Jesus from the beginning to the end. In the beginning of the passion narrative, the disciples were present with their master, Jesus, all the time in Matthew's depiction. They ate the Passover meal with Jesus and then followed him to Gethsemane. However, when Jesus was arrested, every one of them went his own way. Following the resurrection of Jesus, the twelve were again present in the events that took place in Galilee. However, the unknown woman who anointed Jesus (Mt 26:6-13) and Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of Zebedee's sons (Mt 27:55-56) were presented in the passion narrative as women who observed the crucifixion, the

death of Jesus, the tomb and his resurrection. These women proclaimed the resurrection to the disciples, who had fled (Mattila 1999:158). They gave up everything, followed Jesus from Galilee and served him. These women fulfilled the demands of discipleship, but they were not called disciples. Moreover, the women and the male disciples in this passion narrative cannot be identified due to the fact that following the resurrection of Jesus, he commanded the eleven male disciples to make disciples of all nations. The only difference symbolized was that of the respective reactions and attitudes of the men and women (Mattila 1999:177).

In Matthew, the separation of male and female discipleship/fellowship was due to the difference in the language used, even when the words referred to the same thing. Men who followed Jesus were said to be “disciples” even though women who followed Jesus were not called disciples, yet both were called to serve or follow him (Mattila 1999:176). Several incidents that illustrate this principle are those that involve Peter’s mother-in-law (Mt 8:14-17), the Canaanite woman (Mt 15:21-28) and the woman at Bethany (Mt 26:6-13). These women’s fellowship with Jesus is described as service or as following. The terms service and following are used in Matthew 27:55 and are connected to the women who came from Galilee, watching at the cross. The term “serve” does not refer only to providing food and hospitality. Matthew uses it as an all-embracing term for the ministry of Jesus (Carter 2000:538).

The term “disciple” was reserved for men only in a patriarchal society (Mattila 1999:176). Love (1994: 57) argues that the term “disciples” refers only to the twelve and to Joseph of Arimathea, even though other members of the Matthean community were also disciples. His point was that women were not among the twelve, even though they were full members of the community. Carter (2000:538) insists that the female witnesses of Jesus’ crucifixion proved that they were clear disciples of Jesus. Women followed Jesus, and the verb (follow), from the outset signified attachment and obedience to Jesus in response to his disruptive call (Carter 2000:538). Yet, women were not called disciples, even though their functions were similar to those of the male disciples (see chapter 1).

Moreover, in first century society, the family was very important. There was no important personality in the society, because it was a patriarchal-family society. When the crowd

followed Jesus, women were at that stage part of a patriarchal society. This may therefore be the reason why children and women were not regularly mentioned in Matthew's narrative. The mother of Zebedee's sons had a double connection to men, both to the father and to the sons, but her own name is not given in the First Gospel (Mt 20:20). Peter's mother-in-law's name is not given as she is introduced in relation to her son-in-law (Mt 8:14-16). Women and children belonged to men. For instance, Jesus fed the five (four) thousand men (Mt 14:13-21; 15:32-38), while women and children were not counted. These women and children were also members of the community. In this sense, women and children might have been a limitation in a patriarchal society (Mattila 1999:168).

The relationship between Jesus and women was that of master and nameless disciples in Matthew's Gospel. Matthew's Gospel was written within deeply embedded patriarchal assumptions. Women were not equal to men. However, their faith was sometimes considered to have been greater than that of the male disciples. Yet they were not called disciples and were always presented without a name. This clearly confirms the theory that while they were significant members of the disciple community, they had a lower status in society.

3.4.3.4 Religious and social outcasts

The unclean, degraded and expendable classes in any agrarian society lived outside the city wall (Malina & Rohrbaugh 1992:85, see above). These classes consisted of disabled people, beggars, prostitutes, bandits, and others (see 3.3.4; Duling 1995a:369-370; see Rohrbaugh 1993a:387; Van Aarde 1993:533; Van Eck 1995: 214). They were at the bottom of an agrarian society (Lenski 1966:280-284) and were referred to as marginals or outcasts. The term "marginal" may be divided into three types: marginal people, involuntary marginality and voluntary marginality¹⁹. In the case of Matthew's Gospel all three kinds of marginality could be seen (Duling 1995a:365). Marginal people were also called outcasts, who were most probably divided into two groups, religious outcasts and social outcasts. In the context of the Second Temple ideology, religious outcasts included the disabled (the paralytic Mt 4:24; 8:6; 9:2.6; the dumb Mt 9:32; 15:30,31; the deaf 11:5; the epileptic Mt 4:24; 17:15; the blind Mt

9:27, 28; 11:5; 12:22), a bleeding woman (Mt 9:20-22) and Gentiles (as discussed above). These social outcasts also included tax collectors and prostitutes (Mt 21:31,32), the poor (Mt 5:3; 11:5; 19:21; 26:9, 11), Barabbas (Mt 27:16,21) and the robbers/bandits (Mt 21:13; 27:38, 44). It does, however, seem evident that religious and social outcasts overlap in Matthew's Gospel. For instance, the Canaanite woman was a Gentile woman with a daughter who suffered from an unnamed disease, and she as a "social outcast" does not appear to have been related to any father, husband, brother or son who could protect her (Levine 2001b:25). Wire (1991:119) stresses that the religious movement of Jesus included all kinds of people, like the ill, the demon-possessed, Gentiles and outcast women in Matthew's narrative. These were doubly marginalised people (see Anderson 2001:34), both social and religious outcasts. It is, however, not the intention of this section to distinguish between religious and social outcasts. In this section, the focus is on the inclusiveness extended to the outcasts in the ministry of Jesus.

Most of the religious outcasts were Israelites, even though some of them were Gentiles. The ministerial mission of Jesus would in particular have been extended to the Israelite outcasts (Anderson 2001:33). Matthew's understanding of the inclusive mission of Jesus included teaching, casting out demons and healing (see Chapter 5). Jesus responded positively to outcasts such as the blind, lepers and women. Through Jesus' mission, salvation was also offered to outcasts (Anderson 2001:34), even though the Israelite leaders did not include these outcasts in their society. This inclusiveness in the mission of Jesus was part of the development of the plot in Matthew's narrative. This should be carefully considered (an overlap with characters mentioned in the section on women and Gentiles above will be avoided as far as possible).

Some men brought a paralytic lying on a mat to Jesus in Matthew's narrative (Mt 9:1-8). The paralytic man was considered an outcast in Israelite society, but Jesus saw their faith and healed the man. Jesus also ate with the social outcasts, like tax collectors and sinners (Mt 9:10-14). The social relationships during a meal were, in general, an image of social relationships in a society. In the ancient world, the custom of sharing a meal was a reflection

and reinforcement of the hierarchical order, social relations and status through invitations. Eating together implied that they were on the same level and shared common ideas. The Pharisees therefore asked the disciples of Jesus why their teacher ate with tax collectors and sinners, because Jesus' eating with outcasts indicated his association with them, it is continued in Matthew's community (Mattila 1999:161).

According to Matthew's narrative, the ritually unclean woman approached Jesus from behind and touched the edge of his cloak, as she thought that if she had faith in him, she would be healed (Mt 9:20-23). Jesus interpreted her touch as a sign of her faith in him (Carter 2000:226). Jesus was characterized as the healer of the most marginal members of the society who had faith (trusted) in him. All the outcasts were healed by their faith, as faith was the key to admission to membership of the Matthean community as the new social identity in Christ.

Even the tax collectors and prostitutes became members of this community (Mt 21:31). The religious leaders did not necessarily enter the kingdom of God, even though the socially marginal and despised tax collectors, as well as the prostitutes, did (Carter 2000:425). Hence, the religious outcasts became members of the community through their faith to such an extent that their faith was contrasted with that of the leaders of Israel, the crowd and the disciples.

This survey can be extended to children (Mt 5:19; 18:1) and the little ones within the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 10:42; 18:6, 10, 14; 25:40,45). These children and little ones were considered members of the community and they were also considered disciples in training (Carter 2000:27). In fact, the disciples were not yet like humble children. The disciples asked Jesus: "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?" (Mt 18:1). Jesus answered "Unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven, therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 18:3). This is the role model of humility for the disciple community (Wire 1991:105). This does not suggest a personal characteristic of purity in children, but demands that marginal members become honest, powerless disciples (Carter 2000:361-362). The conception regarding the little ones means that Matthew initially identified single persons to be trained to become disciples, to minister to people in need of provisions, those in need of a cup of water (Mt

10:42), as well as to care in general for those in need. It was clear that the little ones were included as members of the community who believed in Christ Jesus as the new social identity (Mt 18:6). The children most probably seemed weak and powerless compared to the political, social, economic and religious elite. Jesus stated that if anyone caused one of these little ones to go astray, they would be punished. Even though one cannot be sure from which stratum those little ones came, the community still needed to care for them. Jesus' inclusive teaching was a source of authority for both the historical disciples and the coming generations as the Matthew's community (Mattila 1999:156).

3.5 Social situation of the Matthean community

In this section, the inclusive situation of Matthew's community is considered. This situation is closely related to the concept of date, location, stratification and membership. As seen above, the Gospel of Matthew was written around 80 CE, which seems best to explain the inclusive situation of Matthew's community. The disciple's community (the post-paschal Matthean community) had an open mission to the Israelites and Gentiles. This implies that the Matthean community was a mixed one, which contained both Israelites and Gentiles. In other words, the Matthean community was inclusive of all nations (Mt 28:19-20). This mixed membership reflected its social location. The community was stratified and hierarchically structured.

The aim of this section is to examine the circumstances of Matthew's community in Antioch. The narrator of Matthew tells his readers that Jesus' ministry from Galilee to Jerusalem was an inclusive ministry (see Chapter 4). Social scientific analysis also suggests that Jesus' inclusive ministry is reflected in the Gospel of Matthew. This assumption allows greater insight into the inclusive situation of the Matthean community at Antioch.

3.5.1 The state of inclusivity

As seen above, Matthew reflects the stories of Gentiles and Israelites in his narrative. These narratives enable the reader to gain an informed view of them. The Gospel of Matthew furthermore emerged from Judaism and the Evangelist's anti-Israelite attitude. It is possible to

find many contradictions similar to these. The largest contrast is that between the Israelites and the Gentiles in Matthew. The evidence of the Gentile stories can be presented as follows. The Gospel of Matthew mentions the son of Abraham, rather than the son of David. In the Matthean genealogy, the first sentence describes Jesus as the son of Abraham (Mt 1:1). It is very important to note that Matthew mentions Abraham, because he is the father of all nations (Sim 1995:20). We know that the list of Jesus' genealogy includes four women, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba (Mt 1:3-6). The birth of Jesus also attracted the Gentile magis to visit Bethlehem and worship him (Mt 2:1-10). This creates a positive view of Gentiles and the "Galilee of the Gentiles"²⁰ (Mt 4:15). The gospel also says: "I will put my spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations" (Mt 12:18); and there is the final command of Jesus to his disciples to evangelize all the nations (Mt 28:19). The intention of these verses is that the Gentiles are to be targeted in these evangelistic endeavours. According to Sim (1995:20), these verses state that "Jesus was the light also to the Gentiles and that in his name the Gentiles will hope". In two narratives, Jesus mentions and praises their great faith, as he healed the servant of the Roman centurion (Mt 8:5-13) and commended the woman of Canaan (Mt 15: 22-28).

However, taking these Gentile materials into consideration, it has been argued that the author of the Gospel of Matthew was a proselytized "Israelite" who had converted from being a Gentile (see Davies & Allison 1988:11). This is a very difficult question, which has yet to be discussed fully by scholars. The scope of this thesis also does not permit or require an answer as to whether the author of the Gospel was an Israelite or a former Gentile. Matthew's description of his church was not purely Israelite-Christian, but it concerned the character of a universal church, which is open to all nations, which follow Jesus.

The clearest indication of the mixed character of Matthew's community is to be found in the parable of the weeds (Mt 13:24-43). This perspective is primarily stressed by Bornkamm (1963:17). In the same year, Smith (1963:149-168) published "The Mixed State of the Church in Matthew's Gospel." He focused on selected parables from Matthew's Gospel, namely "The parable of the Weeds" (Mt 13:24-30, 36-43), "The parable of the Net" (Mt 13:47-50), "The

sub parable of the Wedding Garment” (Mt 22:11-14), “The parable of the Bridesmaids” (Mt 25:1-13), and “The Sheep and the Goats” (25:31-46). Smith (1963:160) argues that we should discover the setting of the parables within the community because these parables “concentrate on the development of the *Sitz im Leben* of the church as the source of pressure.” Those passages seemingly reflect the evangelist’s experiences in his church life. Smith also argues that Matthew’s community was a mixed state with good and bad, saints and foolish members (see Sim 1996:211).

I concur with Smith’s view regarding the congregation of the First Evangelist that it was indeed in a mixed state. On this point, one reasonable question arises and this is: who were good and bad members? Smith (1963:163; see 2.2.1) mentions two possible components of Matthew’s community, namely the Gentiles and the Pharisees. Smith (1963:163) did not strongly stress the Gentile position, he merely mentioned that “the battle over the admission of Gentiles had been won and the church was open to all.” Though, we do not know exactly who was a good or bad member in that community, one can assume that Matthew endeavoured to reconcile his people, to make Israel a true and righteous people (Mt 13: 43, 49; 25:37). One can simply think about the members of the community as having some unsettled disputes among them.

Matthew’s community reflected the kind of life Jesus and his disciples lived (pre-paschal level). This lifestyle reached out to both Israelites and Gentiles throughout Jesus’ ministry in order to influence the disciples’ community (post-paschal level). The city of Antioch was the best place for the kind of mixed state found in Matthew’s community, because it was a large Gentile city, with a large Israelite population, and the largest Israelite settlement in Syria was undoubtedly in Antioch. They were very near their homeland and living there was very much like living in Palestine. They were living in close association with Gentiles (Stern 1974:137-138). Antioch was predominantly Greek-speaking, which provided a natural site for the written Gospel and the setting for the circumcision-press mission to the Gentiles (Meier 1983:22-27; see Vledder 1997:131). This setting could therefore explain the tone adopted to both the Israelites and the Gentile converts (Kingsbury1978a:94).

3.5.2 The social structure of the Matthean community at Antioch

The setting of Matthew's community is that of an urban environment (Kingsbury 1978b:66; Stark 1991:189; cf Meek 1983). There are few references in Matthew related to villages, compared to the Gospel of Mark. Matthew seems to have been more familiar with cities and he refers specifically to city life. A clear confirmation of this is that Mark uses the word "city" eight times and the word "village" seven times. Matthew uses the word "village" only four times, but the word "city" twenty-six times (Smith 1980:266; see Jackson 2003:784). There are certain words for "city" in Matthew that seem to relate to his own city (Mt 5:14; 10:11, 14, 15, 23; 23:34) (Brown 1982:97).

Greco-Roman cities were small, both in terms of area and population. The city of Antioch was the capital of the Roman province of Syria. It was a key city for both and it was also one of the three or four most important cities in the Roman Empire. The population of the city was about 150,000 to 200,000 at the end of the first century (Chandler & Fox 1974:81, 303; Stark 1991:192). Smith (1857:143) assesses that the "citizens were divided into 18 tribes, distributed locally" in Romans. Stark (1991:196) understood Smith's view as arguing that there were eighteen identifiable ethnic quarters within Antioch. The ethnical composition of the Roman world shows us that they were not an egalitarian structured society, because ethnic diversity and a constant influx of newcomers tends to undercut social integration, thus exposing residents to a variety of harmful consequences, including high rates of deviance and disorder. Moreover, some were brought in as slaves (Stark 1991:196).

Israelites were among the original settlers of the city of Antioch, when it was founded by Seleucus Nicator in 300 BCE (Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 2. 39; *Ant.* 12.119). We can't be sure how many synagogues existed in Antioch, but in the Roman period the main synagogue was located in the southern quarter of the city, the Keratein (Downey 1961:544 n 179). It is assumed that the Israelite community was in the city of Antioch. Antioch was also to become one of the main centers of Christianity. Moreover, Antioch was the birthplace of "Gentile Christianity" and it was also the place where controversy between Israelites and Gentiles first

erupted within the church (Acts 11:27-30). All this evidence tells us that the city of the Antioch church was a bridge between Israelite and Gentile Christianity (Meek & Wilken 1978:18).

People were terribly crowded within these buildings: the streets were so narrow that when people leaned out their windows they could chat with someone living across the street without having to raise their voices (Stark 1991:193; cf Finley 1997). These people belonged to the lower class in the city of Antioch, where, we can consider archaeological evidence of social stratification of the city of Antioch. In most cities the water was piped to fountains and public buildings such as the baths in the Greco-Roman world. Some was also piped to the homes of the very rich. However, for the rest of the residents, water had to be carried home in jugs (Stark 1991:193), which implies that higher social levels used more water.

The urban Israelites of Antioch were of all classes. Israelite peasants were separated from the urban Israelites by language, religious practice, and economic class (Meek & Wilken 1978:10). A few members of these groups were able to gain wealth, but for the most part they were poor, burdened directly or indirectly by the heavy tax and subjected to abuse by soldiers and officials (Liebeschuetz 1972:52-61). The social structure of Antioch was not very different to that of other cities of the Roman Empire, where the population consisted essentially of two groups, a small elite, which controlled city life to its own advantage, and a second group, which served the needs of this elite (see MacMullen 1981:8). This stratification has already been mentioned above. A large group of involuntary marginal members constituted the lowest class of the society (Carter 2000:20). A few extremely wealthy families and the much larger numbers of free and liberated poor members and slaves within this society reflected its vertical, hierarchical and interconnected character (Carter 2000:20; see Stark 1991:195). The hierarchical social structure caused some conflict between classes, and is reflected in the Gospel of Matthew.

As we have seen in the above discussion, the social environment of the city of Antioch was hierarchical in structure, which was similar to that of Matthew's community. This community was therefore not egalitarian in its structure.

3.6 Summary and conclusion

Matthew's community's social situation has been considered above. We have discussed the date of the Gospel of Matthew. It has been focused on before or after 70 CE. The Gospel was written around 80 CE and circumstances within the community enhanced openness towards all nations. The community was located in the city of Antioch, which was a populous place and mixed in population. The community was not necessarily part of Judaism, even though it still adhered to some Israelite traditions. The Israelite Diaspora settled in Antioch prior to the start of the Christian community. Matthew's group therefore needed to open its community's boundaries in order to allow a highly stratified society.

Members of the Matthean community were from various social classes. Amongst these were members of the upper classes (the urban elite, the ruling and the governing classes) and the lower classes (from the urban non-elite, the degraded, unclean class and the rural peasantry). There is sufficient evidence that the Matthean community was not an egalitarian society.

The implications of the membership of the Matthean community in relation to the social stratification in advanced agrarian societies have been investigated. The community was probably a mixed one; thus, its various members of the community formed a wide-open stratified society. This implied that the Matthean community was an inclusive community that accepted all kinds of social stratification levels amongst its people (cf Carter 1997a:653). Of course, a few members from the upper classes were also present in this community (such as Joseph of Arimathea).

It has been confirmed above that Matthew's community was an advanced agrarian society, with a particular hierarchical and inclusive structure (cf Carter 2001:51). This will further be considered in the next chapter, where the text of the Gospel of Matthew is read as a test case for the suggestion of the inclusiveness within the community (developed above) via a narrative point of view analysis.

¹ Matthew composed his gospel prior to 100 CE. The likelihood of this is confirmed by the fact that the one who knew the Gospel in its written form, namely Ignatius of Antioch, died in 107 CE. Ignatius wrote a number of important epistles and these epistles referred to Matthew's gospel. However, this date is still debated by scholars (see Trevett 1992:3-9; Massaux 1990:85-94; Sibinga 1966:263-83; Sim 1998:31-33).

²We can see the longest Gospel version as indicated in table 4 in Stein (1988:49-50).

³Vorster argued that Perrin supported this view.

⁴We can see that he mentioned the name in the Scriptures (see Robinson 1976:106).

⁵Brandon's (1951:221) view is taken from Streeter's view of the Infancy Narratives. According to Streeter, the source of the Infancy Narrative is different in Matthew and Luke (the Matthean and Lukan versions imply too distinct and dissimilar traditions). Therefore, Matthew and Luke do not originate from the same place.

⁶Davies and Allison (1988:420) and Gundry (1994:65) share the view that Galilee was in the north-west, Decapolis in the north-east, Jerusalem and Judea in the south-west and Trans-Jordan in the south-east.

⁷These verses mention that Peter was in Antioch (Act 12:2; Gal 2:11).

⁸Rohrbaugh (1993a:383) says that the upper layer of agrarian society consisted of the so-called urban elite.

⁹According to Lenski (1966:219,243; see Saldarini 1988a:40-41), the ruling and the governing classes are not different from each other.

¹⁰ In Matthew 3:7, the evangelist takes up Jesus in his vituperation against the Pharisees (Hagner 1993:49; Luz 1989:169). It is true that the Sadducees were the real opponents of the historical Jesus; the Pharisees were the opponents of Matthew.

¹¹Here, I refer to a person who was a Scribe in the Gospel of Matthew. According to Rivkin (1969-70:205-249; 1978:135-142), the fact that Matthew saw the Pharisaic scribes as *Pharisees* rather than as scribes means that the Pharisees and scribes are synonymous. However, Orton's (1989:37) view is that in the eyes of Matthew, at least, they are not synonymous. Matthew's own reflection is that "the Scribes were Disciples" (Orton 1989:165). This implies that the Scribes, according to Matthew, were those who had received a thorough training in Jewish exegesis and writing. However, one still has to consider Matthew as Levi.

¹²Pharisees and Sadducees (Mt 3:7; 16:1,6,11,12), the Scribes and Pharisees (Mt 5:20; 12:38; 15:1; 23:2,13,15, 23, 25, 27, 29), the chief priests and elders (Mt 21:23; 26:3, 47; 27:1, 3, 12, 20; 28:11-12), the chief priests and Pharisees (Mt 21:45; 27:62), the chief priests and scribes (Mt 2:4; 20:18; 21:15), the scribes and elders with Caiaphas the high priest (Mt 26:57), the elders, chief priests and scribes (Mt 16:21; 27:41) (Van Tilborg 1972:1-6; Carter 1996:241 n3).

¹³According to Duling (1995:364-365), the concept of marginality is divided into three categories, namely the marginal man, involuntary marginals and voluntary marginals. First, the marginals are those individuals and groups who, because of birth, migration, conquest and the like, are doomed to live in two different worlds. The marginal man is antagonistic to the cultural world and not fully acculturated. Second, involuntary marginality refers to "individuals and groups who for reasons of race, ethnicity, sex, under-development and the like are not able to participate in normative social status, roles and offices and their obligations and duty." They cannot relate to other members at the centre of society. Finally, voluntary marginality refers to those "individuals and groups who consciously and by choice live outside the normative statuses, roles and offices of society because they reject hierarchical social structures, though there will be attempts to perpetuate this spontaneity by social control or in conventicles within the normative social system." These three perspectives help us to understand the variety of religious sects and parties within Israelism

¹⁴The phrase πάντα τὰ ἔθνη indicates only the nation of Israel, or is there a deliberate contrast between Israel and the other people of the world? The Greek words ἔθνος and ἔθνη occur nine times in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 4:15; 10:5, 18; 12:18, 21; 21:43; 24:14; 25:32; 28:19). Their meaning (Mt 4:15; 10:5, 18; 12:18, 21; 21:43) is "Gentiles" in Matthew's Gospel (see Jackson 2002:32 n16). In the other verses ἔθνη could indicate Israel or "Gentiles" (Hare & Harrington 1975:363). Hare and Harrington (1975:366-367) say that the Gospel of Matthew

shows that the gospel should be preached first to Israel (Mt 10:5) and then to the Gentiles. Hence, the interpretation of Matthew 28:19 is a later intention of Matthew for his ideal gospel - “all nations” including Israel.

¹⁵ By contrast, the phrase “Galilee of the Gentiles” is not a matter of Gentile mission or Gentiles living in or close to Galilee. It designates land ownership in context. The Roman Empire controlled Galilee (Carter 2004:265-266).

¹⁶ The term “a mixed state” has become a popular one in the study of Matthew. Some scholars mention a “Mixed State” (Luomanen 1988:469-480; Smith 1963:149-168; Gundry 1994:5-10).

¹⁷ This included feminist literary criticism (cf Fetterley 1978; Warhol & Price Herndl 1991), feminist anthropology (cf Moore 1988), feminist classical scholarship (Rabinowitz & Richlin 1993) and feminist historical scholarship (cf Wallach Scott 1988; Kelly 1984)

¹⁸ According to Rich (1976:57-58) “patriarchy is the power of the father: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male...”

¹⁹ The concept of “marginality” in the social science literature has three dimensions: “the marginal man: individuals and groups who, because of birth, migration, conquest, and the like are ‘doomed’ to live in different, antagonistic cultures without fully belonging to either.” “Involuntary marginality: individuals and groups who for reasons of race, ethnicity, sex, underdevelopment, and the like are not able to participate in normative social statuses, roles and offices and their obligations and duties. They fail to share in both material and nonmaterial resources available to other members at the center of society, and thus who experience themselves as personally alienated”, “voluntary marginality: individuals and groups who consciously and by choice live outside the normative statuses, roles, and offices of society because they reject hierarchical social structures, though there will be attempts to perpetuate this spontaneity by social control or in conventicles within the normative social system” (Duling 1995a:364-365).

²⁰ The Gospels and Acts have 61 references to Galilee only. The phrase “Galilee of Gentiles” occurs only in Matthew 4:15-16. It is quoted from Isaiah 8:23 to indicate that Jesus, in settling in Capernaum, fulfilled an ancient prophecy. According to Chancey (2002:173), the purpose of Matthew’s quotation of Isaiah may serve to show that Gentiles will eventually be included in the Kingdom of God.