

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

### OBSERVATIONS ON PAUL'S CONCEPT OF A HEBREW DEITY

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Is it indeed possible to infer a Pauline concept of a Hebrew deity based on the explicit κύριος and θεός citations? Before some observations are made in this regard, it is would be important to determine to what extent, if at all, the study succeeded in:

1.) Finding a possible solution for:

**Paul's 'inconsistent' use of the term κύριος within his literary context, as well as the inconsistent association of both the term θεός and κύριος in relation to Jesus as the κύριος and Χριστός.**

2.) Offering reasonable arguments to uphold the theory:

**that Paul is, for the most part, conceptually consistent in his use of the term θεός, which principally refers to the monotheistic Hebrew deity, while the term κύριος is used ambiguously as a reference for the Tetragram and Jesus as the κύριος**

Therefore, the relevant effectiveness of the study will be determined by:

- a.) Evaluating if, and to what extent the objective: *determine the extent of the impact the explicit κύριος and θεός citations, as found in the authentic Pauline letters, might have had on Paul's conceptual understanding of θεός and κύριος specifically in relation to Jesus as the Χριστός and κύριος* was achieved.
- b.) Evaluate if the attempt to consider: *the explicit κύριος and θεός citations within its immediate literary conceptual (κύριος and θεός) context against a wider Jewish-Hellenistic literary backdrop* produced valuable insights that would support the proposed theory and assist in offering a plausible solution for the defined problem.

## 5.2 EVALUATING THE JEWISH-HELLENISTIC BACKDROP

The Hebrew manuscript evidence (chapter 2) has shown, without any reasonable doubt, that אל or אלהים and related forms such as אלוה were written as reference to the monotheistic Hebrew deity. This deity was ‘named’ and the ‘name’ written as יהוה primarily. The following written forms (*K<sup>e</sup>tib* tradition) could be deduced from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE onwards:

**For אלהים**

- a.) אלהים
- b.) אל
- c.) la
- d.) יהוה

**And for יהוה**

- a.) יהוה
- b.) Hwhy
- c.) ייי
- d.) אדני

The complexity of the matter revolved around the prohibition in uttering the ‘name’ of the Hebrew deity, in other words uttering יהוה. The *Q<sup>e</sup>re* tradition (that which ought to be read or uttered) attests to an array of options, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE onwards:

- a.) אדני
- b.) אלהים and
- c.) שמא

The various possibilities offered within the *K<sup>e</sup>tib* and *Q<sup>e</sup>re* tradition could have forced one to make a distinction between the concept of the Hebrew deity based on its ‘written’ form (especially in terms of the Tetragram) and its ‘oral’ form. Therefore, writing and uttering the term אל or אלהים would call a wise creator deity into mind, the monotheistic Hebrew deity

proper, so to speak, the deity that resided on Mount Sinai. The ‘written’ form of the Tetragram could cause one of three concepts: 1.) an authoritative most respectful figure ‘Lord’, 2.) the Hebrew deity proper or 3.) the Tetragram as the most Holy One, the ‘God of the covenant, the personal Hebrew deity. These concepts of the Hebrew deity would concur with the concepts one infers from the *Q<sup>e</sup>re* tradition. These are but only three deductable concepts from the manuscript data discussed in chapter 2 of this study. These are not the only concepts that could be formulated, but they represent concepts that might have been commonplace from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE onwards. These concepts however, did not make it easier for the Greek translators and therefore the question is: *is it possible to construct a concept of the Hebrew deity in its Greek frame of conceptual reference, considering the complex K<sup>e</sup>tib and Q<sup>e</sup>re tradition as a backdrop?*

The complex backdrop painted by the *K<sup>e</sup>tib* and *Q<sup>e</sup>re* tradition and the concepts they offer for the Hebrew deity would become one of the most influential elements in rendering the Hebrew deity with ‘suitable’ Greek equivalents. One would therefore expect variations, inconsistencies and discrepancies to say the least. It is clear that no standardised system was in circulation and operational from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE up until at least the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Second, it is reasonable to assume that the alternative Greek equivalents are due to the *K<sup>e</sup>tib* and *Q<sup>e</sup>re* issue. The Greek equivalents for אלהים were:

- a.) θεός and
- b.) κύριος (or at least the *nomina sacra* forms for the most part).<sup>168</sup>

To find a ‘suitable’ Greek equivalent for the Tetragram (יהוה), however was much more complex. The terms that were used to render or reproduce the Tetragram, deductable from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE onwards varied between:

- a.) ΙΑΩ
- b.) Open space
- c.) יהוה
- d.) Hwhy
- e.) ΚΣ (*nomina sacra*)
- f.) ΘΣ (*nomina sacra*)
- g.) δεσποτής and
- h.) θεός

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<sup>168</sup> See Tuckett, C. M. “Nomina Sacra in Codex E.” *JTS* 57.2, (2006), 487-499 and Hurtado, L. W. “P52 (P. Rylands GK 457) and the nomina sacra: Method and Probability.” *TB* 54.1, (2003), 1-14.

It should be noted from this position, that none of the above mentioned terms were applied consistently, nor were any of these considered as the ‘norm’ or the ‘most’ suitable Greek equivalent for the Tetragram. Notwithstanding, that such an array of possibilities in rendering the Tetragram had a significant impact on how the Hebrew deity was conceptualised in the Greek frame of reference.<sup>169</sup> The conceptual distinction between יהוה and אלהים was already initiated in the Hebrew text tradition. This conceptual distinction was not only taken to the next level in the Greek frame of conceptual reference, but the concepts underlying both the term אלהים and יהוה became interchangeable – almost to a point of confusion in some instances. The concepts produced by the Greek translators were θεός as the monotheistic Hebrew deity, who could also be κύριος, the authoritative figure and ruler over all and *vice versa*. The concepts offered by Philo and Josephus, did not only affirm that no standardised system was in place during the first two centuries CE, but they would also indicate that the term θεός was widely accepted as a ‘suitable’ Greek equivalent when reference is made to the monotheistic Hebrew deity.<sup>170</sup> Second, the sensitivity towards the term κύριος used when referring to the Hebrew deity is evident in the writing of Philo, while Josephus shows utter discontent utilising such a term. This would then form the literary conceptual backdrop against which Paul would ultimately construct his concept of a Hebrew deity based on the Greek equivalents attested in the explicit κύριος and θεός citations. Although the final word concerning the Jewish-Hellenistic literary backdrop regarding the terms θεός and κύριος has not yet been spoken, the manuscript data offers sufficient evidence and insights as to why Paul could have adopted his consistent use of the term θεός and ambiguous use of the term κύριος. It is thus indeed possible to construct a plausible Pauline concept(s) of the Hebrew deity based on these terms, as presented by the explicit κύριος and θεός citations. It would thus be fair to state that:

- 1.) Some discrepancies and inconsistencies related to the term יהוה already existed in the Hebrew text tradition from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE onwards;
- 2.) These inconsistencies spilled over into the Greek OT text, which in turn, increased in frequency and complexity;

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<sup>169</sup> See Woyke’s, *Götter*, discussion on the Old Testament backdrop on the concept of *JHWH*, *Gottheiten* and *Götterbilder*, 67-72.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Shaw, Frank. “The Emperor Gaius’ Employment of the Divine Name.” *Studia Philonica annual* 17 (2005), 33-48 and Wright, Nicholas T. “Paul’s Gospel and Caesar’s Empire.” Pages 160-183 in *Paul and Politics: Ekklēsia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation*. Edited by Richard A. Horsley.

see also Crüsemann, M. “Der Gottesname im Neuen Testament.” *Junge Kirche* 68.4, (2007), 16-21.

- 3.) Authors such as Paul, Philo and others, writing in the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, could not have escaped these complex inconsistencies related to the ‘name’ of the Hebrew deity.

### 5.3 PAUL’S KYPIOS AND ΘΕΟΣ CONCEPTS

The terms θεός and κύριος together with χριστός, are three of the most significant theological terms in the New Testament when a.) one is referring to the Hebrew deity and b.) assigning a title of the utmost authority and conceptual status to Jesus, while c.) emphasising the salvation character of Jesus as the χριστός. Moreover, these terms encapsulate the NT *theologie*,<sup>171</sup> *christo-logie* and what one would call *kyrio-logie*. This section of the chapter has no intention in repeating what has already been written on Paul’s theology and christology.<sup>172</sup> The objective is neither to develop a uniquely different train of thought as proposed by scholars working in the field of Pauline theology and christology.<sup>173</sup> The pre-mediated intent is threefold: 1.) to summarise the *theos* and *kyrios* concepts attested in the ‘authentic’ letters of Paul 2.) determining if the Greek equivalents presented in the explicit κύριος and θεός citations pose a ‘unique’ concept of a Hebrew deity and finally 3.) to formulate a possible Pauline concept of a Hebrew deity in relation to Jesus. If one would formulate the objective into a question: *could the Greek equivalents for the Hebrew deity, including their underlying concepts, assist in determining Paul’s concept of the Hebrew deity in relation to Jesus as the χριστός and κύριος?*

<sup>171</sup> According to Dunn, James D. G. *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998. Paul’s convictions about God are all too axiomatic and because of this Paul never made much effort to expound on them, 28. Paul’s beliefs about God were common place and he shared such beliefs with his readers, 29. Schnelle, *Theologie*. According to Schnelle, Paul proclaims two fundamental principals concerning his ‘God’ concept, in his own words: “Er (Paul) ist sowohl Herr der Geschichte als auch Herr des persönlichen Lebens,” 198.

<sup>172</sup> Bauckham, “Paul’s Christology,” interprets Rom 10:13; Rom 14:11; Rom 9:33 as “YHWH texts with Jesus Christ as referent”, 2; and Rom 4:7-8; Rom 9:27-28, 29; Rom 10:16; Rom 11:3; Rom 11:34; Rom 15:11 and Rom 12:19 (among others, see also page 7) as “YHWH texts with God as referent”, 6.

<sup>173</sup> The work done in this regard is enormous, to the extent that listing the contributions would clutter this section of the study; reference would thus be made to only some studies. Fitzmeyr, Joseph A. *Pauline Theology, a Brief Sketch by Joseph A. Fitzmeyr*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967; Trasher, B. *The Attribute of God in Pauline Theology*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1986; Theissen, G. *Psychological aspects of Pauline Theology*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987; Dunn, *Theology of Paul*; Dunn, James D. G. *The New Perspective on Paul*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005; Schnelle, *Leben und Denken*. Porter, Stanley E. (ed.). *Paul and His Theology*. Leiden: Brill, 2006; Woyke, *Götter*. Two recent publications that deal with the Theology of the New Testament should also be noted: Hahn, F. *Theologie des Neuen Testaments – Bd. I: Die Vielfalt des Neuen Testaments*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck (UTB), 2011; *Theologie des Neuen Testaments – Bd. II: Die Einheit des Neuen Testaments*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck (UTB), 2011;. For brief but insightful discussion on the *Grundmodelle* developed in approaching the theology of Paul, see Hahn, *Theologie – Bd. I*, 181-188.

### 5.3.1 SUMMARY: PAUL'S KYPIOS AND ΘΕΟΣ CONCEPTS - NON-CITATIONS

In 1 Thessalonians Paul presents a *theos*-concept that portrays a monotheistic Hebrew deity—the father of Jesus as the κύριος.<sup>174</sup> Paul's *kyrios*-concept is related to Jesus as an authoritative person demanding great respect while his *christos*-concept appears under-developed at this stage.<sup>175</sup> The *theos*-concept remains unchanged in the Galatian epistle with a much more developed *christos*-concept. The latter concept is specifically a Jesus induced concept, Jesus is the *christos*, the saviour. The *kyrios*-concept is downplayed and limited to the concept of Jesus as the χριστός and κύριος. In Philemon however, the *theos*-concept is downplayed while being combined with a dominant Jesus induced *christos* and *kyrios*-concept. A frequently applied *christos*-concept is discernible in Philemon, with Jesus as the χριστός. The saviour and messiah concept is strongly emphasised in this letter. Paul remains conceptually static in terms of his *theos*-concept as the Hebrew deity, while the *kyrios*-concept is the typical authoritative nature of Jesus.

### 5.3.2 GREEK EQUIVALENTS ATTESTED IN THE EXPLICIT CITATION – UNIQUE KYPIOS AND ΘΕΟΣ CONCEPT?

In the first Corinthian letter a highly developed *christos*-concept is visible, almost to the extent of inducing Paul's *theos*-concept.<sup>176</sup> This *christos*-concept transcends the crucified Jesus as the κύριος and 'becomes' an entity who is neither the earthly and crucified Jesus, nor the transcended monotheistic Hebrew deity. Stated differently, existentially the *christos*-concept would be closer to Paul's *theos*-concept than his *kyrio*-concept, the latter which is related to Jesus. Apart from the *christos*-concept, the *kyrios*-concept deduced from the explicit citations also presents a unique characteristic, that of ambiguity. Paul intentionally and implicitly used the κύριος citations with the intent to call the personal Hebrew deity to mind for the Jews among his readers. This would have 'forced' the Jewish believers to consider their personal Hebrew deity, κύριος, in association with Jesus as the κύριος. The concept Paul had in his mind while deploying the explicit κύριος citation was primarily the personal Hebrew deity, the Tetragram. The ambiguity lies in the fact that in some instances

<sup>174</sup> For Schnelle, *Theologie*, the basis for the Christology relies on the premise that God acts in and through Jesus Christ. God is the one that raised Jesus from the dead (cf. Thess 1:10), 186; see also Woyke, *Götter*, 104-155; cf. Meeks, "Social Context," who interprets the paradox of the Messiah's crucifixion, as presented by Paul, as the end of the boundary-setting of the Torah.

<sup>175</sup> Cf. Dunn, *Theology*, 245. For Schnelle, *Leben und Denken*, God as the origin and subject of salvation history in 1 Thessalonians, was the *Primat der Theologie*, 183; see also Schnelle, *Leben und Denken*, 199-200 in terms of 1 Thessalonians presenting Paul's 'shaping' theology; cf. Hahn, *Theologie*, 311-312.

<sup>176</sup> See the conversion from 'Götter' to 'Gott' based on 1 Cor 9b-10 in Woyke, *Götter*, 104-155.

Paul's *kyrios*-concept is explicitly Jesus as the κύριος, while in other cases the *kyrios*-concept as the Tetragram is made explicit while Jesus as the κύριος is implicitly implied. It would be unreasonable to suggest that Paul only had the Tetragram or Jesus as κύριος in mind – it was merely a case of implicit and explicitness. **Finally, the concept underlying the term θεός is never anything other than the monotheistic Hebrew deity. This term, for Paul, would always designate the creator and just Hebrew deity, the one who has the ability to raise Jesus as the κύριος and χριστός from the dead.** Even though this is the case, it would also be fair to say that the closest, conceptually speaking, that the earthly Jesus would come to 'be' the Hebrew deity would be through the underlined concept of the term χριστός in some instances. What follows next is a brief summary of the *theos* and *kyrios*-concepts presented in the explicit citations. In summary:

- a.) the *kyrios*-concept deduced from the explicit citations presents a unique characteristic, that of ambiguity. Paul intentionally and implicitly used the κύριος citations with the intent to call the personal Hebrew deity to mind for the Jews among his readers;
- b.) The ambiguity lies in the implicit and explicit use of the term κύριος in referencing to κύριος and the Tetragram respectively;
- c.) The concept underlying the term θεός is never anything other than the monotheistic Hebrew deity. This term, for Paul, would always designate the creator and just Hebrew deity, the one who has the ability to raise Jesus as the κύριος and χριστός from the dead.

### 5.3.3 The *KYPIOS* and *THEOS* concepts in the Romans epistle

The most plausible concept underlying the term θεός in Rom 2:24; Rom 3:11, 18, which would include Rom 1:1-3:20 for that matter is the monotheistic Hebrew deity, the creator and rightful judge. The term θεός in Rom 4:3 would hold the same conceptual value as with the other three cited texts mentioned. Noteworthy is that the translation of יהוה with the the term θεός did not originate in the Pauline school, but this was a theological-conceptual shift that was made by the Greek scribes that translated the Hebrew Scriptures. The term κύριος in Rom 4:8 (Ps 31:2) validates the assumption that θεός is the primary term used when Paul refers to the monotheistic Hebrew deity. The same could be inferred from the cited text in Rom 9:26 (Hos 2:1b-c). This conjecture is due to the fact that Paul does not share the theological-conceptual view of the Greek translators (in this case at least), that the term κύριος reproduces the Tetragram. In the mind of Paul, the term κύριος in Rom 4:8 refers to



no one other than Jesus as the *χριστός* and *κύριος* (cf. Rom 4:23-24), a term Frenschkowski would categorise as an epithet, metonym or title.<sup>177</sup> One could, with a reasonable amount of certainty, conclude that Paul is for the most part consistent in his use of the *theo*, *kyrio* and *christo*-concepts in Romans 1 up until Romans 8. The four explicit *θεός* (Rom 2:24; Rom 3:11, 18 and Rom 4:3) and one explicit *κύριος* citation (Rom 4:8) did not deter Paul from conceptualising that the term *θεός* as a reference to the monotheistic Hebrew deity, while the term *κύριος* refers to Jesus as the *χριστός* and *κύριος*. The inter-relatedness and theological-conceptual data of the explicit citations in Romans 9 proved to be a bit more complex.

The Hos 2:1b-c citation (Rom 9:26) again attests to the *θεός* concept denoting the monotheistic Hebrew deity. The subject matter related to the term *κύριος* in Rom 9:28 (Isa 10:22) and Rom 9:29 (Isa 1:9) strongly suggests a monotheistic Hebrew deity concept and not a mere epithet or title for Jesus as the *χριστός*. The literary conceptual context captured in Romans 9 is one of those rare cases where it is extremely difficult to distinguish between the concept underlying the *χριστός*, *κύριος* and *θεός* terms. It appears as if Paul not only allowed his *Vorlage* to dictate, but Paul also adopted the concept that the term *κύριος* ‘represents’ the personal Hebrew deity of Israel, the Tetragram. The latter permitted Paul to bridge the theological conceptual fissure between the *χριστός* and *θεός*, including the *κύριος* referent. **A clear, unambiguous distinction between the referent of the *κύριος*, *χριστός* and *θεός* terms in Romans 9, is thus extremely difficult to determine.** Paul ingeniously sets the *theo*-logie stage for what would become the grand *θεός* doxology finale in Rom 11:33-36. What would be interesting is if Paul allowed for this conceptual bridge to be extended to chapter ten leading up to Romans 11.

The pivotal terms in support of Paul’s *christo*, *kyrio* and *theo*-logie are evenly spread in Romans 10; with the term *κύριος* dominating the cited content yet again. The most obvious and most likely conclusion is that the term *κύριος* refers to Jesus as the *κύριος* (cf. Rom 10:9), the risen *χριστός* (cf. Rom 10:7). Paul’s *christ-kyrio*-logie remains intact - this includes his *theo*-logie. Both the term *χριστός* and *κύριος* refer to Jesus, while the term *θεός* refers to non other than the monotheistic Hebrew deity. The *theo-kyrio*-logie however, remains uncertain and with that the conceptual relation between the referents implied by the term *θεός* and *κύριος*. As expected, the term *θεός* dominates Romans 11, with the term *κύριος* again limited to the cited content (cf. Rom 11:3 and 34). Paul’s theological-conceptual frame of reference implies that he not only knew that the term *κύριος* coins a Greek equivalent for the

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<sup>177</sup> Frenschkowski, “Kyrios in Context,” 96.



Tetragram, but he also allowed openness for the readers to interpret both the term θεός and κύριος to call the personal monotheistic Hebrew deity to mind. Paul's more integrated *theo-kyrio-logie* in relation to his χριστός concept was introduced in Romans 9, while balanced in Romans 10 and ultimately made more public in Romans 11. Paul's intent with his intertwined *theo-kyrio-christo-logie* introduced in Romans 9 was to ensure optimal theological effectiveness with the explicit representation of his *theo-kyrio-logie* in Romans 11, and ultimately the grand finale in the form of a doxology in Rom 11:33-36. For the optimal impact of the doxology Paul had to make a theological-conceptual shift from Jesus as the χριστός and κύριος to θεός as the κύριος. The latter term was not primarily to denote the authoritative nature of θεός, but is to explicitly call upon a deity as the personal-covenant Hebrew deity. The explicit κύριος citations in Rom 10:13 and Rom 10:16 ensured the possibility for a dual conceptual understanding; on the one hand Jesus as the κύριος and χριστός and on the other hand, the cosmic rule of θεός as יהוה. In Rom 11:3 and 11:34 however, in the mind of Paul that is, the term κύριος appears to be conceptually limited to the θεός as יהוה.

A strongly emphasised *theo-logie*, with the open possibility of a *theo-kyrio-logie* rooted in a *christo-logie* suited a more indicative mode of interaction as is apparent in Rom 1-11. With the transition from a more indicative mode of conversing to a more imperative mode, Paul ensures to deploy his *theo-kyrio-christo-logie* with the term θεός dominating Rom 12:1-4, with χριστός as the mediator with an *in-cooperating* function (Rom 12:5). This includes his *kyrio-logie* as one of authoritative rule demanding service (Rom 12:11). It does seem as if Paul kept with his *theo-kyrio-logie* evident from the cited content in Rom 12:19. The wrath of κύριος had the reasonable potential not just to call θεός as the Hebrew deity into mind, but also the personal Hebrew deity. Paul's dominating *theo-logie* explicitly denoted by the term θεός in Rom 13:1-6, while Jesus as the κύριος and χριστός concludes this chapter (cf. Rom 13:14). Paul's *theo-kyrio-logie* becomes even more evident in Romans 14, again with a possible varied conceptual undertone.

The explicit and emphasised *theo-kyrio-logie* in Rom 14:1-10 is unique in terms of its intensity. The *theo-kyrio-logie* dominates vv. 1-10, the latter which is confirmed by the explicit *kyrios-theos* citation in Rom 14:11. It remains debatable if the term κύριος in Rom 14:1-10, confirmed in Rom 14:11a, refers to Jesus as the κύριος in the theological conceptual sense of the word (cf. Rom 14:14). The term χριστός in Rom 14:9 suggests a Jesus as κύριος and χριστός frame of reference in Rom 14:10. Stronger evidence in support for such a *kyrio-christo* flavoured *theo-logie* is the topic on mortality and that one's mortality is constituted by

κύριος, which makes it highly unlikely that any other theological concept is implied other than Jesus, who died. The *theos-kyrios* inter-relatedness is not so much based on theological-conceptual commonalties, but rather that they represent existentially different entities. The term θεός refers to the immortal transcendent entity, while the term κύριος refers to Jesus as the mortal, in and through whom, every believer's mortality is constituted—not as an emphasis of their mortality but that this κύριος is the living κύριος (cf. Rom 14:11a). The concept of 'living' in correlation with κύριος together with the term θεός could have triggered a dual theological concept: a.) the risen κύριος (cf. Rom 14:9) and b.) θεός as the living κύριος, 'Lord' and ruler. A third possibility could also be inferred, namely that of Jesus as the risen κύριος—and *because* Jesus morphed from mortal being to immortal being every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that he is θεός. Even though the term κύριος refers to Jesus, the *theo-kyrio*-logie developed in Romans 14 should not be underestimated. Such a theological view does provide ample plausible ground to regard Jesus as the New Testament יהוה.

The 'uniting' and 'final' chapter (Romans 15); considered to 'conclude' the 'primary' epistle addressed to the fellow followers of Christ living in Rome,<sup>178</sup> attests to Paul's *christological* theology, or differently stated, his *theological* christology. The well-known and frequently used concept that θεός is the father of Jesus as the κύριος and χριστός is again introduced in Rom 15:6 with an all too familiar dominance of the term χριστός and θεός in combination. The dual potential, based purely on its use within the thought-context of the term κύριος is again made possible by the explicit citation in Rom 15:11, but what the *kyrio*-logie gained from Romans 9 onwards had been toned down in Romans 15—which one would have expected if Paul wanted to frame his *christological theo*-logie or *theological christo*-logie. If and to what extent Romans 16 is considered to form part of the 'main' body of the Romans epistle could account for the developed *christo-kyrio*-logie of Romans 16. The term θεός features only in three verses (cf. Rom 16:20, 26 and 27) with the deployment of both the χριστός and κύριος terms that dominates the literary conceptual context. Such a 'developed' *kyriological* Christology does not blend in well with Paul's theological, christological and kyriological concepts introduced throughout Romans 1-15. This does not necessarily imply that Romans 16 should be considered 'non-Pauline', but the 'out-of-the-ordinary' features of this chapter does demand closer investigation. The theological-conceptual impact presented

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<sup>178</sup> Michel, *Römerbrief*, 338-339, Käsemann, *Romans*, 409, Wilckens, *Die Römer*, 132 and Schlier, *Der Römerbrief*, 440 would not reject Rom 16:1-27 as not being authentic Pauline material. What is indeed plausible is the fact that Romans 16 did not form part of the 'original' main Romans epistle.

in Romans 16 is thus intentionally ignored when some concluding remarks on the Romans epistle are formulated. The *kyrio* and *theos*-concept discernible from the Romans epistle could thus be summarised as:

- a.) Romans 1-8: Paul *theos*-concept is presented by the term θεός and refers to the monotheistic Hebrew deity, while his *kyrios*-concept is called to mind using the term κύριος referring to Jesus as the κύριος and χριστός (explicit citations in Rom 2:24; Rom 3:11, 18; Rom 4:3, 7 support the *theos*-concept);
- b.) Romans 9-11: Paul's intent with his intertwined *theo-kyrio-christo*-logie introduced in Romans 9 was to ensure optimal theological effectiveness with the explicit representation of his *theo-kyrio*-logie in Romans 11, and ultimately the grand finale in the form of a doxology in Rom 11:33-36. For the optimal impact of the doxology Paul had to make a theological-conceptual shift from Jesus as the χριστός and κύριος to θεός as the κύριος (The explicit κύριος citations, Rom 9:28, 29; Rom 10:13, 16 and Rom 11:2c-3; Rom 11:34, support the ambiguous *kyrios* and *christos*-concept);
- c.) Romans 14-15: The explicit citations in Romans 14 again supports the ambiguous *kyrios*-concept in Romans 14, while the citations in Romans 15 attests to Paul's *christological* theology, or differently stated, his *theological* christology;
- d.) Romans 16: If and to what extent Romans 16 is considered to form part of the 'main' body of the Romans epistle could account for the developed *christo-kyrio*-logie of Romans 16. Such a 'developed' *kyriological* christology does not blend in well with Paul's theological, christological and kyriological concepts introduced throughout Romans 1-15.

### 5.3.4 The *KYPIOΣ* and *ΘΕΟΣ* concepts in the 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthian letter

What is evident from the first four chapters of the first Corinthian epistle is that the term θεός refers to the wisdom of the cosmos, the all powerful Hebrew deity. Second, is the all too familiar concept of Jesus as the χριστός and κύριος. This remains undisputed throughout the Pauline literature and especially in the Corinthian letters. The latter does not however, exclude nuanced variations of such concepts. Four such theological-moulded altering instances are found in the first four chapters (1 Cor 1:31; 1: Cor 2:8, 16; 1 Cor 3:20). These instances do bring a slightly nuanced concept of the term κύριος to the fore. Of these four the term κύριος in 1 Cor 1:31 should be understood and conceptualised as referring to Jesus as

the *χριστός* (cf. 1 Cor 1:30). Although the use of the term *κύριος* seems out of place in terms of the immediate literary conceptual context, Paul deliberately chose and adapted his *Vorlage* to read the term *κύριος* as part of the cited text for authoritative emphasis, which he slotted in neatly between 1 Cor 1:30 *ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* and *εἰ μὴ Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν* (1 Cor 2:2).

The *θεός* citation in 1 Cor 2:9, preceded by the rare combination of the *τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης*, is considered within the New Testament text as a whole. A plausible inferred theological concept in this case is a *kyrio-theo-logie*—a concept where the theological undertone supporting both the term *κύριος* and *θεός* appears to be overlapping. Paul does make it possible, ever so slightly, to conceptualise *κύριος* as referring to the same entity as does the term *θεός*—especially with the explicit citation in 1 Cor 2:9 in combination with 1 Cor 2:8. If considered within the immediate literary conceptual context, there is no obvious reason why the term *κύριος* in 1 Cor 2:8 would refer to any other entity other than Jesus. The same could be said for the term *κύριος* in 1 Cor 2:16a, although one cannot ignore the range of possibilities this explicit *κύριος* citation offers. Even though one could eventually consider 1 Cor 2:16a as referring to the same entity as does the term *χριστός* in 1 Cor 2:16b, and therefore Jesus in 1 Cor 2:2. It does appear as if a more independent *kyrio-logie* is enforced by the explicit *κύριος* citation in 1 Cor 2:16. Stated differently, the term *κύριος* is used more independently from Jesus as the *χριστός*, or so it seems to be in the first few chapters of first Corinthians.

The concept underlying the term *κύριος* in 1 Cor 3:20, related to wisdom, correlates with the underlying concept suggested with the term *θεός* in 1 Cor 3:19. If Paul had the same referent in mind when he used the term *κύριος* in 1 Cor 3:5, remains uncertain. What appears to be certain is the fact that the referent of the term *χριστός* (1 Cor 3:1, 11 and 23) and the term *θεός* are distinguished from one another. The *theo-kyrio-logie* of 1 Corinthians 3 is clearly determined by the explicit *κύριος* citation in 1 Cor 3:20 in combination with the use of the term *θεός* in 1 Cor 3:19. The *theo-logie* of 1 Corinthians 3 is thus two-fold: a.) *christo-logie* and b.) *kyrio-theo-logie*. 1 Corinthians 4-7 does not pose any ‘out-of-the-ordinary’ concepts related to the terms *θεός*, *κύριος* and *χριστός*. In general, Jesus is referred to as the *χριστός* and *κύριος* while the monotheistic Hebrew deity is called to mind with the use of the term *θεός*. The latter concepts are true for chapter eight for the most part. Paul’s *theos* and *kyrios* concepts in 1 Cor 8:4-6 do offer dynamic concepts in this regard. The *mono-theistic* character of the Hebrew deity represented by the term *θεός* appears to be challenged in 1 Cor 8:5. Paul recognises the ‘reality’ that there are many *θεοί* in heaven and on earth; there are also many *κύριοι*. The theological issue is not ‘if’ other *θεοί* do indeed exist, neither did Paul

want to engage the multitude of κύριοι as opposed to Jesus as the κύριος. Paul's *theo*-logie, and with that his *kyrio*-logie, remains intact. His primary intent is to emphasise the unity of θεός as father and Jesus as the χριστός and κύριος.

The terms χριστός and κύριος in combination are more dominant in 1 Corinthians 10 than any other chapter in the Pauline literature. This includes a clear existential distinction between the referent of the term χριστός and θεός. The *christo*-logie as well as the *theo*-logie remains intact, whereas the *kyrio*-logie demands the conception that Jesus is the κύριος (cf. 1 Cor 10:21-22) with the term κύριος referring to the Hebrew deity (cf. 1 Cor 10:9<sup>179</sup> and 1 Cor 10:26). What seems to be quite obvious is that Paul's deductable *christo*-logie, *theo*-logie and *kyrio*-logie in the Corinthian correspondence, particularly evident in 1 Cor 8 and 10, are socio-culturally induced. It is thus reasonable to assume that the Hellenistic θεός and κύριος concepts of his time would have had a major impact on Paul's thought processes. Ironically, in the case of 1 Cor 10:26 (cf. 1 Cor 10:9), one would have expected the introduction of a more 'Hellenistic' concept of the term κύριος and not so much a concept that is rooted in the Jewish scripture. The latter might pose the question: would Paul be more inclined to rely on his Jewish roots or Christian beliefs when confronted by the religious dynamic society of his time?<sup>180</sup> Paul's theology with regard to the theological significant terms in question, remains integrally inferred from chapters eleven and twelve.<sup>181</sup>

1 Corinthians 14 would be considered to be of key importance in understanding the conceptual relationship between the terms κύριος and θεός. Moreover, the explicit citation in 1 Cor 14:21 (Is 28:11-13) assigned to λέγει κύριος would be the focal point in discovering the key to Paul's theology and *kyriologie* in this chapter. The term θεός remains the undisputed monotheistic deity, whereas the term κύριος holds the potential to call both Jesus as the κύριος or the Tetragram to mind. In this case, it is reasonable to understand the term κύριος (cf. 1 Cor 14:21, 37), conceptually and logically speaking, as referring to the personal Hebrew deity. It should be re-iterated at this stage, that the conceptual nuance between אלהים and יהוה was introduced by the Jewish scriptures, which spilled over into the Greek version of these texts with the term θεός (equivalent for אלהים) and κύριος (equivalent for יהוה). The nuanced character, portrayed by these terms, became more complex in the Hellenistic period; the very complexity Paul is struggling with. It is the challenge to remain true to the Jewish

<sup>179</sup> The argument is only valid, and with that logical, if the premise is accepted that the term κύριος is the most suitable reading.

<sup>180</sup> See Meeks, Wayne A. "The Social Context of Pauline Theology." *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 36.3, (1982), 266-277.

<sup>181</sup> 1 Corinthians 13 is the only chapter with no explicit reference to the terms θεός, κύριος and χριστός.

roots captured and maintained by the Jewish scriptures, while simultaneously interpreting the Jewish scriptures. The *theo*-logie in 1 Corinthians 14 is thus supported by the *kyrio*-logie (cf. 1 Cor 14:21 and 1 Cor 14:37). In 1 Corinthians 15 it is the christology that supports Paul's theology. This is the most christological dense chapter in Pauline thought. It is almost as if Paul wanted to counter balance the Jewishness of his *kyrio*-logie in 1 Corinthians 14 by putting his conscience at rest with an overwhelming amount of references to *χριστός*. Paul goes even further with the dominant use of the term *κύριος* in 1 Corinthians 16, whereby he confirms the fact that Jesus as the *χριστός* is the *κύριος*. It would have been confusing for the readers of Paul if he had jumped from *κύριος* as the Tetragram (1 Corinthians 14) to Jesus as *κύριος* (1 Corinthians 15). Paul's deductable thought sequence looks as follows:

- Kyriological supported theology (1 Corinthians 14)
- Christological supported theology (1 Corinthians 15)
- Theological supported kyriology (1 Corinthians 16)

These three chapters in particular, is an example of Paul's balanced Christological-kyriological theology. Not that he intended it to be this way, but this is clear evidence of a Jew that applied and interpreted the Hebrew deity in terms of Jesus as the *Χριστός* and *κύριος* in an attempt to establish reasonable coherence between religious Jews and faithful Christ followers, between Jewish texts and Christian contexts. In summary:

- a.) 1 Corinthians 1-13: *Christo-kyrio* induced *theo-logie*, in some instances challenged by the explicit citations;
- b.) 1 Corinthians 14: Kyriological supported theology, made possible by the explicit *κύριος* citations;
- c.) 1 Corinthians 15: Christological supported theology;
- d.) 1 Corinthians 16: Theological supported kyriology.

### 5.3.5 The *KYPIOS* and *ΘΕΟΣ* concepts in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthian letter

As is the case in the first Corinthian letter, a christologically supported theology is at work in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthian epistle, with the implementation of the term *κύριος* and with that a *kyrio*-logie that appears to be deployed at key sections of the epistle. The latter is specifically made possible with the employment of explicit *κύριος* citations. This is palpable for the most part of the epistle, with the exception of chapter seven, which only attests to the term *θεός*. The



pertinent question is if the explicit κύριος citations in 2 Cor 3:16 (Exod 34:34a) and 2 Cor 10:17 (Jer 9:23a) offer a ‘new’ concept of the Hebrew deity and the relationship with Jesus as the χριστός and κύριος? Logically speaking, and for all practical purposes, the term κύριος in 2 Cor 3:16 is a reproduction of the Tetragram and thus refers to the personal Hebrew deity. The *kyrio*-logie inferred from 2 Cor 3:15-18 is not that obvious, as if it refers to Jesus as the χριστός. Paul’s intent was to be ambiguous, to force the reader to ponder the κύριος idea. What Paul is suggesting here is that when Moses is read (the torah), a veil covers the reader’s mind. This veil is removed when turning towards κύριος (2 Cor 3:16). In Exod 34:34 it is Moses who covers his face, but when κύριος is addressed the veil is removed. This κύριος for Paul is ὁ κύριος who is also the spirit (2 Cor 3:18), and those who’s faces are unveiled see the glory of κύριος. Paul then concludes with καθάπερ ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος (this comes from κύριος the spirit). There should be little or no doubt that the κύριος in this literary context refers to none other than the Hebrew deity who resides on Mount Sinai. The concept introduced by Paul in this case is a pneumatological supported *kyrio*-logie—the referent of which is clearly distinguished from χριστός, but the same cannot be said for the term θεός. The explicit κύριος citation in 2 Cor 10:17 does not offer any other κύριος concept than Jesus as the χριστός and κύριος.

#### 5.4 PAUL’S CONCEPT OF A HEBREW DEITY

Paul’s concept of a Hebrew deity is aligned with the Old Testament concept of such a Hebrew deity in general. Paul’s concept would thus be in line with Jewish contemporaries and Jewish thought in general between the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE and the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, at least until the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Paul also shared the inferred practise that the term θεός was predominately used to refer to the Hebrew deity. One major difference in this regard would be the fact that Paul intentionally used the term κύριος to refer to the personal Hebrew deity, the Tetragram. Deploying such a possible ‘profane’ term would not have been common place among Jewish thought, nor would it have been an accepted practice.

The explicit κυριός citations in particular as well as the θεός citations are considered to be the ‘missing’ link between the Hebrew deity and Jesus as the κύριος and χριστός. Paul made the conceptual shift between *the Tetragram* as the personal Hebrew deity who delivered the Israelites from Egypt, the ‘God’ of the covenant, the one who spoke through the prophets, who initiated the deliverance of the Jews and *Jesus as the κύριος and χριστός* who became the crucified personal deity. Paul’s concept of a Hebrew deity should therefore not be

characterised as being ‘incoherent’ but rather ambiguous. For Paul θεός, as the living Hebrew deity, became the personal covenantal ‘God’—for the Israelites as יהוה, while Jesus became the χριστός and κύριος, the personal ‘God’ for both Jew and gentile. Paul constructs a christologically induced theology governed by his ambiguous *kyrio*-logie.

## 5.5 PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research study made an attempt to propose a possible solution for Paul’s alleged ‘incoherent’ understanding of a Hebrew deity in terms of Jesus as κύριος and χριστός based on his explicit κύριος and θεός citations. Apart from the obvious outcomes of such a research venture, recognising limitations and observing future research possibilities form part and parcel thereof. The limitations would evidently be that the socio-religious or Hellenistic context of both the terms κύριος and θεός, especially with regard to Emperor Cults, were deliberately underplayed.<sup>182</sup> The Greco-Roman conceptual context of the terms κύριος and θεός could have contributed to a better understanding of these terms and the potential conceptual value they convey.<sup>183</sup>

This research study however could be regarded as a stepping stone for the following proposed future research endeavours:

- a.) An in-depth text-critical investigation into the history of both the OG and NT text (with a particular focus on dominating manuscript witnesses) with regard to the terms θεός and κύριος. Such an investigation would shed some light on possible scribal traditions that might have existed at various intervals.
- b.) An investigation into the use of the terms θεός and κύριος in ‘non-Biblical’ text in the second temple period and to determine what conceptual possibilities they hold.
- c.) A final suggestion would be to investigate the works of Philo and how his concept of the terms θεός and κύριος relate to his contemporaries, including NT authors.

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<sup>182</sup> See for example Miller, C. “The Imperial Cult in the Pauline Cities of Asia Minor and Greece.” *CBQ* 72.2 (2010), 314-332; MacGraw, D. “The Imperial Cult: a new paradigm for understanding 2 Cor 2:14.” *RQ* 52.3 (2010), 145-156; Finney, Mark T. “Christ Crucified and the Inversion of Roman Imperial Ideology in 1 Corinthians.” *BTB* 35.1, (2005), 20-33, to mention only three.

<sup>183</sup> See for example Shaw, “The Emperor Gaius,” 33-48; Meeks, Wayne A. “The Social Context of Pauline Theology.” *Interpretation* 36.3 (1982), 266-277; Barclay, John M. G. “Thessalonica and Corinth: Social Contrasts in Pauline Christianity.” *JSNT* 47, (1992), 49-74; Horsley, *Paul and Empire.; Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation*. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000; *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2004.

These are but a few proposals suggested for this interesting field. The conceptual potential the terms θεός and κύριος, terms used to refer to a possible deity, project and communicate. None of these proposed studies, including this study would offer absolute or final remarks on these terms, but a tapestry of studies in this regard could produce a responsible and plausible conceptual understanding of the terms θεός and κύριος.