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SUMMARY

Title: The ethical sayings of Jesus: Grounded
apocalyptically-eschatologically or
ethically-eschatologically?

Candidate: Gerhardus Cornelius Johannes Nel

Supervisor: Prof Dr A G van Aarde

Degree: Doctor Divinitatis (New Testament Studies)
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Drawing on the insights of Q research, the purpose of this study is to question the traditionally accepted position that Jesus' ethical sayings are to be understood in terms of an apocalyptic framework. It is argued that an ethical-eschatological point of departure is rather to be discerned in Jesus' teachings.

The study first sketches the positions of those ethicists whose readings discern in Jesus' teachings an apocalyptic-eschatological point of departure and who understand his ethical sayings in terms of the latter. The themes *temple*, *Son of Man*, *John the Baptist* and *Kingdom of God* (aspects central to the preaching of Jesus) are used to spell out the positions of these *traditional* ethicists. Then, in chapter 3, the study outlines positions – opposed to the above-mentioned ones – of New Testament scholars who view Jesus' sayings as not

being eschatological at all. The study, again, makes use of the themes mentioned above in order to spell out the positions of non-eschatological thinkers.

In chapter 4, which deals with the Sayings Gospel Q, J S Kloppenborg's research on the stratification of the Jesus tradition in Q is considered. The findings indicate that no apocalyptic traits are apparent in the first layer of Q, the layer closest to the historical Jesus. The research shows that these findings form the basis for doubting the traditional ethicists' position that Jesus' ethics is apocalyptically-eschatologically grounded.

An alternative perspective in place of the apocalyptic-eschatological one is suggested. Jesus' reference to the Kingdom of God is understood as referring to an alternative lifestyle in the here and now of the life of Jesus' followers.

In chapter 6, it is argued that there may indeed be an eschatological perspective in Jesus' teachings, but that this would be an ethical-eschatological perspective.

What this might entail is articulated with reference to the insights of J S Kloppenborg, J D Crossan and R A Horsley.

In chapter 7, the study concludes with an exegetical discussion of two passages from Q, viz. Q 13:18-19 (the parable of the mustard seed) and Q 7:18-20, 31-35 (the metaphorical discourse about the children on the market square, ensuing from an enquiry by John the Baptist) in order to indicate how these sayings of

Jesus may be read ethically-eschatologically. In the last chapter the insights derived from this study are applied to the present-day situation of the church by describing Jesus' ethics as subversive wisdom which challenges many conventional practices.

OPSOMMING

Titel: Die etiek van Jesus: Apokalipties-eskatologies of eties-eskatologies begrond?

Kandidaat: Gerhardus Cornelius Johannes Nel

Promotor: Prof dr A G van Aarde

Graad: Doctor Divinitatis (Nuwe-Testamentiese Wetenskap)
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Die doel van hierdie studie is om deur die gebruikmaking van die insigte van Q-navorsing die tradisioneel aanvaarde uitgangspunt dat Jesus se etiese uitsprake in terme van 'n apokalipties-eskatologiese raamwerk verstaan moet word, te bevraagteken en daarteenoor te stel dat ons eerder 'n eties-eskatologiese vertrekpunt behoort te veronderstel.

Die studie bespreek eerstens die standpunte van etici wat by Jesus 'n apokalipties-eskatologiese perspektief identifiseer en sy etiese uitsprake in terme van so 'n perspektief verstaan. In die navorsing word die temas wat verband hou met *tempel*, *Seun van die Mens*, *Johannes die Doper* en *Koninkryk van God* (aspekte wat sentraal in die prediking van Jesus staan) gebruik om die standpunte van hierdie *tradisionele* etici te beskryf en te verduidelik.

Die standpunte van Nuwe-Testamentici wat meen dat Jesus se etiek geen eskatologiese konnotasies het nie, word in hoofstuk 3 bespreek. Dieselfde temas wat hierbo gemeld is, word gebruik om die standpunte van die nie-eskatologiese denkers te verwoord.

Hoofstuk 4 fokus op die Spreuke-Evangelie Q. Die ondersoek in hierdie verband bou voort op die navorsing van J S Kloppenborg oor die stratifikasie van Jesus-tradisies in Q. Die studie toon dat daar in die eerste laag van Q (die stratum die naaste aan die historiese Jesus), nie apokaliptiese trekke aanwesig is nie. Hierdie bevinding bevestig die grond vir die twyfel rakende die tradisionele etiese oortuiging dat 'n apokaliptiese eskatologie die perspektief vorm van waaruit Jesus sy etiese onderwysings uitgespreek het .

Vervolgens word 'n alternatiewe perspektief in die plek van die apokaliptiese-eskatologiese voorgestel. Jesus se verwysing na die "Koninkryk van God" word verstaan as verwysende na 'n alternatiewe lewenstyl in die teenswoordige lewe van Jesus se volgelinge.

In hoofstuk 6 word geargumenteer dat daar wel by Jesus van 'n eskatologie sprake is, maar dan gedefinieer as 'n etiese eskatologie. Die inhoud van so 'n etiese perspektief word verduidelik met behulp van die resultate van die navorsing van J S Kloppenborg, J D Crossan en R A Horsley.



In hoofstuk 7 word twee gedeeltes, te wete Q 13:18-19 (die gelykenis van die mosterdsaad) en Q 17:18-20, 31-35 (die metaforiese uitspraak oor die kinders op die markplein na aanleiding van 'n navraag deur Johannes die Doper), eksegeties bespreek. Die doel van hierdie bespreking is om aan te toon hoe hierdie uitsprake van Jesus vanuit 'n eties-eskatologiese perspektief gelees kan word en hoe so 'n interpretasie verskil van 'n etiek wat Jesus se uitsprake in terme van 'n apokalipties-eskatologiese raamwerk verstaan.

In die laaste hoofstuk word die insigte van hierdie studie eietyd toegepas deur Jesus se etiek te beskryf as 'n subversiewe wysheid wat heelwat hedendaagse kerklike konvensies en gebruike krities bevraagteken.