



**Annual Conference of the
New Testament Society of Southern Africa**

6-10 June 2022 - Stellenbosch University

hosted by the “Jesus and the Gospels” subgroup

PROGRAMME BOOK

Conference Theme:

***Orality and memory in the study of Jesus and/or the
Gospels***



Venue:

Stellenbosch University, Faculty of Theology

Monday, 6 June

11:00-18:00 - Meetings and Article Writing Workshop

Meetings (Venue: Hofmeyr)		Writing Workshop (Classroom 1002)	
		11:00-12:30	Session 1: Scaffolding: Types of academic articles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research articles • Review articles
		12:30-13:30	Lunch (at own cost)
14:00-16:00	NTSSA Executive Meeting	13:30-15:00	Session 2: External structure and information management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing titles and headings • How these interrelate
16:00-18:00	<i>Neotestamentica</i> Editorial Board Meeting	15:00-16:30	Session 3: Internal coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hooking your reader: the introduction • Rounding off: the conclusion • The golden thread: paragraphs
		16:30-18:00	Session 4: Specialised session on article writing with Jonathan Draper

18:00-20:30 - Welcoming and Plenary Address

Joint Programme (Venue: Hofmeyr)	
18:00-18:10	Prof Reggie Nel (Dean of the Faculty of Theology, Stellenbosch University): Welcoming
18:10-18:30	Marius Nel: Introducing and welcoming Jonathan Draper as Honorary President of the NTSSA
18:30-19:30	Plenary Address 1: Jonathan Draper: <i>Orality and memory in the Golden Rule in Matthew's Gospel</i> (45-minute presentation + 15-minute discussion) (Chair: Marius Nel)
19:30-20:30	Light snacks

Tuesday, 7 June

9:00-15:30 - Parallel Papers and Article Writing Workshop

All Parallel papers: 30-minute presentation + 15-minute discussion

Subgroup abbreviations (in alphabetical order)

EC = Early Christian Studies
GS = Gender and Human Sexuality

JG = Jesus and the Gospels
PS = Pauline Studies

Parallel Papers (Hofmeyr Hall)		Writing Workshop (Classroom 1002)	
9:00-9:45	Francois P. Viljoen (JG): <i>Bloated self-interest or humble Christian leadership; reflections from Matt 23:3-12</i> (Chair: J. Gertrud Tönsing)	9:00-10:30	Session 5: Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing for your audience • Conciseness • Variety
9:45-10:30	Jeremy Punt (PS): <i>Paul, stranger in Africa?</i> (Chair: Tanya van Wyk)		
10:30-11:00	Refreshments	10:30-11:00	Refreshments
11:00-11:45	Albert Coetsee (EC): <i>“God is a consuming fire”: An intertextual study of Deuteronomy and Hebrews</i> (Chair: Peter Nagel)	11:00-12:30	Session 6: Unlocking your article: Abstracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of abstracts • Writing tips
11:45-12:30	Charel du Toit & Tanya van Wyk (GS): <i>Invisible women? An experiment in “unhiding” with the aid of “realistic readings” of parables and feminist historiography and - spirituality</i> (Chair: Jeremy Punt)		
12:30-13:30	Lunch	12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:15	J. Gertrud Tönsing (JG): <i>Making the Gospel Performable - the Order of Mark</i> (Chair: Francois P. Viljoen)	13:30-15:00	Session 7: Cover letters and final steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selling your article • The 3-paragraph letter • Revising your own writing • Providing and engaging with peer feedback
14:15-15:00	Peter Nagel (EC): <i>Towards a Kyriology of Early Christianity: The Use of the Term <i>κυριος</i> in the Letter of Barnabas</i> (Chair: Albert Coetsee)		
15:00-15:30	Refreshments	15:00-15:30	Refreshments

15:30-16:30 - Plenary Address

Joint Programme (Venue: Hofmeyr)	
15:30-16:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Plenary Address 2: Nina Müller van Velden: <i>Memory, Jesus, and Mary Magdalene: Whose memory matters?</i> (45-minute presentation + 15-minute discussion) (Chair: June Dickie)</p>

16:45-18:15 - Keynote Address

Joint Programme (Venue: Hofmeyr)	
16:45-18:15	Keynote Address 1: Alan Kirk (James Madison University, USA): <i>Oral Tradition, Memory, and D. F. Strauss: The Media Framework in Das Leben Jesu and the Unresolved Problem of the Tradition/Memory Nexus</i> (60-minute presentation + 30-minute discussion) (Chair: Llewellyn Howes)

Wednesday, 8 June

9:00-12:30 - Parallel Papers

All Parallel papers: 30-minute presentation + 15-minute discussion

Subgroup abbreviations (in alphabetical order)

EC = Early Christian Studies

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Parallel Papers: Hofmeyr Hall		Parallel Papers: Classroom 1001
9:00-9:45	H. J. Prinsloo (PS): <i>Persuading the Thessalonians - A Text-Centered Rhetorical Analysis of 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5</i> (Chair: Jonathan More)	
9:45-10:30	Jacobie M. Helena Visser (GS): <i>James 2:1-7 a lifegiving text? A rhetorical investigation of the intersection of masculinities and poverty in James 2:1-7</i> (Chair: Charel du Toit)	Oluwarotimi Paul Adebayo (EC): <i>A Socio-Rhetorical Understanding of θεόπνευστος in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 in its Contribution to Scriptural Authority</i> (NB: This is a short paper and may finish before 10:30) (Chair: Gerhard van den Heever)
10:30-11:00	Refreshments	Refreshments
11:00-11:45	Llewellyn Howes (JG): <i>The Harvest Logion in Q 10:2 and Non-servile Farm Labour</i> (Chair: Kenosi Patson Motuku)	Jonathan More (PS): <i>"I can do all things": Paul's self-sufficiency in the context of ancient freedom</i> (Chair: H. J. Prinsloo)
11:45-12:30	Gerhard van den Heever (EC): <i>"And So I Conclude that a Temple Exists" (Barnabas 16:7): Spiritualising the Temple in Early Christian Discourse</i> (Chair: Oluwarotimi Paul Adebayo)	Annette Potgieter (PS): <i>A spatial rhetoric of hope in Romans 5-8</i> (Chair: Dion A. Forster)

12:30-16:00 Lunch and Business Meeting

Joint Programme (Venue: Hofmeyr)	
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:45	Business Meeting 1
15:45-16:00	Refreshments

16:00-17:00 - Keynote Address

Joint Programme (Venue: Hofmeyr)	
16:00-17:00	<p>Plenary Address 3: June Dickie: <i>Quotations and allusions in Mark's Gospel: Their form and function in reference to orality and cultural memory studies</i> (45-minute presentation + 15-minute discussion) (Chair: Nina Müller van Velden)</p>

17:00-22:00 - Conference Dinner

17:00-17:30	Travel to Conference Dinner (Venue: Middelvlei Wine Estate, Flamingo St, Stellenbosch)
17:30-22:00	Conference Dinner

Thursday, 9 June

9:00-16:00 - Parallel Papers

All Parallel papers: 30-minute presentation + 15-minute discussion

Subgroup abbreviations (in alphabetical order)

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PS = Pauline Studies

Parallel Papers: Hofmeyr Hall		Parallel Papers: Classroom 1001	
9:00-9:45	Marius J. Nel (JG): <i>The significance of the allusions in Matthew 20:20-28</i> (Chair: Mphumezi Hombana)	Bekele D. Anshiso (GS): <i>Paul's message on Gender Equality/Inequality in the Context of the Ethiopian Full Gospel Church</i> (Chair: Tim Ledgerwood)	
9:45-10:30	Mark Wilson (PS): <i>Dismantling the Urban Thesis: Paul's Audience in the Chora in Acts and his Letters</i> (Chair: Philip du Toit)	Paul B. Decock (EC): <i>Barnabas and the Struggle for Covenant and Scripture: Them and Us</i> (Chair: Pieter Botha)	
10:30-11:00	Refreshments	Refreshments	

11:00-11:45	Mphumezi Hombana (JG): <i>The Shaping Stratum of the Passion Narrative</i> (Chair: Llewellyn Howes)	Pieter Botha (EC): <i>Parting of the Ways or Lost and Looking for a Way Out? The Epistle of Barnabas and Early Christian Identity</i> (Chair: Paul B. Decock)
11:45-12:30	Philip du Toit (PS): <i>“Eschatological identities” in Romans 3:19-31</i> (Chair: Mark Wilson)	Tim Ledgerwood (GS): <i>The Ethiopian eunuch and the Servant of the King</i> (Chair: Bekele D. Anshiso)
12:30-13:30	Lunch	Lunch
13:30-14:15	Dion A. Forster (GS): <i>Your body is not your own: A political theological engagement with Gretha Wiid’s patriarchal interpretation of Ephesians 5:22-23</i> (Chair: Jacobie M. Helena Visser)	Vuyani Sindo (PS): <i>African Christian Identity and the critique of the third race theory: An investigation of the ‘in Christ’ motif in Paul</i> (Chair: José De Carvalho)
14:15-15:00	Kenosi Patson Motuku (JG): <i>Orality and memory in Luke 1-2: Anti-imperial womanist reading of the Lukan infant narrative highlighting Mary as the mother of the revolution</i> (Chair: Annette Potgieter)	José De Carvalho (PS): <i>Ephesians 2: The Social Impact of Transformed Identities</i> (Chair: Vuyani Sindo)
15:00-15:15	Refreshments	Refreshments

15:15-16:15 - Plenary Address

Joint Programme (Venue: Hofmeyr)	
15:15-16:15	Plenary Address 4: Pieter Botha: <i>The field of New Testament introduction and orality and memory research</i> (45-minute presentation + 15-minute discussion) (Chair: Jonathan Draper)

16:15-18:00 - Subgroup Meetings

16:15-18:00	Early Christian Studies: Classroom 1001 Gender and Human Sexuality: Classroom 1002 Jesus and the Gospels: Classroom 1003 Pauline Studies: Hofmeyr Hall
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Friday, 10 June

9:00-12:00 - Business Meeting

Joint Programme (Venue: Hofmeyr)	
9:00-12:00	Business Meeting 2

End of Programme

Abstracts

(In alphabetical order according to presenter surnames)

Adebayo, Oluwarotimi Paul: *A Socio-Rhetorical Understanding of θεόπνευστος in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 in its Contribution to Scriptural Authority*

Several theological understandings and debates have been generated from the use of the *hapax legomenon*, θεόπνευστος over centuries of biblical interpretation in an attempt to formulate a concept of the Christian Scripture. This has led to different theological leanings and inclinations on the place and the role of the Scripture in Christianity. The author of the Pastoral Epistle strategically placed the iconic and peculiar σὺ δὲ (v. 14) just before he introduced θεόπνευστος. Thereby attributing further significance to the role of the Scripture in the text. Therefore, there is a need to once again examine the term and passage however using the socio-rhetorical methodology this time around to unpack how this term functions in this pericope. Furthermore, investigating the supposed influence, the strategic placement of θεόπνευστος was intended to have in the pericope and what resulting influence the term θεόπνευστος has exerted on the understanding and interpretation of the Christian Scripture over the centuries following its deployment in the Pastoral Epistles.

Anshiso, Bekele D.: *Paul's message on Gender Equality/Inequality in the Context of the Ethiopian Full Gospel Church*

The New Testament does not have a unified message regarding the equality of male and female believers. However, the issue of women and their role in some Pauline writings (e.g. 1 Timothy 2:11-12) has been controversial in global churches as well as the Ethiopian Full Gospel Church (EFGC), in which many congregations are divided between those who believe in women's ministry and those who do not.

While some believe that there must not be a limitation to women's involvement in public ministry, others do not allow them to assume leadership roles precisely because such limitations can be traced back to the Apostolic teaching of the first century that, according to them, promoted male domination.

Thus, having briefly discussed Pauline texts (e.g. Galatians 3:26-29; 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:8-15), I argue that regardless of some confusion among NT scholars, theologians and global Church leaders, Paul teaches that the issue of gender must be understood and applied on the basis of the NT teachings rather than any tradition of long waited churches and society.

Finally, unlike what many Romans and Jews of the first century as well as some Ethiopian Evangelical Churches - particularly the (EFGC) - forbid, Paul invites women to learn (1 Tim 2:11), and then to serve rather than declaring an absolute muzzling of all women not to speak at all during services. In short, the EFG Church leadership should learn the equality of gender in following Jesus as well as serving his people at all levels.

Botha, Pieter: *Parting of the Ways or Lost and Looking for a Way Out? The Epistle of Barnabas and Early Christian Identity*

Much (if not most?) of early Christian anti-Judaism was directed toward people other than Jews. The Letter of Barnabas can be read as an instance of early Christian anti-Judaism directed against Gentile Christians. Early Christianity (Christians of the late 1st century and early 2nd century) combined a commitment to Jesus Christ with adherence in varying degrees to Jewish practices. Several Christian leaders thought that some of these practices dangerously blurred the boundaries between Christianity and Judaism, thereby revealing a struggle about “Christian” identity. It is uncertainties and competition for “true” Christian identity that underlies much anti-Jewish rhetoric in early Christian writings such as the *Didache*, Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho* and the Epistle of Barnabas. In this study the phenomenon of Gentile Christian Judaizing is examined within the broader context of Jewish-Christian relations in the second century. The aim is to invite reflection on the existence of Gentile Christian Judaizers as another point on the continuum of Jewish-Christian relations in the Greco-Roman world. We need to think of much more complex ways that Christianity and Judaism interacted during the crucial first, second and third centuries, as well as of a much more nuanced understanding of the nature of conflict between religious traditions.

Botha, Pieter: *The field of New Testament introduction and orality and memory research*

Since the 1970s a paradigmatic shift in research on orality, oral tradition, oral history, scribal culture, folklore, oral literature, history of literacy, text theory and storytelling and performance criticism has transformed disciplines in the humanities and opened up interesting and far-reaching insights in an array of traditional questions. Some New Testament scholars have picked up on these developments and from the 1980s a steady stream of research have resulted in important publications. Yet, the impression is that these (New Testament) studies on orality and memory remain in the ambit of “insiders”, scholars already committed to the “paradigm” conversing with each other; the immense progress in the social sciences and humanities seem to be marginal in other fields of New Testament scholarship. It would be an interesting test of the merit of the orality/memory trend by considering the impact of and response(s) to this research in New Testament introductions.

Given that New Testament introductions represent not only overviews of “accepted” results in New Testament scholarship but also (and more importantly) the distillation of what scholars themselves actually consider important enough to emphasise to students and others interested in New Testament “essentials” the subdiscipline is a clear barometer of the value of the conversation generated by interest in orality and memory research.

The parameters of my discussion are New Testament introductions of the past decade (2010+) with a focus on gospel origins, gospel narratives and historical Jesus presentations. These will be gauged by a summarising review of the major developments and critical insights of selected studies dealing with orality-literacy and memory research.

This discussion should also be seen as an exploration of ways in which academic research engages with constituencies and public arenas. Engagement with orality and memory research is an important (and unavoidable) venue to serve to inform and invigorate historical Jesus and gospels research; an invigoration sorely needed in the field of New Testament introduction.

Coetsee, Albert: “God is a consuming fire”: An intertextual study of Deuteronomy and Hebrews

The author of Hebrews concludes his fifth warning passage with the severe warning (Heb 12:29): “our God is a consuming fire” (ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν πῦρ καταναλίσκων; NA28). The background of this phrase is readily identified by most scholars as Deuteronomy 4:24 or 9:23. Of the two, Deuteronomy 4:24 enjoys primacy as the most probable background.

This, however, is how far most studies of the background of Hebrews 12:29 goes. No scholarly articles seem to be devoted to an in-depth investigation and discussion of the background of this phrase, and its implications for the interpretation of Hebrews 12:29. It is this lacuna that the current paper aims to fill.

The paper starts with baseline interpretation of Hebrews 12:29, briefly focusing on the place and function of the verse within the book. Next, the paper investigates the most probable Old Testament background of Hebrews 12:29, confirming why most scholars view Deuteronomy 4:24 as the background of the verse. The paper then investigates the use and function of the phrase “consuming fire” in the Old Testament for its possible bearing on the use of the phrase in Deuteronomy. This is followed by an in-depth discussion on the use and function of the phrase “God is a consuming fire” in Deuteronomy. Turning to Hebrews, the paper then combs through the text of Hebrews 12:14-29 for possible intertextual parallels between the passage and Deuteronomy 4 and 9. Based on the previous findings, the final section of the paper investigates how these findings lead to a more nuanced interpretation of Hebrews 12:29.

De Carvalho, José: *Ephesians 2: The Social Impact of Transformed Identities*

In the New Testament, the language of reconciliation features mainly in the Pauline corpus (2 Cor 5:18–21; Rom 5:8–11; Col 1:20–22). The Church has traditionally focused on the “vertical” dimension of reconciliation—God and humanity. This study’s central argument is that this is a reductionist view. The writer contends that reconciliation is a multidimensional reality encompassing reconciliation with God and between human beings, forming an inseparable reality.

The research seeks to establish how the transformed identity postulated by Paul in Ephesians 2 impacts horizontal relationships bringing ethnic reconciliation that end the hostility among people. The study affirms that the Gospel does not destroy or transmute cultural differences, and cultural diversity is not necessarily divisive. Diversity may provide the tapestry for unity to enable the Church to fulfil the gospel mandate. The research will further explore how the “Ephesian Movement” and “Ubuntu” may form an African paradigm toward recovering a communal society.

Decock, Paul B.: *Barnabas and the Struggle for Covenant and Scripture: Them and Us*

The common view of the NT is that Christ is the fulfilment of the promises and that whoever does not turn to Christ is cut off from the promises: Gal 3:16; Acts 3:23; Rom 11-12; John 8:39-41. Barnabas radicalizes this position and dates that rejection of God’s promises and God’s covenant further back to the scene of the golden calf, so that the Old (original) Covenant never materialized and God offered a New Covenant in Christ. However, for Barnabas, unlike for Marcion and some Gnostic positions, the Old Testament Scriptures are valid, but only if understood in the light of Christ and in a spiritual way.

The paper will explore three aspects, the rhetorical character of the Letter, the interpretation of the Scriptures, and the social context.

Dickie, June: *Quotations and allusions in Mark's Gospel: Their form and function in reference to orality and cultural memory studies*

Oral transmission of the gospel message and the importance of a community's cultural memory have become important topics in biblical studies in the past forty years. Using concepts gained from these studies has brought insight concerning the biblical text. In particular, the gospel of Mark has been recognized to have a strong oral base, as well as drawing on the community's cultural memory in its use of Old Testament scriptures. This is apparent in various ways, including Mark's unusual way of incorporating quotations and allusions within the narrative (significantly different to that of the other gospel-writers).

This paper describes Mark's approach, and indicates how his use of oral discourse gives an immediacy which makes it highly memorable, engaging all the senses. Moreover his embedding of OT texts in the narrative calls upon the reader or hearer to get involved in the text, below the surface, to recognize the astounding message Mark is highlighting: Jesus as the embodiment of God. Mark makes clear that Jesus is more than a fulfiller of prophecies (the message that comes through Matthew and Luke) but a living person, the one spoken of in Genesis, Psalms, and Isaiah.

Draper, Jonathan: *Orality and memory in the Golden Rule in Matthew's Gospel*

Pieter Botha has rightly argued that oral theory can provide "an alternative to the tradition/redaction cul-de-sac" but, if so, can oral produced texts be re-oralized? John Miles Foley in *The Singer of Tales in Performance* (1995) has argued that it can. This paper explores his theoretical framework and methodology and attempts to test it using the Golden Rule in Matt 7:12 as an exemplar. Using Foley's determination of the performance arena by careful 'triangulation and following the chain of interlocking metonymy' in all the examples of the Golden Rules available to me I have read the text of Matthew in this oral register to 'key ourselves into the performance arena' through the signals and gaps it provides. The key binary metonym in triangulation is found in related to walking two ways and this in turn relates to the master myth of 'covenantal nomism', the entry of Israel into the Land and the terms required by God, namely Torah. This is most clearly expressed and reflected in the triangulation over hundreds of years by Moses command to Israel to choose the Way of Life as opposed to the Way of Death. The consistent role of the Golden Rule in the oral tradition is that of a Summary of Torah. The negative form of the Rule is normative, but the positive form found in Matthew presents a new 'dialect' found only in the Christian tradition.

Du Toit, Charel, and Tanya van Wyk: *Invisible women? An experiment in "unhiding" with the aid of "realistic readings" of parables and feminist historiography and -spirituality*

In her classic feminist historiography, Gerda Lerner had pointed out that women actively participated in history-making, but they were not part of recorded and interpreted History – during which meaning is assigned to events (*her capitalisation*). In feminist theology, this awareness has been translated into a deconstruction and reconstruction of Christian religious symbols and tenets – because an awareness such as this means a reorientation towards what is regarded as "canon". Two decades after her work was published, the issue of what is considered "core" and what is considered

“marginal” has become one of the greatest challenges faced by theologians and Biblical scholars’ approach towards interpreting texts, because of our growing awareness of the relationship between positionality, power and knowledge construction. This contribution will examine the possibility of invisible women (their presence and voices) in Biblical texts and experiment with ways to “unhide” them. Two “test cases” will be presented: Utilising the parable of the Friend at Midnight by using a combination of social-scientific criticism and a ‘realistic’ reading as methodology, an exploration of how first-century Mediterranean audiences might have understood women to be present in the parable, will take place. This will include a consideration of what the presence of women might have meant for the interpretation of this parable – this includes exposing possible normative gender constructions relating to the role of women. This will form the greater part of the contribution. Another, more compact exploration will also take place: imagining the effect of reading the story of Jesus’s ministry through the eyes and voice of a woman. For this purpose, a short reflection on the novel by feminist Sue Monk Kidd, *The Book of Longings*, will be utilised. The contribution is an experiment in interdisciplinary work and as such will utilise methodologies and perspectives from different sub disciplines in theology.

Du Toit, Philip: “Eschatological identities” in Romans 3:19-31

In this contribution, Paul’s references to νόμος (“law”) and πίστις (“faith”) in Romans are interpreted in terms of the eschatological distinction in his letters between the old age under law, sin and death, and the new age in Christ in which righteousness has been manifested through faith apart from the law. The turn of the ages is especially indicated by the eschatological νῦν (“now”) in 3:21, which does not only indicate the new age in Christ, but also marks a definite turning point in the rhetorical buildup of Paul’s argument in the letter. Amidst the New Perspective(s) on Paul, the two ages are not only interpreted salvation-historically, but as representing two modes of identity in Christ in which the criteria for covenant membership have been redrawn. An eschatological reading of the law and faith in Paul helps to understand the relationship between the various identities that feature in Romans as well as the way in which law and faith are understood in the letter.

Forster, Dion A.: *Your body is not your own: A political theological engagement with Gretha Wiid’s patriarchal interpretation of Ephesians 5:22-23*

Why does Gretha Wiid call upon her predominately white Afrikaner female followers to submit themselves unquestioningly to the sexual will and social authority of their husbands? Moreover, why would some of these women willingly give over their bodies and their agency in order to be considered ‘Worthy Women of God’? This paper will engage the founder of the ‘Worthy Women of God’ movement, Gretha Wiid’s, interpretation of Ephesians 5:22-23. It aims to explicate the political theology that underpins and informs Wiid’s patriarchal hermeneutics by placing it within the cultural, political, racial, and gendered context of a changing South Africa (particularly a changing Gauteng). In order to do so consideration will be given to the ways in which Wiid has interpreted Ephesians 5:22-23 in her publications, public addresses, and DVD / Video materials. By understanding her tacit political convictions, one can gain a clearer understanding of her hermeneutic strategy, and the reception of her patriarchal theology among her predominantly white, middle class, Afrikaner, women followers. It will be argued that her political strategy is diametrically opposed to the ethical intent contained in Ephesians 5:21-33.

Hombana, Mphumezi: *The Shaping Stratum of the Passion Narrative*

Interpreters have claimed since the introduction of form criticism that there existed a fairly well-formed, maybe even definitively fixed, version of the Passion narrative anterior to the writing of the first written gospel. The length of time between Jesus' death and the writing of the first Gospel necessitated an oral tradition transmission mechanism (Soards 2000:387-388). The passion narratives were determined to be a lengthy, logically progressive succession of short, seemingly related, and even dependent upon one another in producing a bigger cohesive account when compared to other stories and sections of the Gospels (Green 1992:163). The portions of the Gospels previous to the Passion accounts, on the other hand, were brief, ostensibly self-contained units that could, and likely organized in any sequence the evangelists wished (Stein 2008:705). Furthermore, whereas the pericope composing the account of Jesus' career previous to the passion could stand alone and transmit a meaningful message, some components of the passion narratives had to be woven into one story (Edwards 2002:624-628).

Without attempting to resolve the concerns of the presence and shape of a pre-Gospel passion story or passion narratives, one might wonder whether there is evidence of the oral tradition(s) from the period anterior to the production of the gospels in the passion narrative of the gospels (Weber 1979:388). In each of the most basic stories, the canonical Gospels disclose a plethora of special resources. As Larsen (2016:140-160) points out, pre-Christian passion parallels in Graeco-Roman and Jewish literature, as well as existing source materials that alluded to Jesus' suffering and death, inspired Mark's passion narrative. When it comes to Jewish literature, the passion narrative's ideology and message are consistent with Jewish literature, which contains numerous references to virtuous individuals whose suffering was divinely vindicated. In this regard, the inclusion of the Hebrew Bible in the Markan rendition of the passion account is noteworthy (Isa 53; LXX Ps 21, 40, 41, 42, 68, 108). Despite the fact that these texts are not tales, they appear to have affected how Jesus' agony, crucifixion, and death were told. Hence, central to this paper is the question: *What influenced the early composition of the passion narrative?* This paper assumes the Markan priority as a credible position in the synoptic puzzle.

Howes, Llewellyn: *The Harvest Logion in Q 10:2 and Non-servile Farm Labour*

The saying in Matthew 9:37-38 and Luke (Q) 10:2 reads as follows: "He said to his disciples: The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. So ask the Lord of the harvest to dispatch workers into his harvest." The present study attempts to illuminate this logion by considering its setting in first-century Palestine. The focus here is not on the logion's possible metaphorical application, but on the literal saying, which involves ancient agriculture and non-servile farm labour.

Kirk, Alan: *Oral Tradition, Memory, and D. F. Strauss: The Media Framework in Das Leben Jesu and the Unresolved Problem of the Tradition/Memory Nexus*

Herder introduced orality and oral tradition into the question of Synoptic origins and the Synoptic Problem, unsurprisingly taking the Synoptic tradition to be a specimen of *oral saga*. Twenty years later Gieseler built Herder's theory out into his full-fledged oral gospel hypothesis. For both Herder and Gieseler the appeal to oral tradition was not just a means explain Synoptic patterns of variation and agreement but more critically, to try to secure the connection of the Synoptic materials to apostolic memory. They ran into difficulties, however, theorizing this connection. In his *Life of Jesus* D. F. Strauss embraced the oral gospel hypothesis but exploited the innate affinity of the saga genre

to myth to sever connections of the narrative tradition to primitive Christian memory. In the course of doing so he made enduring contributions to understanding the Synoptic tradition as a cultural product and cultural phenomenon. Yet he ran into difficulties of his own trying to theorize the tradition's origins apart from the memory factor. The problem of the nexus of primitive Christian memory with the formation of the tradition is still with us, but interdisciplinary work on the cognitive/cultural interface shows promise of resolving it.

Ledgerwood, Tim: *The Ethiopian eunuch and the Servant of the King*

It is only recently that scholars have examined the figure of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26 – 40) and recognised the queering role that the eunuch plays. This role extends beyond issues of gender to encompass issues of class, colour, race, and wealth. This makes the Ethiopian eunuch an excellent role model in terms of queering which can be used to look at the message of the Gospels through a very different lens than the ones we would normally employ. While the Ethiopian eunuch is a somewhat obscure reference in the New Testament, even more obscure is the parallel figure in the Old Testament. This is the figure of the servant of the king – Ebed-melech – in Jeremiah 38 and 39. While there are many similarities between the two figures, very little scholarship appears to have been done by New Testament scholars in terms of examining the relationship between the two figures. In this paper, I will examine the parallels between the two figures, and re-examine the figure of the Ethiopian eunuch through a Jewish lens, using the figure of Ebed-melech.

More, Jonathan: *"I can do all things": Paul's self-sufficiency in the context of ancient freedom*

The centrality of freedom in Paul's thought can easily be gauged by the role that words like *eleutheria*, *eleutheros*, and *eleutherein* play at key junctions in his letters to the believers at Rome, both letters to Corinth, and the letter to the Galatian believers. The importance of this idea in Paul's thought, together with frequency of this lexeme in these four texts, makes its absence in the remaining three undisputed Pauline letters somewhat surprising. In this paper, I argue that Paul's claim to be self-sufficient in Philippians 4.11 forms part of the ancient philosophical discussion of freedom and should be understood within the apostle's broader theology of the believer's freedom.

Motuku, Kenosi Patson: *Orality and memory in Luke 1-2: Anti-imperial womanist reading of the Lukan infant narrative highlighting Mary as the mother of the revolution*

This paper examines the role of orality and memory in the infant narrative of Luke 1-2. Special attention is given to Mary's Magnificat in Luke 1 and Luke's parenthetical verses in Luke 2 highlighting Mary's heartily memorisation of the panegyric sayings on the life and destiny of the Christ-child. The paper demonstrates that Mary through her words and attitude assumes the role of a revolutionary mother employing various strategic and tactical responses in the various phases of the revolution heralded by the Lukan revolutionary songs i.e. *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, *Magnificat*, *Benedictus*, and *Nunc dimittis*. This is true when the Lukan infant narrative is read in the light of the socio-economic and political contexts of the first-century Roman Palestine. Accordingly the paper accords to Mary the title, 'Mother of the revolution', for her often invisible and neglected yet revolutionary role in the salvific story of Jesus.

Müller van Velden, Nina: *Memory, Jesus, and Mary Magdalene: Whose memory matters?*

Paradoxically, collective memory concerning Mary Magdalene is both vague and very specific – and transcends the scholarly circles of biblical interpretation. On the one hand, there are those who closely follow the canonical Gospels' collective memory and regard her as an important follower of Jesus, the apostle to the apostles, and as a clear reminder of the importance of female followers of Jesus during his earthly ministry (albeit with a demonic past). On the other hand (and especially in popular culture), she is remembered for what is *not* stated in the canonical Gospels: that she was loved more by Jesus than any other women or even married to him (cf. the Gospel of Mary, and the blockbuster book and movie *The Da Vinci Code*). Furthermore, the conflated collective memory of different female characters in the Gospels continues to persist after centuries, recalling Mary Magdalene as (repentant) prostitute.

In this paper I will explore how ideologies concerning gender and female sexuality has shaped these various strands of collective memory of Mary Magdalene, specifically in relation to Jesus. This exploration will start with close readings of the representations of Mary Magdalene in the four canonical Gospels. Thereafter a brief overview of the representation of Mary Magdalene in the apocryphal Gospel of Mary will be provided, followed by the centuries-old representation of her as sexually dubious character. Finally, I will ask questions concerning collective memory and social control over the female body in New Testament interpretation. Whose memory matters? Who determines if female followers of Jesus are even remembered? But more importantly: how are they remembered?

Nagel, Peter: *Towards a Kyriology of Early Christianity: The Use of the Term κυριος in the Letter of Barnabas*

Several theological understandings and debates have been generated from the use of the *hapax legomenon*, θεόπνευστος over centuries of biblical interpretation in an attempt to formulate a concept of the Christian Scripture. This has led to different theological leanings and inclinations on the place and the role of the Scripture in Christianity. The author of the Pastoral Epistle strategically placed the iconic and peculiar σὺ δὲ (v. 14) just before he introduced θεόπνευστος. Thereby attributing further significance to the role of the Scripture in the text. Therefore, there is a need to once again examine the term and passage however using the socio-rhetorical methodology this time around to unpack how this term functions in this pericope. Furthermore, investigating the supposed influence, the strategic placement of θεόπνευστος was intended to have in the pericope and what resulting influence the term θεόπνευστος has exerted on the understanding and interpretation of the Christian Scripture over the centuries following its deployment in the Pastoral Epistles.

Nel, Marius J.: *The significance of the allusions in Matthew 20:20-28*

This paper further investigates the intertextual allusions in Matthew 20:20-28. It firstly explores the literary context of the pericope and its pivotal role in the narrative of Matthew. Secondly, the conceptual, linguistic, and contextual parallels between the various allusions and other ancient text in Matthew 20:20-28 will be explored. Particular attention will be paid to the intertextual approach followed by Matthew and the role of ambiguity in the pericope. The paper will conclude by outlining what the analyses of the allusions in Matthew 20:20-28 contribute to gaining a deeper understanding of Matthew's motifs of forgiveness and salvation, narrative structure, and rhetorical strategy.

Potgieter, Annette: *A spatial rhetoric of hope in Romans 5-8*

Paul's argument in Romans 5–8 is rich with imagery employed to persuade an audience that Jesus Christ “our” Lord should be the controlling power of a believers’ body. Many of the images that Paul employs are spatial, but moreover, Paul uses the body of the believer as the place where contestation occurs. It is the body that needs to continually present itself to God in order to be a space that is truly alive. Paul introduces the notion of hope in Rom 5:2 in a particular pericope that is imbued in spatial rhetoric. This paper will investigate whether the notion of hope can be perceived from a spatial perspective in Paul’s use in Romans 5–8.

Prinsloo, H. J.: *Persuading the Thessalonians - A Text-Centered Rhetorical Analysis of 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5*

From the state of scholarship, it is clear that almost all scholars assume that Paul utilised ancient rhetorical categories when he wrote 1 Thessalonians, and that the best way to do a rhetorical analysis of the letter is by the use of ancient rhetorical categories. However, the large diversity and sometimes even clashing ways in which such categories are used by quite competent New Testament scholars sheds doubt on the use of such categories. In this paper, I tried another approach, namely to describe the rhetoric of the text by a close reading of the text itself, which is described as a “text-centred rhetorical approach”. This approach has been developed by Francois Tolmie and applied by him to the Letter to the Galatians. In practical terms during the first phase one identifies the overall rhetorical strategy and the dominant and supportive arguments and during the second phase one identifies the use of rhetorical techniques. In this paper I will apply the same minimum theoretical framework in order to reconstruct the rhetoric of both the letter opening and thanksgiving of Paul’s First Letter to the Thessalonians (1Thessalonians 1:1-5). This article will show that Paul adapts the ancient letter styles to achieve his rhetorical objectives. Of critical importance is to note: (a) his pastoral concern in confirming the favourable relationship the congregation continued to have with God the Father, Jesus the Lord, and the missionaries, (b) his exhortation of the congregation to live worthily their new identity as converts in the light of the coming parousia. The discussion of the overall rhetorical strategy and supportive arguments is followed the identification of the rhetorical techniques used, e.g. alliteration, antithetical sentence construction, hyperbole, inclusive language, and metaphor.

Punt, Jeremy: *Paul, stranger in Africa?*

Scholars in the past have signalled the almost complete absence of Paul – as cypher for the Pauline letters and tradition(s) – in Africa, in all its pluralist variety and richness. The apparent lack of use of the Pauline letters in Black, African and Liberation Theologies on the continent, is generally taken as testimony to the perceived strangeness of the apostle in Africa. However, even if Paul’s strangeness does not however equate with his absence, at least not altogether, Paul’s profiles in Africa will include dimensions such as Paul as stranger, as unwelcome guest, as conquering traveller, and as victim of tradition. I argue that Paul’s absence from, as well as strangeness in, Africa may be more apparent than real, and that hermeneutical patterns and practices more than epistolary content, may have played the stronger role in the construal of Paul in Africa.

Sindo, Vuyani: *African Christian Identity and the critique of the third race theory: An investigation of the 'in Christ' motif in Paul*

Identity formation studies in Paul have become a fast-growing discipline in recent years. These studies “have brought to the fore the centrality of social identity in Paul’s thoughts” (Tucker, 2011:2). Most reformed and evangelical scholars, in their treatment of identity formation in Paul, tend to emphasise what is generally referred to as “the universalistic approach to Christian identity” or “third race theory”. This approach is built on four popular New Testament texts: Galatians 3:28 and Colossians 3:11, which speak of there being “neither Jew nor Greek” in Christ; 1 Corinthians 12:13, which talks about our unity in one baptism and one Spirit; and 2 Corinthians 5:17, which says that εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις. This approach, in its treatment of identities in Paul, mostly emphasises the discontinuity of previous identity to the point where it ignores some of the Pauline texts that speak about the continuation of those identities (i.e. 1 Corinthians 7:17-24; Romans 11:13 and 15:27). Campbell (2006:1) makes a helpful observation about this approach and especially its impact in the contemporary world. He notes that this approach has landed itself as “an accessory” to an imperialistic conception of a dominating Western culture over e.g. African or Korean cultures. This approach, in its teaching about unity in the church, has emphasised sameness, and this has been particularly detrimental for the church in Africa as it has taught the church that in order for her to be genuinely Christian she needs to abandon anything that is African.

This paper will argue for a reconstruction approach to identity formation in Paul. It will argue that the “in Christ” event has brought about a significant change in the identity formation of Christ’s followers, but this change does not mean a complete abandoning of one’s ethnic identity. The significant scripture here is 1 Corinthians 7:17-24, where Paul says that the Christian community should remain in the state that they were called in. At face value, it seems that Paul argues that those who belong to Christ should not seek to change their ethnic identity markers (circumcision), especially the Jews. Horrell (2008:9), looking at these verses, noted that there must have been diversity amongst the Corinthian community, with the Gentiles being the majority. The question arising then is, since the Gentiles were the majority, did Paul expect them to keep their Gentile identity markers, and what is the interplay between being “in Christ” and their Gentile identity? Moreover, Paul is generally “accredited as being the architect of the gentile inclusion in Christ”, also, it was he “who fought continuously for the inclusion of Gentiles on equal terms with the Jews and resisted all attempts to treat them as proselytes or potential Jews”. Scholars also see “the Antioch incident” as “Paul’s triumph over Jewish influence in the church” (Campbell, 2006:87 emphasis original). Thus, this paper seeks to investigate how the interplay between the Gentile identity and being “in Christ” may be supportive of the formation of the African Christian identity.

Tönsing, J. Gertrud: *Making the Gospel Performable - the Order of Mark*

Since the discovery of Mark as the oldest canonical gospel, it has been the primary source for reconstructing a life of the historical Jesus, and is almost always given preference if disagreeing with John. This is in spite of the fact that almost all commentaries include a reference to Eusebius quoting Papias, that Mark wrote “not, indeed, in order, of the things said or done...”. In this paper the argument will be that Mark was the first attempt at “making the gospel performable”, one dramatic story which makes understandable why Jesus was put to death. In trying to construct this dramatic arc, Mark took some liberties with his oral and written source material, writing it up “not in order”. Firstly he simplifies the story by telling of only one visit to Jerusalem after the commencement of Jesus’ Galilean ministry. Secondly he includes a resurrection appearance in the middle of his narrative as “transfiguration”, after deciding to leave the ending open. This, the argument is, was so

that performers could decide themselves whether to name Peter or Mary Magdalene as the first to see the risen Jesus. Thirdly he places the “cleansing of the Temple” episode after the triumphal entry, and thus makes it the direct cause of Jesus’ arrest. The paper will examine several indicators that show that in this case John probably has the more historical sequence. It was this dramatic “performable” power of the Markan storyline that probably secured the gospel’s enduring popularity, even after largely being incorporated into Matthew and Luke.

Van den Heever, Gerhard: “And So I Conclude that a Temple Exists” (Barnabas 16:7): Spiritualising the Temple in Early Christian Discourse

The early second century letter of Barnabas espouses virulent invective against Jews and their understanding of scripture and practice of religion, deriding them for idolatry and, generally, for misunderstanding significant aspects of their own religion: the covenant, fasting, sacrifices, circumcision, kosher food laws, sabbath, the temple. In fact, while appropriating Jewish scripture for Christianity, Barnabas claims that because Jews broke the covenant at Sinai, which was never restored for them, all of scripture now belongs to Christians. It is a crude supersessionist missive, and its symbolic/allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament should be read as a rhetoric of disallowing Jews any rights to scripture – Barnabas claims special knowledge (*gnosis*) received from God as authority for his discounting of Jewish interpretation of scripture. Yet the letter is simultaneously one of the early Christian writings (along with, arguably, the Didache) closest to Second Temple Jewish discourses. Given its probable dating and setting (shortly before the Second Jewish War of 132—135 CE), the letter probably arose out of an intense competition regarding messianic claims between Jews and Christians (Barnabas’s audience is probably gentile and not Jewish-Christian). In this context, Barnabas provides a spiritual understanding of the temple as place of epiphany and divine dwelling. The temple is now understood as God taking up residence inside Christian believers through their repentance and life of faith. The paper investigates this particular aspect of Barnabas’s rhetoric in that this is a trajectory of religious redefinition that has already had a longer history, namely the relocation of epiphany within the human believer.

Viljoen, Francois P.: *Bloated self-interest or humble Christian leadership; reflections from Matt 23:3-12*

Jesus in Matthew 23:3-7 depicts the teachers of the Law and Pharisees, Jewish leaders of his time, as people who do things because of self interest. Jesus criticizes their overall insincere conduct. Within their honour and shame society, they make the life of their subordinates unbearable (Mt. 23:4) while they selfishly seek honour from their society. Jesus provides specific examples of what they do (Mt 23:5–7):

- They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long.
- They love the place of honour at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues.
- They love to be greeted in the market places and to have men call them ‘Rabbi’.

In contrast to the vanity of these Jewish leaders Jesus proceeds to set out the behaviour required of his followers (Mt 23:8–12). Jesus emphasizes humility and equality of ‘all’ in subjection to ‘one’, meaning himself with his teaching authority. His community members should not strive to be called *καθηγηταί* (instructors) as they have but one *καθηγητή* (instructor) (Mt 23:10), which is Christ. He is their *καθηγητής* with ultimate authority.

This paper will consist of a semantical investigation of Matthew 23:3-12 within its textual and societal context. This will be followed by a theological reflection on what Jesus in this passage teaches about leadership as required from his followers. This reflection should provide guidelines for (Christian) leadership in Africa.

Visser, Jacobie M. Helena: *James 2:1-7 a lifegiving text? A rhetorical investigation of the intersection of masculinities and poverty in James 2:1-7*

The COVID-19 global pandemic has resulted in renewed emphasis on the devastating effects of gender inequality and oppressive expressions of masculinities in South Africa, especially as it concerns poverty and gender-based violence. Since the first reported case of the COVID-19 virus South Africa in early March 2020, the effects of poverty and gender-based violence in the daily lives of South Africans have received national attention. The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on the tragic and continuous consequences of the issues of poverty and gender-based violence that have plagued South Africans since before and after the advent of democracy.

In SA almost 80% of the population identify as Christian and consequently regarding the Bible as an authoritative text which frames the context of poverty and gender-based violence in relation to religion. This leads one to ask about the impact of certain Biblical texts on the perceptions of South Africans. A text like the Epistle of James speaks to the intersection of poverty and masculinities, and it becomes important to ask about its modern-day impact, positive or negative, on societies given that intersections continue to exist. Without ignoring the large contextual gap between the ancient text of the Epistle of James and the modern South African context, the significance of this ancient text for believers today is worth considering.

My paper, then, will explore the intersection of 1st-century masculinities and poverty in James 2:1-7. The text will be investigated by using a rhetorical close reading. The focus will shift to the modern South African context to explore whether (and how) the Epistle of James can serve as a life-giving text within the life-threatening context of South Africa as far as the intersection of masculinities and poverty are concerned.

Wilson, Mark: *Dismantling the Urban Thesis: Paul's Audience in the Chora in Acts and his Letters*

In his recent examination of the identity of the first Christians, Thomas A. Robinson has attempted to dismantle the urban thesis held by many scholars of early Christianity. Commentators have often drawn that conclusion from Paul's ministry in urban centers in the eastern Mediterranean as presented in Acts and his letters. Robinson tantalizingly mentions Paul's ministry in the countryside in Acts 13:49 but fails to develop the point. This paper will do that by first discussing the meaning of chora as it related to Greco-Roman cities like Pisidian Antioch. It will examine how villages functioned within their civic chorai. Four villages on or near the Via Sebaste will be examined. These are found in the geographic regions of Phrygia, Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Pamphylia—all mentioned in Acts and part of provincial Galatia. Inscriptional evidence related to the social, religious, and economic life of these villages will be explored. The *perichōros* mentioned between Lystra and Derbe (Acts 14:6–7) adds another dimension to Paul's rural ministry. Understanding the relationship between city and chora helps us to understand better the audiences addressed in Paul's letters to the Galatians, Thessalonians, Corinthians, and Philippians. Ancient readers would not understand any dichotomy between urban and rural as is so often understood in modern scholarship.