JOSHUA E. LEIM

Matthew's Theological Grammar

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 402

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The Father and the Son

Mohr Siebeck

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For Keely, Salem, Silas, and Evangeline

Preface

This monograph is a slightly revised version of my ThD dissertation submitted to Duke University Divinity School in August of 2014. I am grateful to Profs. Jörg Frey and Ross Wagner for their recommendation to publish this dissertation in the WUNT II series. Further, thanks are due to Dr. Henning Ziebritzki and his staff at Mohr Siebeck for their efficiency in bringing this monograph to publication so quickly.

In *On the Sublime*, Pseudo-Longinus cites Demosthenes' remark that "the greatest of all blessings is to be fortunate, but next to that and equal in importance is to be well advised – for good fortune is utterly ruined by the absence of good counsel." Whether or not he is right about "good fortune," he is surely right about "good counsel." The good counsel I have received from my advisor, C. Kavin Rowe, both in matters scholarly and personal, is inestimable. Mostly by imitation, I have learned from him what it means to be a biblical scholar. To borrow his words from another context, his is "the kind of life that forms the background of the possibility of being able to know the truth rather than the lie – a true kind of life." Beyond classroom instruction, personal conversations, and his investment in this dissertation, the shape of his life has profoundly molded my theological imagination.

The biblical and theological formation I have received from the other members of my dissertation committee – Richard B. Hays, Paul J. Griffiths, and J. Warren Smith – is likewise difficult to overestimate. Among *many* other things, Richard Hays taught me how to read texts closely, carefully, and, indeed, lovingly. Paul Griffiths helped me work through Augustine and Wittgenstein and indulged many questions from a neophyte. Warren Smith taught me to love the Church fathers and to think precisely about the fourth-century theological controversies.

Thanks are due also to many others who provided helpful input as I worked on this project, including Nathan Bills, Ann Marie Boyd, Brandon Crowe, Brian Curry, Nathan Eubank, Joshua Gritter, Stanley Hauerwas, Joel Marcus, Scott Swain, and Ross Wagner. At some point they were all a source of encouragement and/or insightful instruction as I tried to make my way through the ins and outs of the argument. Also, many thanks are due to Brett McKey, who compiled the indexes.

To my family I owe the deepest gratitude. The joy of raising Salem, Silas, and Evangeline with my wife, Keely, makes the sometimes overwhelming vicissitudes of life bearable. They are good and perfect gifts apart from which I would be a different person – much for the worse. Finally, but for my wife, Keely, this work would be inconceivable. Her constant encouragement through and unflagging commitment to years of graduate studies – all the way through the final days of this project – has been remarkable to experience and humbling to receive. To her and to our children I dedicate this project.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

". . . and like all objects to which a man devotes himself, they had fashioned him into correspondence with themselves."

George Eliot, *Silas Marner*

Works of pride, by self-called creators, with their premium on originality, reduce the Creation to novelty – the faint surprises of minds incapable of wonder . . . .

Good works find the way between pride and despair.
It graces with health. It heals with grace.
It preserves the given so that it remains a gift.

Wendell Berry, "Healing"

Around the time I was beginning research for this dissertation, I came across the disruptive stanzas above by Wendell Berry. Berry, whose lived intellectual life I very much admire, began to put me in something of a quandary. His words about our treatment of creation seemed analogous to a common way of construing dissertation writing in biblical studies. How could I write a dissertation without saying something "novel"? Is that not the purpose of a dissertation – to say something "original"? Probably I had something of a self-imposed, truncated view of the purpose of a dissertation, but it can hardly be denied that there is a widespread premium on novelty in dissertation writing.

Around the same time I came across a similar claim by Paul Griffiths:

> In its ideal type … the novelty is always just out of reach, beckoning seductively…. Appeals to the desirability of the new and claims that something is new are as likely to mask repetition, recapitulation, and imitation, as they are to signal the presence of something genuinely novel.[1]

Words like "pride," "despair," "desire," and "gift" feel a bit out of place in an introduction to a dissertation on Matthew, and I do not wish to inundate the reader here in a deluge of self-psychologizing. More importantly for this introduction, however, is that two such witnesses, Berry and Griffiths, were sufficient to make me think hard about the nature of the task ahead of me.

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[1] Paul J. Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite: A Theological Grammar* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 210.

I begin as I do, rather than directly with my topic of study, as an attempt primarily to keep ever before myself, and also the reader, what I hope to accomplish with this study. While the focused effort of this project is to investigate in detail a particular aspect of Matthew's narrative christology, the larger goal is summed up well by Paul Holmer:

> At best, the theological research that goes on does not quite issue in real theology – instead it prepares people a bit, at the most, for appreciating the real thing. It is like logic in respect to thinking and grammar in respect to writing prose . . . . [T]he continuous task of theology is both to say and to resay what are the rudiments of the Bible and of the faith; and this is its simplest and never-ending responsibility.[2]

The hope of this study is to "resay," or perhaps better, to "extend"[3] and render more perspicuous certain aspects of Matthew's theological grammar, the proper ordering of which cannot help but better situate the Church to "appreciate the real thing," the one to whom the text bears witness; or, in Elliot's words above, for the Church to be more closely "fashioned into correspondence" with the one to whom the narrative calls us to render προσκύνησις.[4] There is more to say regarding the hermeneutical posture of this study, to which we shall return in the concluding postscript. However, with the mention of προσκύνησις, I turn more immediately to the topic of and justification for this study.

A. The Study and its Justification

Since the rise of the application of narrative criticism to the literature of the Old and New Testaments, there has been an increasing appreciation for the literary artistry of the Gospel narratives, and for Matthew in particular. Whereas older studies of Matthew could rather blithely suggest that Matthew unwittingly incorporated competing traditions or doublets,[5] the majority of recent critics agree that the author of the first Gospel has crafted his narrative

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[2] *The Grammar of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper Row Publishers, 1978), 25, 28.

[3] Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, 20. See also Thomas Pfau, *Minding the Modern: Human Agency, Intellectual Traditions, and Responsible Knowledge* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), chpt. 3.

[4] Cf. John Webster, "Resurrection and Scripture," in *Christology and Scripture: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (eds. Andrew T. Lincoln and Angus Paddison; LNTS 348; London: T&T Clark, 2007), esp. 153.

[5] Cf., e.g., Georg Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchungen zur Theologie des Matthäus* (FRLANT 82; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 16; Douglas R. A. Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (SNTSMS 6; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 111–12; Stephenson H. Brooks, *Matthew's Community: The Evidence of His Special Sayings Source* (JSNTSup 16; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 59–64; E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (New

with rather careful deliberation. Beaton's description represents this broadly shared opinion:

> For Matthew, the allusions to the OT within the narrative itself serve as pointers to the significance of a particular event for a thoughtful or informed audience….This, plus the other literary and stylistic features, implies that the document was crafted with a sophistication and complexity that rewarded repeated performances or readings.[6]

Speaking of the intricacies of the infancy narrative, Pesch similarly attests that "der [Text] ja wahrlich kein volkstümliches Erzeugnis mündlicher Überlieferung, sondern meisterhafte Komposition eines begabten Evangelisten ist."[7]

York: Penguin, 1993), 94.

[6] Richard Beaton, "How Matthew Writes," in *The Written Gospel* (eds. Markus Bockmuehl and Donald A. Hagner; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 134; cf. also Richard Burridge, "From Titles to Stories" in *The Person of Christ* (eds. Stephen R. Holmes and Murray A. Rae; London: T&T Clark, 2005), 48; Mark Allan Powell, "The Plot and Subplots of Matthew's Gospel," *NTS* 38 (1992): 187–204; Dale Allison's essay, "Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*" (idem, *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005]) helpfully illustrates the careful construction of the narrative as a whole; also in the same volume, see his essay "Foreshadowing the Passion"; Krister Stendahl, "Quis et Unde? An Analysis of Mt 1–2," in *Judentum – Urchristentum – Kirche: Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias* (ed. Walther Eltester; BZNW 26; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1964), 96; cf. also Hubert Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi: Studien zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte des Evangeliums nach Matthäus* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973), 324; N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*. Vol. 1 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 386. See also the comments by Roland Mushat Frye, "A Literary Perspective for the Criticism of the Gospels," in *Jesus and Man's Hope* (eds. D. G. Miller and D. Y. Hadidian; 2 vols; Pittsburg: Pittsburg Theological Seminary Press, 1971), 2:220 n. 42. For a slightly opposing position, that is, one that thinks the literary finesse of the evangelists can be over-emphasized, cf. Christopher Tuckett, review of C. Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke*, *Review of Biblical Literature* (2008) [http://bookreviews.org], esp. 3.

[7] Rudolph Pesch, "Der Gottessohn im matthäischen Evangelienprolog (Mt 1–2). Beobachtungen zu den Zitationsformeln der Reflexionszitate," *Bib* 48 (1967): 396. By saying that scholars have come to a greater appreciation of the literary quality of Matthew's narrative, I am by no means suggesting all scholars affirm that Matthew's narrative is internally coherent at every point. On a different note, by endorsing the notion that "Matthew" has carefully crafted his narrative, I do not wish to endorse a simplistic notion of "authorial intent," as though we could get "behind" the words into Matthew's "mind" and thereby discover what he really "meant." Rather, it is the contours of the narrative itself – the extensive presence of literary elements like verbal repetition, inclusios, narrative analogies, intertextuality, etc. – by which one is compelled to attend closely to its shape on a macro and micro scale if one is to read it well (cf. Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation* [Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1990], 148).

It is all the more surprising, then, that Matthew's προσκυνέω language has received very little sustained attention,[8] since such language is in fact a significant point of emphasis in Matthew's narrative portrayal of Jesus. Of course, commentators have long-noted that προσκυνέω is a "favorite" Matthean term – he uses the term thirteen times (ten for Jesus) compared to Mark's two and Luke's three. But often the discussion has neglected the literarily strategic use of προσκυνέω unique to Matthew's Gospel. If our author is indeed a "gifted Evangelist," then we should pay close attention to how Matthew has woven this important term into the fabric of his narrative.[9]

Indeed, a few examples suffice to suggest the literarily judicious use to which Matthew puts this term. Much like the commonly observed inclusio focused on Jesus' presence with his people (Matt 1:23/28:20; cf. also 18:20),[10] so also the first witnesses to Jesus' birth and the first witnesses to his resurrection render him προσκύνησις (2:2/11; 28:9, 17). Strikingly, however, when the devil requests προσκυνήσις from Jesus in the same language used for the magi's action before Jesus – πίπτω + προσκυνέω (2:11, 4:9) – Jesus cites Israel's basic confession of faith: κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις (4:10). Yet, as the story goes on Jesus receives προσκύνησις repeatedly. Among other episodes, the first time the disciples confess Jesus as "Son of God" they also render him προσκύνησις, a uniquely Matthean climax to the water-walking episode positioned at the center of the narrative (14:33/Mark 6:51–2/John 6:20–21). Or, as a final example, both of the well-known series of healings begin with the supplicant offering Jesus προσκύνησις (8:2; 9:18), both instances of which represent a change to Mark's text.

Further corroborating Matthew's προσκύνησις-christology, then, is his redaction of Markan material. While our focus will largely be on Matthew's narrative in its own right, a pattern nonetheless emerges in his handling of a number of Markan passages. Four times in material that Matthew has taken over from Mark he has either changed Mark's wording to a form of προσκυνέω or he has added it where Mark has no such gesture.[11] Further, he removes Mark's

[8] Cf. Larry Hurtado's and Mark A. Powell's similar comments in their respective articles, "Pre-70 CE Jewish Opposition to Christ-Devotion," *JTS* 50.1 (1999): 40; Powell, "A Typology of Worship in the Gospel of Matthew," *JSNT* 57 (1995): 3.

[9] Cf., e.g., Hurtado, "Pre-70 Jewish Opposition to Christ Devotion," 40 n.22; Pesch, "Der Gottessohn," 414; Markus Müller, "Proskynese und Christologie nach Matthäus," in *Kirche und Volk Gottes: Festschrift für Jürgen Roloff zum 70. Geburtstag* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2000), 223.

[10] A widely-recognized inclusio; cf., e.g., Adelheid Ruck-Schröder, *Der Name Gottes und der Name Jesu: Eine neutestamentliche Studie* (WMANT 80; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1999), 262.

[11] Matt 8:2/Mark 1:40; Matt 9:18/Mark 5:22; Matt 15:22–5/Mark 7:25–26; Matt 20:20/Mark 10:35. There is a text critical question of whether Mark 1:40 originally included "and kneeling" (καὶ γονυπετῶν). For our purposes, Matthew has either changed γονυπετῶν

only two uses of προσκυνέω, a theologically significant editorial choice.[12] We will trace a number of other significant patterns in Matthew's use of προσκυνέω throughout the body of the study,[13] but the examples above suffice to illustrate that the προσκυνέω motif is by no means incidental to Matthew's narrative christology.

Of course, that there has been no monograph-length treatment of Matthew's use of προσκυνέω and very little attention to the literary-theological contours of προσκυνέω even in article-length studies is by no means to suggest that scholars have overlooked Matthew's use of προσκυνέω. As noted above, one hardly finds a commentary that fails to notice προσκυνέω as a favorite Matthean-ism.[14] But this broad consensus nonetheless continues to issue in two significant problems. First, a point to which we shall return below, προσκυνέω is commonly treated as lending to Matthew an "exalted" or "heightened" christology. Such vague language yields a consistent result – προσκυνέω does not actually do much work for the precise articulation of Matthew's christological/theological grammar either on a large scale or for individual passages. Second, despite the importance of προσκυνέω for Matthew's portrayal of Jesus, there is little consistency regarding the details of its interpretation in actual exegesis and therefore insufficient regard for its christological significance. From this second point we turn to a brief *Forschungsbericht* of προσκυνέω in Matthean studies.

Consider, for example, Davies and Allison's treatment of this linguistic pattern in Matthew. Early in their commentary series they argue that (almost) all of Matthew's uses of προσκυνέω should be understood not only as homage/obeisance, but as actual "worship:"

> [Re: Mt. 2:2] So one might translate προσκυνέω by 'pay homage' (so the NEB). Yet the child before whom the magi bow (2:11) is the Son of God. Moreover, ἔρχομαι followed by προσκυνέω denotes a cultic action in the LXX, and Jews tended to think of complete *proskynesis* as properly directed towards the one God … So 'worship' is perhaps implied in 2:2. Almost everywhere else in Matthew such a translation is probably fitting.[15]

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to προσεκύνει or simply added the entire notion where Mark had nothing.

[12] Matt 8:28–29/Mark 5:6; Matt 27:29/Mark 15:19. I will comment briefly below on Matthew's removal of προσκυνέω from Markan material, but Pesch is on the right track, "Der Evangelist...übergeht 8,28f. die Proskynese des Besessene aus Mk 5,6 und zwar zweifellos deshalb, weil er die Proskynese als einen Akt göttlicher Verehrung versteht, den kein Besessener leisten kann. Ebenso bestätigt die Streichung der Proskynese von Mekka 15,19 in Mit 27,30 das mythische Verständnis von προσκυνέω. Die Proskynese darf nicht zur Verspottung des Königs missbraucht werden" ("Der Gottessohn," 415).

[13] See especially the beginning of chapter 5.

[14] Cf., e.g., the influential study by Günther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (trans. Percy Scott; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963), 229.

[15] W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988–97), 1:237.

Matthew, they argue, has "blurred the distinction between the time before and after the resurrection," freely introducing the church's later christological views into the narrative. As a result, προσκυνέω probably connotes worship in Mathew's usage of the term, though they seem to remain somewhat reticent about this conclusion. There are, however, two problems with their claim. First, there is a problem of literary coherence. How does the "worship" of Jesus square with Jesus' own claim in the climactic moment of the temptation – only "the Lord God" is to be "worshiped" and served (κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις, 4:10)? If one were to resolve this by arguing that Jesus *is* God, Davies and Allison would disagree, which leads to their second problem – logical coherence. That is, they argue that Jesus is not "equal" to God in Matthew, but rather "the fullest embodiment of the divine purpose . . . [but] less than God."[16] Why, then, are we to translate προσκυνέω as full-blown "worship" with reference to Jesus, yet at the same time not consider Jesus "equal" to God?[17] If, as Davies and Allison argue, Matthew's Gospel reflects deeply Jewish concerns, probably mirrored in the community to which he writes, how would they have conceived of "worshiping" Jesus while he is nonetheless "less than God"?[18] They offer no answer.[19]

A second position represents, broadly, a response to a position like that of Davies and Allison. Protecting Matthew from blatant anachronism, Peter Head argues that there is insufficient evidence that προσκυνέω connotes "divine" worship.[20] Rather, on the basis of lexicographical evidence and Matthew's re-

[16] *Matthew*, 1:217.

[17] Cf. also, e.g., Hubert Frankemölle's statement: "Dieses Verbum [προσκυνέω] ist für Mt ein 'religiöser Begriff' wie πληροῦν . . . und stark redaktionell vermehrt" (*Jahwebund*, 166 n. 37). Frankemölle, however, does not explain exactly what he means by a "religious concept," nor how it can function coherently for both Jesus and the Father.

[18] Cf. *Matthew*, 1:26–57, 143–47.

[19] Similar is Held's argument in "Matthew as Interpreter of the Miracle Stories," in *Tradition and Interpretation*, 229, 265–275. Pesch ("Der Gottessohn") represents a position not unlike that of Davies and Allison and Held. Though only briefly commenting on προσκυνέω, Pesch makes a number of trenchant observations, and quickly, but carefully traces Matthew's *Sprachgebrauch* vis-à-vis προσκυνέω (cf. 414–415). Not unlike Held, however, he does not (1) clarify what he means by "divine" worship, (2) demonstrate how that "divine" (christological) worship relates to Matt 4:8–10 (or the broader Jewish commitments to the one God), or (3) give a sustained exegetical case for his interpretation. Larry Hurtado, in his brief treatment of προσκυνέω in Matthew, largely follows Held (*How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 145–148).

[20] Head explicitly brings up the charge of "anachronism" (*Christology and the Synoptic Problem* [SNTSMS 94; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997], 131). I put "divine" in quotation marks because the term is unhelpfully ambiguous, especially in Head's discussion of Jesus' identity vis-à-vis "God" in Matthew.

dactional pattern, προσκυνέω probably suggests nothing more than royal obeisance. While Matthew's later auditors may have heard "more" in the term, such a "surplus of meaning" probably obtains only at the level of *Wirkungsgeschichte*, not necessarily in the narrative itself.[21] Head and Carson argue, however, that Matthew himself *may* have exploited the ambiguity of προσκυνέω such that at the story-level the term retains a more mundane meaning, while later readers who "worship" Jesus would necessarily hear more.[22] We will see that dramatic irony may well be at play in some of Matthew's uses of προσκυνέω, but the problems for Head and Carson are also two-fold. First, for them, προσκυνέω in Matthew accrues christological significance in a manner primarily external to the narrative – in the (later) interpretive community. But this move ignores the literary patterns already noted above that suggest προσκυνέω is in fact indispensable for the narrative's rendering of Jesus' identity.[23] Second, we will see that Carson's and Head's position is exegetically weak – attending to the pattern of Matthew's usage of προσκυνέω will not support reading it only as royal or respectful "obeisance."

Whereas the second position above argued that Matthew *would* not write his Gospel in such a blatantly anachronistic way, the third position essentially argues that Matthew *could* not have done so. That is, Matthew's dictum in 4:9–10 and the broader "monotheistic" concerns of Second Temple Judaism make it impossible for us to think that Matthew used προσκυνέω in relation to Jesus as "worship." Peter Fiedler states this position clearly. Commenting on Matt 4:9–10, he says:

> Die Verknüpfung von kniefälliger Verehrung und Anbetung wirft ein Licht auf die (wenigen)[24] Stellen bei Mt, an denen Menschen vor Jesus auf die Knie fallen (s. bereits 2,11): Mt meint eindeutig keine göttlich Verehrung Jesu; denn das wäre Gotteslästerung.[25]

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[21] Ibid., 130–31; cf. also, D. A. Carson, "Christological Ambiguities in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Christ the Lord: Studies Presented to Donald Guthrie* (ed. Harold H. Rowden; Downer's Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1982), 110–111.

[22] Head, *Christology*, 131; Carson, "Christological Ambiguities," 111. John Nolland also suggests Matthew may have exploited the ambiguity of προσκυνέω, arguing that in most instances it should be understood as "deferential respect," though at the water-walking episode and the resurrection, "worship" is the appropriate interpretation (*The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 42–43).

[23] Cf. Carson, "Matthew" in vol. 9 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew and Mark* (rev. ed.; eds. Tremper Longman III & David E. Garland; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 116.

[24] Are there really "wenigen Stellen"? As I noted above, Matthew uses προσκυνέω language more than any other Gospel writer (13x; 10x for Jesus).

[25] Peter Fiedler, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (TKNT; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer), 92. With equal force, David Kupp says that the προσκύνησις the Father receives in 4:9–10 "makes it obvious" that Jesus' reception of προσκύνησις throughout the narrative does not mean that he is equal to "God" (*Matthew's Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God's People in the First*

Here, Fiedler suggests that the προσκύνησις Jesus receives cannot be the same as that which the "Lord God" receives, lest the narrative stand in contradiction with itself. Yet, Fiedler runs into difficulties as well. When he comes to the προσκύνησις rendered to Jesus by the disciples in 14:33, after Jesus has walked on the water, stilled the storm, and uttered "d[ie] Selbstvorstellung 'ich bin'…die LXX-formel der Gottesoffenbarung,"[26] Fiedler fails to comment on exactly how one should interpret προσκύνησις. If, as Fiedler himself argues, Jesus appropriates the divine-revelation formula for himself and the whole passage echoes "die Exodus-Erfahrung...[und]…die Macht Gottes über das Meer,"[27] and as a result the disciples render him προσκύνησις, it is unclear exactly why we should *not* render προσκυνέω as "worship," as many translations (and commentators) do. Yet, seeing this instance as full-blown "worship" leaves us with what Fiedler attempts to avoid – conflict with the clear pronouncement in 4:9–10.[28]

Gospel [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], 226); cf. also Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading* (JSNTSup 204; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 76; Adolf Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Ziel, seine Selbständigkeit* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1948), 31.

[26] Fiedler, *Matthäusevangelium*, 276.

[27] Ibid., 275.

[28] Another broad proponent of this position is James D. G. Dunn. Sometimes Dunn's language can seem to point in opposite directions, but overall his position has remained the same. For example, in a recent article Dunn argues that Matthew's use of προσκυνέω, particularly in 14:33 and 28:9, 17, clearly indicates "worship," and "worship" is offered to Jesus precisely because he "expresses and embodies the divine presence" ("How Did Matthew Go About Composing His Gospel?" in *Jesus, Matthew's Gospel, and Early Christianity* [eds. Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitis, and Richard A. Burridge; LNTS 435; New York: T&T Clark, 2011], 56–7). Elsewhere, however, Dunn distinguishes "worship" from "cultic worship," the latter referring to terms like λατρεύω, σέβω, etc. (*Did the First Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010], e.g., 12–17). "Cultic worship," Dunn argues, is reserved for "God," which means the NT writers are "faithful to the teaching of their Scriptures" (17). Jesus, then, despite "embodying the divine presence" and receiving "worship" in Matthew is, apparently, not to be identified in any way with "God" who receives "cultic worship." Three problems emerge with Dunn's study of προσκυνέω, at least for a discussion of Matthew. First, the actual content of statements like "embodying the divine presence" is left largely unexplored. Second, he takes such a cursory glance at the material that there is very little exegetical engagement with Matthew's use of προσκυνέω, especially on a narrative level. His very brief discussion of the Matthean texts is then subsumed under his broad initial conclusion that, "In any event, the use of *proskynein* in the sense of offering worship to Jesus seems to be rather limited" (*Did the First Christians Worship Jesus*?, 9–12). Third, he quotes with approval James McGrath's argument that "sacrificial worship [was] *the* defining feature of Jewish exclusive devotion to only one God" (53 n. 59; italics original; James McGrath, *The Only True God: Early Christian Monotheism in its Jewish Context* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press], 31). From this he points out that

We can note two attempts to overcome the potential *Widerspruch* between Jesus' circumscription of προσκύνησις to "the Lord God" in 4:9–10 and the narrative's consistent assignation of προσκύνησις to Jesus. In his brief but insightful study, Markus Müller argues that "Jesu Hilfe jedoch wird so geschildert, daß sie an Gottes 'Gottsein' letztlich nicht rührt und zugleich Gottes helfende und heilende Gegenwart – die Gegenwart des Emmanuel – in der Person Jesu erkennbar werden läßt."[29] The προσκύνησις Jesus receives from the leper (8:2), for example, is not really worship offered to Jesus, but rather ultimately honor offered to God since the leper's actions (presumably) end in making the appropriate sacrifice to God (8:4). In the end, the προσκύνησις offered to Jesus throughout the narrative "einerseits die Gottheit Gottes belassen und andererseits *die Unmittelbarkeit Jesu zu Gott* nicht verleugnen."[30] Mark Allen Powell comes to a similar conclusion: "The numerous depictions of Jesus as the object of προσκυνέω in Matthew do not contradict this point [4:10], for Matthew regards Jesus as one in whom God is uniquely present.[31]

"*Christ was never understood as the one to whom sacrifice was offered*" (56, italics original). He fails to discuss, much like McGrath, (1) how Jews accounted for their exclusive devotion to God after 70 A.D., when sacrifice was no longer possible, and (2) the fact that sacrifice was not even offered to "God" in early Christian circles (at least by the time of Matthew's writing; see McGrath's very brief mention of these issues [*Only True God*, 93 and 128 n. 56]). Dunn does, however, nuance his discussion of sacrifice vis-à-vis God's identity in relation to Christ as the final sacrifice and God's own participation in the sacrifice of Christ (*Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* 55–6). McGrath, however, is not as circumspect as Dunn. For example, he willingly speaks of the Jewish use of "spiritualized" language for sacrifice even after the destruction of the Temple (*Only True God*, 128 n. 56), but when addressing Revelation's use of the cultic image of offering the "first fruits" to "God and to the Lamb," he discounts it as "metaphorical," whose "significance should not be pressed too far" (73).

[29] "Proskynese und Christologie nach Matthäus," 223 (cf. also 217, 221).

[30] Ibid., 224. (italics original)

[31] Powell, "A Typology of Worship," 5. In a longer version of his article (cf. *God with Us: A Pastoral Theology of Matthew's Gospel* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995], 28–61), Powell attempts to clarify how Matthew's sustained focus on Jesus as the recipient of προσκύνησις does not contradict Jesus' pronouncement in 4:10. Though brief, he argues that the answer "must lie in Matthew's Christology . . . . If Jesus qualifies for worship . . . it is because he is the Son of God (3:17; 14:33; 16:16; 27:54). He is Emmanuel, the one in whom and through whom God is present. . . . [B]y presenting Jesus as an appropriate recipient of worship Matthew does, for all practical purposes, portray Jesus as divine" (58). Powell here pushes in a direction compatible with my argument below. However, his explanation remains vague and problematic. Jesus, as Emmanuel, is the one "in whom" God is present. What does that mean for Jesus' own identity? What exactly does "uniquely present in" mean? Is that what makes him "for all practical purposes, divine"? What does "divine" mean in relation to Matthew's rather clear understanding of the identity of Israel's God (e.g., 4:10; 11:25) and his articulation of Jesus as "Son of God"?

The problem with both Müller's and Powell's attempts at reconciling the obvious tension in the narrative is that they fall short of explaining how for Matthew (or Second Temple Judaism) a being other than God (even God's chief representative, if there was such a being) can receive unqualified "worship."[32] To say that Jesus can receive worship because of God's "unique presence" in him (Powell) or because of "die Unmittelbarkeit Jesu zu Gott" (Müller) neither lessens the force of the unqualified dictum of 4:10 nor integrates it coherently with the narrative's insistence on Jesus (not God "in" or "through" Jesus) as the object of προσκύνησις. We will see below that there were ways in which Jews could (and often did) explicitly qualify the προσκύνησις (or similar act) offered to a human being or an angel, especially if such language occurred in a context where it could be confused with the worship Israel owed to the one true God. Matthew, as we will also see, does not do this.

Finally, I comment last on Horst's broad *religionsgeschichtliche* study of προσκυνέω from the early 1930s, because the thirty pages or so he devotes to Matthew remains the most extended and detailed study of the Gospel's use of προσκυνέω.[33] Unfortunately, his excellent study has never been translated into English and seems to be frequently overlooked. Though working well before the onset of narrative criticism, he makes a number of trenchant literary-theological observations about Matthew's use of the term – observations often bypassed in more modern scholarship.[34] Like Müller and Powell above, Horst notes the potential *Widerspruch* between Jesus' consistent reception of προσκύνησις and Matthew's "late Jewish" concerns, and thus opts for an interpretation similar to theirs – the προσκύνησις Jesus receives "jede Menschenvergötterung ausschloß und Gott allein die Ehre gab."[35] Like Müller and Powell, in the end Horst tears asunder what I will argue the narrative holds together – the worship of Jesus and a commitment to the one God of Israel.[36]

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[32] Cf. Larry Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (2d ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998).

[33] D. Johannes Horst, *Proskynein: Zur Anbetung im Urchristentum nach ihrer religionsgeschichtlichen Eigenart* (NTF 3/2; Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1932), 204–37.

[34] E.g., the privileging of προσκυνέω for Jesus at the outset of the narrative, which works its way into the basic thought of the Gospel's christology (209); the inclusio of 2:2, 11 with 28:9, 17 (210); Matt 14:33 as a *Vorwegnahme* to Peter's confession in 16:16 (231–32), etc. However, Horst treats προσκυνέω in the body of the narrative as meaning "less" than in 2:2, 11, 14:33, and 28:9, 17, a position I will argue against below.

[35] *Proskynein*, 233. Horst is so worried about "jedes anthropomorphe Mißverständnis" of the Father-Son relation that he ends up qualifying away a number of his insightful observations (cf., e.g., 233, 238).

[36] There is one other recent article on Matthew's use of προσκυνέω, Hak Chol Kim, "The Worship of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew," *Bib* 93 (2012): 227–41. However, Kim assumes from the very beginning that προσκυνέω connotes "worship," and he does not engage closely the problems discussed above.

In sum, the interpretive impasse noted above is highly significant. It suggests that there remains a rather glaring confusion, even contradiction, regarding the interpretation of one of the Gospel's central modes of narrating the proper human response to Jesus. This means nothing less than that Jesus' identity remains unclear, though, ironically, his identity is exactly what the Gospel is about. This impasse regarding Matthew's use of προσκυνέω is largely the result of a significant lack of attention to the literary contours of Matthew's use of προσκυνέω. Rather than attending closely to how προσκυνέω shapes and is shaped by the flow of the narrative, its "meaning" continues to be governed largely by concerns either external to the narrative or in rather clear contradiction to what the narrative says – e.g., the later community (Held, Davies and Allison, Carson), the "Jewish" concern to avoid blasphemy (Horst, Fiedler, Kupp, Dunn), the profane use of προσκυνέω in the first century (Head, Carson), God's reception of προσκύνησις "through" Jesus' reception of προσκύνησις (Müller, Horst).[37]

These studies, for all of their worth, lack the detailed engagement necessary for discerning the integral role προσκυνέω plays in Matthew's narrative christology. Correlative to that lack of sustained, detailed attention to the refined integration of προσκυνέω into the overall narrative is the ubiquitous use of vague descriptors for its importance. With it, so it is often argued, Matthew has

[37] Since it has been such a large area of study/debate, I should note here my view of Matthew's Gospel vis-à-vis early Judaism. I consider Matthew's Gospel (and the communities to which it *may* have been written) to be closely related to early Judaism. I use the deliberately vague "closely related" because I doubt much more precision than that can be obtained with any certainty. On the whole, I still find that Graham Stanton's position on Matthew's community(ies) makes decent sense of the tension between Matthew's "Jewishness" and his polemic against Judaism, though I am skeptical of community hypotheses of all stripes (see especially Part II of Stanton's *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992]). Although those of the *intra muros* position have a strong case, I find a number of recent proponents of that position to lack nuance when speaking of Matthew's demand for law observance, not least in their lack of attention to christological issues. Cf., e.g., David C. Sim, "Matthew's Anti-Paulinism: A Neglected Feature of Matthean Studies," *HTS* 58 (2002): 766–78; but see also Sim's helpful survey that follows up on Stanton's earlier survey, "Matthew: The Current State of Research," in *Mark and Matthew I: Comparative Readings: Understanding the Earliest Gospels in Their First-Century Settings* (eds. Eve-Marie Becker and Anders Runesson; WUNT 271; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011). See also the judicious comments by Donald Senior ("Directions in Matthean Studies," in *The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study* [ed. David E. Aune; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001], esp. 11–12). In the end, it must be Matthew's narrative that directs the reader to the interpretive framework in which it should be read, i.e., Israel's Scriptures and their "fulfillment" in the story it will tell of Israel's Messiah (cf. Luz's comments on Matthew claiming "biblical authority," in "Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew," *HTR* 97.2 [2004]: 129).

"heightened" his christology,[38] "exalted" Jesus,[39] imbued Jesus with "divine-like" significance,[40] "developed" Mark's christology,[41] shown Jesus receiving the "highest honours."[42] But the actual content of such descriptors, especially with regard to articulating the coherence of Matthew's *christ*ological vision with his *theo*logical one, is almost never explored. That is, the proper grammatical relationship between Matthew's *christ*ological use of προσκυνέω and his *theo*logical use of προσκυνέω remains seriously underdeveloped, even incoherent on literary-theological grounds.

B. The Identity of θεός: The Father-Son Relation

The vagueness with which Matthew's προσκυνέω language is explicated is parasitic on a larger linguistic problem in Matthean studies, to which our study of προσκυνέω will have to attend: namely, Matthew's grammar of the word "God." Most scholars who write on Matthew's Gospel aver that Matthew has something of a "high" christology due, not least, to the Emmanuel motif that serves as an inclusio for the entire narrative (1:23, 28:20): in the life of Jesus God is eschatologically present with his people.

While many scholars affirm such a view, they frequently contend that Jesus is not therefore to be "identified" with God. Ulrich Luz, for example, argues, "Jesus ist im Matthäusevangelium die neue und definitive Gestalt von *Gottes* Gegenwart bei seinem Volk,"[43] and yet also explicitly says, "[Matthew] does not identify Jesus with God."[44] David Kupp, who wrote the well-received *Matthew's Emmanuel*, asserts throughout his work that in Jesus the divine presence is made known, but concludes that "Matthew never openly asserts that Jesus is divine . . . . the term 'divine presence' does not require that Jesus is God." Matthew's christology, Kupp argues, is more likely a "functional" christology.[45] As we saw above, Markus Müller argues that Matthew's christology, though emphasizing the "unmediatedness" of Jesus to God, does not actually alter our

[38] Dunn, "How Did Matthew," 50, 56.

[39] Donald J. Verseput, "The Role and Meaning of the 'Son of God' Title in Matthew's Gospel," *NTS* 33 (1987): 552 n. 41.

[40] Huratdo, "Pre-70 CE Jewish Opposition," 41.

[41] Müller, "Proskynese und Christologie," 224, n. 62.

[42] C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 176.

[43] "Eine thetische Skizze der matthäischen Christologie," in *Anfänge der Christologie: Festschrift für Ferdinand Hahn zum 65. Geburtstag* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 223 (italics original).

[44] Luz, *Matthew* (3 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress), 1:96, cf. 3:639 (Matthew's christology is "functional").

[45] 220–21, cf. also p. 56.

perception of "God's deity" (*die Gottheit Gottes*).[46] In fact, Davies and Allison articulate well the state of the question regarding Jesus' relationship to God in Matthew's Gospel: "Is Jesus 'God' in Matthew's Gospel? Does he transcend messianic categories? He seems to. We only ask the question. We do not know how the first evangelist conceptualized this – how exactly he thought of the person of Jesus."[47]

Concomitant with the lack of coherence in scholarly treatment of προσκυνέω in Matthew, therefore, there is a general conceptual confusion about what it would mean for Matthew's christology to be "high," or for Jesus to be "divine" or "identified with God," and how one would go about addressing such a question.[48] The question of whether Jesus is "divine" or "God" in Matthew's Gospel, that is, is often asked apart from clearly examining how Matthew articulates the identity of θεός.[49] Thus, once again, rather than attending to Matthew's actual use of words, generalized notions of "divinity" conceived apart from the narrative are the means by which the identity of Jesus and God is articulated.[50] The result of these shortcomings is that Matthew's christology is rendered in abstraction from his own Gospel and ultimately expressed in theologically incoherent terms. While Matthew clearly conveys the distinction between God and all created reality (e.g., 4:10; 11:25), the studies noted above lack such clarity and inadvertently place Jesus somewhere in the middle between humanity and God, which does justice neither to Matthew's clear expression of Israel's commitment to the one God nor to his portrait of Jesus.[51]

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[46] "Proskynese und Christologie," 223.

[47] *Matthew*, 2:641–2. As we saw above, however, Davies and Allison give a rather firm "no" to this question: "Jesus is less than God" (*Matthew*, 1:26–57, 143–47).

[48] There are a number of other examples of similar conceptual confusion. Ruck-Schröder says that there is an "exklusive Verbindung zwischen Jesus und Gott," but goes on to speak of "die funktionale Zuordnung Jesu zu Gott, die die Einzigkeit Gottes nicht antastet" (*Der Name Gottes*, 263); cf. also, Terence Donaldson, "The Vindicated Son: A Narrative Approach to Matthew's Christology," in *Contours of Christology in the New Testament* (ed. Richard Longenecker; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2005), 106–7; Peter Fiedler, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (TKNT; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2006), 57–8, esp. 92; Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading* (JSNTSup 204; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 72, 76; Dunn, "How did Matthew," 58; Mogens Müller, "Theological Interpretation of the Figure of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: Some Principle Features in Matthean Christology," *NTS* 45 (1999): 166–7 (cf. also n.21).

[49] On the language of "identity," see below.

[50] That is, when scholars are addressing Jesus' "divinity" in Matthew, there is often little discussion of what constitutes "God's uniqueness" (*die Einzigkeit Gottes*) in Matthew's narrative.

[51] The paradigmatic examples of such conceptual confusion can be seen, surprisingly, in two of the most highly regarded (rightly so) commentaries on Matthew – those of Luz and

Therefore, the sixth and final chapter of this dissertation will explore in detail how Matthew's christologically-oriented προσκυνέω language is inextricably tied to a larger linguistic pattern in the Gospel – God and Jesus as Father and Son. It goes without saying that Jesus' divine-filial[52] identity is integral to the Gospel's presentation of Jesus, and Jesus as "Son of God" is discussed in virtually every scholarly (or popular) treatment of Matthew's christology. What is almost wholly neglected, however, is how Matthew's *theo*logical grammar is radically reshaped by his "filial" grammar;[53] how the narrative reshapes the reader's articulation of κύριος ὁ θεός around the advent of the filial κύριος. If, as I will argue, the Son is the recipient of the προσκύνησις Israel owed to "the Lord God" (cf. 14:33), Matthew's narrative requires us to relearn how to say θεός. As we will see, this is precisely what the narrative does.

C. Interpretive Method

The animating conviction of this study's approach to Matthew's narrative is that it should be read as a unified, coherent whole. This is, of course, in keeping with much recent work on the Gospels and the now well-established practice of "narrative criticism."[54] Not only has it been recognized for some time now that narrative criticism provides useful tools for reading biblical narrative in both testaments,[55] but numerous studies have also shown how such an approach illuminates Matthew's Gospel in particular.[56] This is not surprising, given that the Gospel is in a fact a carefully crafted story.

Davies & Allison. For Luz, see above; for Davies and Allison, see 2:641–2. These commentators claim a "high" christology for Matthew, but demur from identifying Jesus with God.

[52] At several points in this study I will use "divine-filial" as a shorthand adjective for Jesus as "Son of God," but it should be noted that the word "divine" in the phrase is not understood in abstraction from the narrative. Rather, it is Matthew's Gospel that will shape our understanding of what "divine" means.

[53] Consider, for example, Jack Kingsbury's *Matthew* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977). Despite the fact that he has a section devoted to "Matthew's Understanding of God," he does not discuss in detail how the narrative actually uses the language of θεός, and how it might correspond to the Father-Son relation. Rather, Kingsbury continues to use "God" apparently as a term implicitly understood by his audience. For example, he says, "[F]ollowing Easter God reigns over the world in the person of Jesus Son of Man" (63–4). But what is the relation between the words "God" and "Jesus Son of Man"? For all of his focus on Jesus' divine-filial identity (in numerous publications) and narrative criticism, he does not give any extended treatment to how the word θεός is defined by the narrative.

[54] For an excellent summary, see Larry Chouinard, "Gospel Christology: A Study of Methodology," *JSNT* 30 (1987): 21–37.

[55] E.g., Robert Alter's justly famous *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

[56] E.g., J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); David R. Bauer,

To read Matthew's narrative as a coherent whole, therefore, is to assume a hermeneutical posture that submits to the story "in some way . . . as a self-contained and 'closed' narrative world."[57] The coherence of the Gospel depends not primarily on hypothetical reconstructions of Matthew's community(ies) or the history of the traditions incorporated into the narrative, but rather on the story itself as "a continuous narrative presenting a meaningful development to a climax and that each episode should be understood in light of its relation to the story as a whole."[58] The implications of such an approach become immediately apparent when turning to our explicit topic – Matthew's use of προσκυνέω and its role in his theological grammar.

First, despite many studies that treat Matthew's use of προσκυνέω in abstraction from the narrative – either as a cipher for the practices of the early community or only in relation to its *religionsgeschichtliche* background[59] – the narrative itself is in fact indispensable for grasping the theological "meaning" of προσκυνέω. The larger genre of discourse in which προσκυνέω participates, that is, is not dispensable for grasping its significance.[60] Its embeddedness in

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The Structure of Matthew's Gospel: A Study in Literary Design (JSNTSup 31; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988); David B. Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story: A Study in the Narrative Rhetoric of the First Gospel* (JSNTSup 42; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990); Janice Capel Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* (JSNTSup 91; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994). Other than studies explicitly devoted to Matthew's narrative structuring/design, a number of commentaries and recent dissertations utilize such an approach for the study of particular motifs in the Gospel. Commentaries: e.g., Margaret Davies, *Matthew* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993); David Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* (New York: Crossroad, 1993); Charles H. Talbert, *Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010); Dissertations: e.g., nine recent dissertations published on Matthew's christology all employ, among others, narrative-critical tools (Chae, Cousland, Crowe, Hood, Huizenga, Kennedy, Kupp, Novakovic, Willitis; see bibliography for relevant bibliographic information).

[57] Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 33.

[58] Robert Tannehill, "Tension in the Synoptic Sayings and Stories," *Int* 34 (1980): 148.

[59] On the former, see, e.g., Hurtado, "Pre-70 Jewish Opposition"; Bauckham, "The Worship of Jesus in Early Christianity," in idem, *Jesus and the God of Israel:* God Crucified *and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 131; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:237; Head, *Christology*, 130–31. On the latter, see, e.g., the discussion of Karen Jobes's article below ("Distinguishing the Meaning of Greek Verbs in the Semantic Domain for Worship," *Filología Neotestamentaria* [1991]: 183–9).

[60] It is the interaction of the manifold features of the text to create a particular perspective on "reality" that renders intelligible the individual parts. See Mark Allen Powell's chapter on "Story and Discourse" in *What is Narrative Criticism* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990); cf. also Bernard Lategan's insightful article, "Reference: Reception, Redescription, and Reality," in Bernard C. Lategan and Willem S. Vorster, *Text and Reality: Aspects of Reference in Biblical Texts* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985).