



UNIVERSAL JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

e-ISSN: 2548-0952

Cilt/Volume: 9, Sayı/Issue: 2, Yıl/Year: 2024 (Aralık/December)

RICOEUR'ÜN HERMENÖTİK DAİRESİ KULLANILARAK MATTA İNCİLİ'NDE İSA MESİH'İN ACI VE İSTIRABININ ANALİZİ

ANALYZING THE PAIN AND SUFFERING OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW USING RICOEUR'S HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE

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Makale Bilgisi – Article Information Makale Türü/Article Type: Araştırma Makalesi/ Research Article

Geliş Tarihi/Date Received: 23/11/2024

Kabul Tarihi/Date Accepted: 31/12/2024

Yayın Tarihi/Date Published: 31/12/2024

Atıf/Citation: Obenza, Brandon vd. "Analyzing The Pain and Suffering of Jesus Christ in The Gospel Of Matthew Using Ricoeur's Hermeneutic Circle". *Universal Journal of Theology* 9/2 (2024):130-164. Doi: 10.56108/ujte.1590101

<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/ujte>

RİCOEUR'ÜN HERMENÖTİK DAİRESİ KULLANILARAK MATTİ İNCİLİ'NDE İSİ MESİH'İN ACI VE İSTİRABININ ANALİZİ

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Özet

Bu hermenötik çalışma, Matta İncili'nde tasvir edilen İsa Mesih'in acı ve ıstırabının çok boyutlu yönlerini, Paul Ricœur'ün Hermenötik Dairesi'ni analitik çerçeve olarak kullanarak incelemektedir. Merkezi araştırma sorusu şu şekildedir: Matta İncili, İsa'nın ıstırabını nasıl tasvir etmektedir ve Ricœur'ün yorumsal merceğiyle analiz edildiğinde hangi teolojik ve sembolik anlamlar ortaya çıkmaktadır? Bu çalışma, birincil kaynak olarak Kutsal Kitap'ın Yeni Uluslararası Versiyonu'nu (New International Version) kullanan nitel bir araştırma yöntemini benimsemektedir. Daha önceki çalışmalar Tutku anlatısını (Passion Narrative) incelemiş olsa da, bu araştırma İsa'nın insanlığı ve tanrısalılığı arasındaki etkileşimi açığa çıkarmak için özellikle Ricœur'ün metodolojisini uygulayarak kendisini ayırmaktadır. Bu analiz, İsa'nın fiziksel, duygusal ve ruhsal ıstırabını, Matta İncili'nin daha geniş anlatı yapısı ve teolojik temaları içinde konumlandırarak, deneyimlerinin Eski Ahit peygamberliklerini nasıl yerine getirdiğini, derin ve sembolik teolojik anlamlar ortaya koyduğunu göstermektedir. Sıklıkla eksegetik veya doktrinel yaklaşımlara odaklanan önceki çalışmalardan farklı olarak, bu çalışma Ricœur'ün Hermenötik Dairesi kavramını entegre ederek metin, okuyucu ve yorumsal bağlam arasındaki dinamik ilişkiyi açıklamak için özgün bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır. Bulgular, İsa'yı ilahi vaatlerin gerçekleşmesi olarak vurgulamakta ve onun özverili sevgisini ve Tanrı'nın iradesine boyun eğişini öne çıkarmaktadır. Onun tutuklanması, yargılanması ve çarmıha gerilmesi yalnızca tarihi olaylar olarak değil, aynı zamanda inanç ve öğrenci olma (disiplin) için dönüştürücü potansiyele sahip kurtarıcı eylemler olarak yorumlanmaktadır. Yazarın yorumları, bu anlatıların inananları alçakgönüllülük, merhamet ve özveri gibi Mesih benzeri değerlerle derin bir şekilde meşgul olmaya nasıl davet ettiğini vurgulamaktadır. Bu çalışma nihayetinde, İsa'nın ıstırabının ilahi sevgi ile insan kırılabilirliği arasında bir köprü olarak süregelen önemini doğrulamakta ve inananları bu değerleri manevi ve günlük yaşamlarında somutlaştırmaya davet etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Acı, ıstırap, Paul Ricoeur, hermenötik, Matta İncili.

Analyzing The Pain And Suffering Of Jesus Christ In The Gospel Of Matthew Using Ricoeur's Hermeneutic Circle

Abstract

This hermeneutic study investigates the multifaceted dimensions of Jesus Christ's pain and suffering as depicted in the Gospel of Matthew, utilizing Paul Ricœur's Hermeneutic Circle as the analytical framework. The central research question asks: How does the Gospel of Matthew depict the suffering of Jesus, and what theological and symbolic meanings emerge when analyzed through Ricœur's interpretative lens? This study

employs a qualitative research design with the New International Version of the Bible as its primary corpus. While previous studies have explored the Passion narrative, this research distinguishes itself by specifically applying Ricœur's methodology to unravel the interplay between Jesus' humanity and divinity. This analysis situates Jesus' suffering—physical, emotional, and spiritual—within the broader narrative structure and theological motifs of the Gospel, demonstrating how his experiences fulfill Old Testament prophecies and reveal profound symbolic and theological significance. Unlike prior works that often focus on exegetical or doctrinal approaches, this study contributes original insights by integrating Ricœur's concept of the Hermeneutic Circle to elucidate the dynamic relationship between text, reader, and interpretative context. The findings underscore Jesus as the fulfillment of divine promises, emphasizing his sacrificial love and submission to God's will. His arrest, trial, and crucifixion are interpreted not only as historical events but as redemptive acts imbued with transformative potential for faith and discipleship. The author's interpretative commentary highlights how these narratives challenge believers to engage deeply with Christ-like values of humility, compassion, and selflessness. This study ultimately affirms the enduring relevance of Jesus' suffering as a bridge between divine love and human frailty, inviting believers to embody these values in their spiritual and everyday lives.

Keywords: Pain, suffering, Paul Ricoeur, hermeneutics, Gospel of Mathew.

Introduction

Suffering encompasses various dimensions—physical, psychological, and ethical—affected by both biological factors and cultural influences. Conversely, pain, as per Ludwig Wittgenstein's concept of "family resemblances," denotes a range of experiences linked by common characteristics rather than a singular essence. The intricate nature of pain and suffering is limitless, shaped by the interplay of biology and culture (Morris & Wilson, 2008; Gerc, 2017; Somerville, 1986). Additionally, pain and suffering are intricate perceptions involving sensory and emotional aspects. While pain mirrors negative emotions, suffering entails a threat to self-integrity and coping abilities, with both sharing negative emotions as a common ground (Stilwell, 2022). Understanding the physiological mechanisms behind pain, negative emotional responses, and stress elucidates the foundation of suffering and the consequences of enduring pain and stressors (Telbizova et al., 2020; De Ridder et al., 2021).

In theology, suffering contradicts God's original plan and often brings pain, discomfort, sadness, and anxiety. Sometimes, suffering is puzzling, and even God experiences it due to his love for humanity. Understanding the suffering of God in Christ is crucial for comprehending all suffering (Noya & Putrawan, 2022). Thus, it is noteworthy that Christ also suffered, which is essential when considering suffering and sin (Davey, 2019; Swantek, 2019; Von Achen, 2023). Initially, Christ's crucifixion may seem to worsen the problem, suggesting that God abandoned Jesus, allowing evil to triumph. However, human experience over time reveals that Christ's suffering and death provide significant support for those grappling with suffering and sin (King, 1915; Ramage, 2021).

The analysis of pain and suffering in the book of Matthew is a complex issue, with various scholars offering different perspectives. Johnson (2023) suggest that Matthew portrays Jesus as the Davidic messiah through his suffering, while Stack (2020) as cited by Cousland (2022) explores the portrayal of sin and evil in the Gospel of Matthew. Perriman (2021) delves into the pattern of Christ's sufferings, particularly in Colossians 1:24 and Philippians 3:10-11, and Ukeachusim et al., (2021) and Morita, (2019) discussed the theme of compassion in the Gospel of Matthew. These studies collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of the analysis of pain and suffering in the book of Matthew, offering insights into its theological, historical, and ethical dimensions.

This study integrates theological and hermeneutic analysis to examine Jesus' pain and suffering in the Gospel of Matthew, employing Ricoeur's Hermeneutic Circle to uncover the existential and spiritual dimensions of suffering. A key theological consideration within this research is the dual identity of Jesus as the Son of God and, in certain Christian traditions, God himself—a point of significant doctrinal discussion. The Gospel of Matthew, consistent with its Jewish-Christian context, emphasizes Jesus' role as the Son of God, portraying him as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and as the mediator between humanity and the divine. However, it also implicitly affirms his divinity through acts such as forgiving sins (Matthew 9:2-6) and his claim of authority over the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8). This duality enriches the interpretive framework of suffering, as it situates Jesus' anguish within both

human vulnerability and divine purpose, offering believers a profound theological paradox to contemplate.

The research reveals new insights into how suffering, as embodied by Jesus, is intricately linked to faith, knowledge, and discipleship, emphasizing its transformative potential in deepening the believer's relationship with Christ. It also underscores the need for more nuanced theological analyses that bridge scriptural interpretations with contextual and doctrinal understandings, especially given the scarcity of global studies on Jesus' suffering. The findings highlight how grappling with Jesus' suffering and dual identity can reshape individuals' spiritual journeys, offering a lens through which to understand the complexities of divine love and human frailty. Beyond its theological implications, this study has potential applications in informing policy, programs, training modules, and advocacy efforts, addressing the existential dimensions of suffering and faith in diverse cultural and religious settings.

The Hermeneutic analysis of pain and suffering in the Gospel of Matthew, based on Paul Ricoeur, offers profound insights into the relationship between suffering, faith, and understanding of Jesus' divine role. This research explores how individuals in the narrative comprehend or misinterpret Jesus' teachings, particularly in the context of suffering. It examines the transformative power of suffering, suggesting that it leads to a deeper knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God and shapes one's identity as a disciple. By analyzing the apostles' responses, the paper highlights how suffering individuals gain unique insights into Jesus' identity compared to those who are powerful and non-suffering. This study challenges traditional views on suffering by presenting it as a means to understand Jesus' sacrificial love and find solace through His own suffering. Ultimately, this research contributes to an understanding of the Gospel of Matthew, shedding light on the profound connection between suffering, faith, and comprehension of Jesus' mission and teachings.

Research Questions

This study aims to analyze the pain and suffering of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew through hermeneutic analysis, exploring its theological,

symbolic, and existential dimensions. While other Gospels also refer to Jesus' suffering, this study focuses on Matthew due to its distinct narrative emphasis on Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and its unique portrayal of his humanity and divinity. Matthew's Gospel integrates Jesus' suffering into a broader framework of discipleship, humility, and obedience to God's will, making it particularly well-suited for a hermeneutic exploration. Specifically, this study addresses the following questions:

1. What is the self-constructive narrative of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew?
2. How do the *bios* and *logos* construct the pain and suffering of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew?
3. How does society construct the biological experiences of the pains and sufferings of Jesus Christ?
4. What insights can be gained from the pain and suffering of Jesus Christ regarding the symbolic richness and theological significance of the narrative?

Methodology and Materials

The investigators utilized a Qualitative Research Design anchored on hermeneutics as a philosophical approach emphasizing interpretation and understanding, offers insights into how individuals make sense of their own experiences of pain and suffering within the context of their lived worlds (Ricoeur & Habermas, 1995).

The study utilized the Gospel of Matthew from the New International Version (NIV) Bible as the corpora. The NIV is a popular and readily available translation known for its balance between accuracy and readability, making it accessible to a wide range of scholars and theologians (Zondervan Bible Publishers, 2011).

Using Ricoeur's Hermeneutic Circle in unveiling the intricacies of Jesus' pain and suffering in the Gospel of Matthew can be deepened (Ricoeur, 1991; M'Bwangi, 2021). This iterative process begins with self-reflection, acknowledging the influence of personal and theological backgrounds on one's pre-understandings, as highlighted by Kelle (2018). By distancing oneself from preconceptions, the text can challenge and potentially revise initial

interpretations, as suggested by Grelier (2021). As the reading progresses, the circle's dynamic nature encourages a continuous dialogue between the text and the reader's evolving understanding. Matthew's portrayal, which may juxtapose suffering with miraculous events or declarations of authority, can lead to a deeper appreciation of the surplus of meaning inherent within the narrative (Reagan, 1996).

This iterative process necessitates seeking validation through intertextual connections with other biblical passages and relevant historical or theological insights (Osborne, 2006). Ultimately, acknowledging the inherent subjectivity of the interpretation, shaped by the reader's background, ensures transparency, and allows diverse perspectives on Jesus' suffering to coexist within the framework of Ricoeur's circle (Kelle, 2018). This approach fosters a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of Jesus' suffering, recognizing both its emotional depth and its profound theological significance within Matthew's Gospel.

Results and Discussion

The self-constructive narrative of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew during his Birth, Life, and Death.

The Birth of Jesus

The birth of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew is presented through three interrelated yet distinct themes: Jesus as a descendant of Abraham (Faith, Emmanuel), Jesus as a descendant of David (King, Ruler), and Jesus as a descendant of the exiled Israelites. While these claims share overlapping theological significance in affirming Jesus' role as the fulfillment of divine promises, they also carry nuanced differences that merit further discussion. The Abrahamic lineage emphasizes Jesus' role as the embodiment of faith and the fulfillment of the covenant with Abraham, linking his birth to the universal promise of salvation (Matthew 1:1). The title "Emmanuel" (God with us) highlights his mission to restore humanity's relationship with God, underscoring his identity as the savior for all nations. The Davidic lineage, on the other hand, underscores Jesus' royal status as heir to the House of David, connecting him to the Messianic prophecy of an eternal king (2 Samuel 7:12-

16). Scholars like Foster (2020) and Friedeman (2020) stress that this lineage legitimizes Jesus' authority as ruler and fulfills Jewish expectations of a Davidic Messiah. Lastly, the theme of Jesus as a descendant of the exiled Israelites draws attention to his solidarity with the marginalized and displaced. His incarnation resonates with the experiences of exiled Israelites, symbolizing divine presence and continuity amidst human suffering and displacement, as noted by Bockmuehl (2021) and Doane (2020).

While these themes converge in affirming Jesus' identity as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, they differ in emphasis. The Abrahamic lineage focuses on faith and universality, the Davidic lineage on kingship and authority, and the exilic connection on solidarity and restoration. Together, they offer a comprehensive portrayal of Jesus as the savior who unites divine promises with human experiences, as further explored by Botner (2017) and Collins (2019). This multifaceted portrayal enriches the theological understanding of Jesus' birth and its significance for faith and salvation.

Similarly, the genealogy presented in Matthew 1:1-6 and 17 emphasizes Jesus' ancestral connection to Abraham, renowned for his steadfast faith and obedience to divine mandates in the face of adversity. This linkage affirms Jesus' alignment with the covenant bestowed upon Abraham-situating him within a lineage of faith and divine favor.

Furthermore, The Genealogy highlights the significance of King David among Jesus' forebears. This aspect establishes Jesus' royal lineage and fulfills a prophetic outlook connecting the Messiah's descent from the esteemed house of David. Consequently, Jesus emerges as the rightful heir to the prophetic messianic legacy, as stated at the messianic dimensions of kingship in Deuteronomy 17:14-20, which Jesus fulfills in his earthly ministry (Martin, 2022; and Branch, 2004).

Additionally, the narrative in Matthew 1:18-25 delves into Jesus' conception and birth, emphasizing the complex duality of his nature as both fully human and fully divine. Additionally, the narrative in Matthew 1:18-25 explores Jesus' conception and birth, presenting the profound and complex duality of his nature as both fully human and fully divine. This duality, central to Christian theology, is not merely paradoxical but complementary—each aspect enriching the other. Jesus' divinity is affirmed through the miraculous

nature of his conception, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies, such as Isaiah 7:14, which foretells the birth of a savior, born of a virgin and called Immanuel, meaning "God with us." At the same time, his humanity is emphasized through the natural processes of birth and his shared experience of human frailty and vulnerability.

This dual nature is not contradictory but rather coexists to reveal the fullness of Jesus' mission: to bridge the gap between divine holiness and human fallenness. The Miraculous Conception highlights his divine origin, affirming his role as the embodiment of God's presence among humanity, while his human birth situates him within the shared experiences of human life, allowing him to fully empathize with human suffering and weakness. Thus, Matthew's account presents a theological and existential integration of Jesus' divinity and humanity, offering a model of how these two natures can coexist harmoniously in the person of Christ (Viljoen, 2019; Fuller, 1978).

In inference, the genealogical accounts and narratives presented in Matthew 1:1-25 thoroughly establish Jesus' identity and significance within the broader framework of biblical history and prophecy. His lineage to Abraham and David, Jesus is depicted as the result of the divine promise, embodying the attributes of faith, royalty, and divine presence making his both human and divine (Suryonugroho, 2022 and Martin, 2022) Fulfilling ancient prophecies and affirming his role on God's redemptive plan as the long-awaited Messiah, Immanuel, *God with us*.

The Life of Jesus

Jesus' Life in the Gospel of Matthew can be viewed through three significant themes: Rabbi, Miracle Worker, and Messiah, as evidenced by Twelftree (2020) and Bockmuehl (2021).

In the Gospel, Jesus is a Rabbi, exercising authoritative teaching, spreading spiritual vision through parabolic narratives, and calling his disciples. This aspect of Jesus' ministry is notably exemplified by his interaction with Simon Peter and Andrew, wherein he extends an invitation to follow him and partake in his mission (Matthew 4:19). Such an initiation into discipleship mirrors the conventional pattern of a Rabbi gathering pupils for

instruction and guidance. Furthermore, Jesus' instructional endeavors are prominently showcased during his sermon on the mount, depicted in Matthew 5:1-2, wherein he ascends a mountainside and imparts comprehensive teachings to his disciples, encompassing morality, ethics, and spirituality. This pedagogical approach resonates with the customary practices of Rabbis instructing their adherents in Jewish tradition. Matthew portrays Jesus as a Rabbi, with a particular emphasis on his role as a teacher and interpreter of the law (Müller, 1999; and Sitorus, et al., 2021).

Moreover, Jesus' teachings are characterized by an authoritative delivery and emphasis on the interpretation of the Law, as delineated in Matthew 7:29. This underscores Jesus' embodiment of the Rabbi archetype within Jewish tradition. Additionally, Jesus uses parables to elucidate profound spiritual truths, as in Matthew 13, wherein he shares parables employing commonplace imagery to convey transcendent concepts—a pedagogical technique commonly associated with Rabbinic instruction. Jesus' teachings, are characterized by their authoritative delivery and emphasis on the interpretation of the Law (Matthew 7:29). His halakhic argumentation in the Sermon on the Mount, as presented in Matthew 5:21-48, serves to counter false assumptions about the Torah and establish his authoritative interpretation of the Law (Simanjuntak et al., 2019; Viljoen, 2013). This interpretation is further explored in the context of Jesus' teaching on the Torah, where Matthew's Gospel emphasizes his role in fulfilling the Law (Oluikpe, 2015; Viljoen, 2016).

Jesus' discussion with the Pharisees about the most important commandment in Matthew 22:34-40, highlights his authoritative interpretation of the Law, solidifying his role as a Rabbi with the authority to explain religious teachings. In summary, through his actions and teachings, Jesus perfectly embodies the archetypal functions of a Rabbi, guiding his followers in matters of faith and righteous living, thereby affirming his central position within the Jewish religious landscape of his time. It is further explored in a range of scholarly works. Krzysztosiak (2021), and Viljoen (2018) propose that Jesus' criticism of the Pharisees was embedded within a broader Jewish inter-sectarian discourse, which drew upon contemporary anti-Pharisaic accusations. This is supported by Stevenson (2019); and Charlesworth (1989),

who highlight the role of archeological and manuscript discoveries in providing a more authentic understanding of Jesus and his teachings.

Jesus portrayed as a Miracle Worker where he demonstrates extraordinary power over nature, sickness, and spiritual forces. These miracles serve to authenticate Jesus' divine authority and compassionate nature (Bauckham, 2020; and M'Bwangi, (2021b). In Matthew 9:27-30, Jesus heals two blind men. Additionally, Jesus exhibits authority over natural elements, such as calming storms and walking on water, as seen in Matthew 8:23-27 and Matthew 14:22-33. These displays of mastery over nature underscore Jesus' divine nature and sovereign control over creation. The Gospel showcasing his divine authority and compassionate nature through various instances of healing and mastery over nature (Matthew 9:27-30, 8:23-27, 14:22-33). Love (2002) and Twelftree, (2014) both provide social-scientific and literary-critical analyses, respectively, that support the historicity and significance of these miraculous interventions. Jesus as a Miracle Worker through various instances demonstrates extraordinary power over nature, sickness, and spiritual forces (M'bwangi (2021); Bauckham , 2020).

In addition, Jesus engages in exorcisms, liberating individuals from demonic possession and spiritual oppression, as demonstrated in Matthew 8:28-34 and Matthew 15:21-28. These highlight Jesus' victory over evil and his role as humanity's ultimate deliverer. Moreover, Jesus provides for the people's physical needs through miraculous food provisions, such as feeding the five thousand (Matthew 14:13-21). Hollenbach (1981) and Johnston (2015) both explore the significance of Jesus' exorcisms, with Hollenbach emphasizing their central role in his public career and Johnston acknowledging the challenges in interpreting these events. Nebreda, (2022).

Thus, the Gospel portrays Jesus as fulfilling Messianic prophecy, offering hope and salvation to all who believe in him. The Messianic identity of Jesus is a central theme of the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus' Messianic self-consciousness is further explored in the context of his proclamation of God's kingdom, with a focus on the communal dimension of his role (Henderson, 2009). The Christological title *the Holy One of God* appears a total of three times in the New Testament (Botner, 2017).

The Death of Jesus

Jesus' death in the Gospel of Matthew can be viewed through two significant themes: the Redeemer and The King of the Jews. First and foremost, Jesus is portrayed as the Redeemer, emphasizing his sacrificial death as the means of redemption for humanity. In Matthew 20:28, Jesus declares his mission to give his life as a ransom for many, highlighting his role as the ultimate Redeemer who offers forgiveness of sins through self-sacrifice. Additionally, in Matthew 26:28, Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper, symbolizing his blood shed to forgive sins, further affirming his identity as the Redeemer the Lamb of God. It is supported by various scholarly perspectives. Jackson (2011) emphasizes the atonement theme in Matthew's Gospel, highlighting Jesus' sacrificial death as a means of salvation.

Conversely, the theme of Jesus as The King of the Jews is prominently displayed during his crucifixion (Crossley, 2013). Despite mockery from the Roman authorities Jesus maintains his dignity, the inscription above Jesus' head on the cross reads, "*This is Jesus, the King of the Jews*" (Matthew 27:37), affirming his royal status even in his moment of suffering. Throughout the trial and crucifixion narrative, Jesus is repeatedly identified as the King of the Jews by his accusers and those who mock him (Matthew 27:29, 42). Furthermore, Jesus' final words on the cross in Matthew 27:46, quoting Psalm 22, further underscore his Messianic identity as the suffering yet victorious King who fulfills Old Testament prophecies. The theme during the crucifixion is a complex and contested one. O'collins (1965) both highlight the biblical dispute over Jesus' messianic claims, with Ellis emphasizing the role of Jewish theologians and O'collins challenging the historical interpretation of the Jewish people's rejection of Jesus. Donaldson (1991) and Van Der Watt (2016) further explore the significance of Jesus' kingship, with Donaldson focusing on the vindication of Jesus as God's Son and Watt discussing the spatial dynamics of Jesus as King of Israel.

Hence, the death of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew captures Jesus as the Redeemer and The King of the Jews. His sacrificial death serves as the ultimate act of redemption, offering forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God while also affirming his royal status as the long-awaited Messianic King. The alleged controversy over forgiveness between Jesus and his adversaries is

implausible within a first-century Jewish setting (Pascut, 2012). The sacrificial death of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew captures Jesus as the Redeemer and The King of the Jews (Schnabel, 2022).

Table 1. The self-constructive narrative of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew during his Birth, Life, and Death.

	Characterization	Verse
Birth	Jesus is a descendant of Abraham: Faith (Emmanuel)	Matthew 1:1-6,17
	Jesus is the descendant of David: King (Ruler)	Matthew 1:1, 6-12, 17
	Jesus is the descendant of the exiled Israelites: Son of Man	Matthew 1:12-17
Life	Rabbi	Matthew 23:8, 26:25, 26:49
	Miracle Worker	Matthew 8:14-15;28-34, 9:27-30, 14:15-21, 14:25-33, 17:14-18; 18:11
	Messiah	Matthew 16:16, 26:63-64, 27:42, 28:18-20
Death	King of Jews	Matthew 2:2, 21:5, 27:11, 27:29, 27:37
	The Redeemer	Matthew 20:28;26:28; 1:21; 27:50-54

Human experience with bios and logos

Fatigue

The Gospel portrays Jesus' physical exhaustion in carrying the cross after being scourged (Matthew 27:31) as a powerful symbol of his divine authority, humanity, and redemptive mission. This moment of fatigue, where Jesus falls to the ground and requires assistance from Simon of Cyrene, challenges our preconceptions of authority figures as rigid or harsh, revealing Jesus' unique and transcendent authority that stems from his divine nature. Jesus embodies a profound sacrifice, bearing the immense burden of mankind's sins to offer

salvation and forgiveness. This depiction of exhaustion serves as a reminder of the weight of divine love and the transformative power of redemptive sacrifice, and the depth of God's love for humanity.

Lindsay (2016) and Louw (2015) both explore the concept of spiritual exhaustion and the burden of the cross in the context of Christian service. Lindsay (2016) emphasizes the call for faithful service and the lightness of the burden compared to what Jesus bore, while Louw (2015) discusses the cost of caregiving and the need for a theology of compassion. van Oudtshoorn (2021) challenges the idealization of Jesus and emphasizes his identification with human weakness, while Loader (1984) presents the cross as a central aspect of God's dealings with humanity.

Sorrow

The portrayal of Jesus' emotional vulnerability in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:37-39) and his sorrowful anticipation of betrayal and abandonment by his disciples (Matthew 26:31) highlights Jesus' true embodiment of humanity, offering a profound exploration of his divine authority, humanity, and redemptive mission. Moreover, Jesus continues to love and save mankind, revealing a depth of compassion that surpasses earthly understanding.

This portrayal of Jesus' sorrow and pleading with God underscores his true embodiment of humanity, particularly in the face of betrayal and abandonment (Tavilla, 2017). The spiritual discipline of His Prayer, as discussed by Gulo et al. (2021), offers a means of finding solace and control in the midst of suffering.

Physical Pain

The physical pain endured by Jesus, Samellas (2015) explores the transformation of pain in late antiquity, suggesting that Christianity brought about a change in attitudes towards suffering. This is further emphasized by Cova & Cova (2019) on the spiritual dimension to pain, suggesting that it can lead to a higher spiritual state. The concept of suffering, particularly in the context of Jesus' crucifixion, is explored in a range of perspectives. Vitillo (2014) and Oet (2020) both emphasize the redemptive nature of Jesus'

suffering, with Vitillo highlighting its role in taking on human suffering and giving it salvific meaning.

Thirst

Jesus' request for a drink during his crucifixion (Matthew 27:48) reveals a fundamental biological need, his embodiment of human experience. This seemingly simple detail, when examined through the lens of Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle, invites us to contemplate the profound implications of Jesus' suffering as a real and embodied human experience. By acknowledging Jesus' thirst, the Gospel highlights the humanity of Jesus, reminding us of the immense sacrifice and love embodied in his suffering. This single verse, therefore, serves as a powerful reminder of Jesus' full immersion in the human condition.

The concept of thirst in the Bible, particularly in relation to Jesus' request for a drink, has been explored in various ways. Sheveland (2019) and Pagacz (2021) both emphasize the spiritual and emotional dimensions of thirst, with Sheveland highlighting the various forms of thirst experienced by humans and Pagacz linking Jesus' thirst to a cry for love.

Social Rejection and Humiliation

Jesus rejected by the Pharisees and received humiliation from the people (Matthew 27:39-40) reveal a human experience of rejection, from those who warmly received him on the gates of Jerusalem.

This perspective is supported by various theological views. Woyesa et al., (2021) emphasize the role of suffering in refining and maturing faith, while Swantek (2019) further explores the redemptive value of suffering, particularly in the context of St. John Paul II's Theology of the Body. Vitillo (2014) adds to this by discussing that Jesus' suffering isn't just physical pain; it has profound spiritual significance of the pain of rejection and humiliation.

Loneliness and Abandonment

In the crushing grip of loneliness and abandonment, Jesus uttered the heart-wrenching cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). As he hung upon the cross, the depths of human isolation engulfed him.

Even the Son of God wasn't spared the searing pain of disconnection. Yet, Jesus transcended the limitations of earthly hope. He offered a promise that stretched beyond the confines of mortal life: a hope for eternal existence and a purposeful future for his followers.

Korkiya (2022) discusses the impact of loneliness in a rapidly changing world, highlighting its potential for both distortion and spiritual development. Dahlberg (2007) further explores the essence of loneliness, emphasizing its role as a figure against a background of fellowship and connectedness. Elliot (2020) Hope sustains us from the sloth and despair that threaten amid injustice, tragedy, and death while Espedal (2021) mentioned on the sacred meetings in connection with others can replace terrified voices with hopeful ones. Xiao & Zhou (2013) reflect on solitude had positive effects on individuals' mental health, creativity, and enhanced self-integration. These studies collectively underscore the complex and multifaceted nature of loneliness and its potential for personal and spiritual growth.

Table 2. Human experience with textual evidence **bios and logos** constructs the pain and suffering of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew.

HUMAN EXPERIENCE	TEXTUAL EVIDENCE	Bios (Jesus' Biological Frame)	Logos (Transcendence)
Fatigue	Carrying the heavy cross after being scourged (Matthew 27:31).	Jesus experience exhaustion in carrying the cross, where Jesus fell unto the ground and needs to be helped by Simeon the Cyrean to carry the cross to the calvary.	Jesus embodies a unique and transcendent authority, distinct from earthly rulers. His power comes from God and is used for healing, forgiveness, and teaching. Jesus carries the cross for his people presents a physical fatigue but a the same time a bargain for man's sin.

<p>Sorrow</p>	<p>The Garden of Gethsemane: Jesus expresses deep sorrow and pleads with God (Matthew 26:37-39). "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death" (Matthew 26:38). Facing Betrayal and Abandonment: Jesus expresses sorrow knowing his disciples will desert him (Matthew 26:31).</p>	<p>Jesus expresses deep sorrow and pleads God to take away the cup of suffering. Jesus' emotional vulnerability challenges the idea of a stoic, emotionless divine figure. He experiences human emotions like fear and sorrow, highlighting his true embodiment of humanity. Judas betrayed Jesus and Peter denied Jesus.</p>	<p>Jesus' endless love for humanity presents a transcendental experience. Though Love may be viewed as an emotional response, often limited to close relationships, but Jesus' sorrow is the unfathomable action of Jesus as a savior of mankind that consequently betrayed.</p>
<p>Physical Pain</p>	<p>Flogging by Roman soldiers (Matthew 27:26). Crowning with thorns (Matthew 27:29). Carrying the cross (Matthew 27:31).</p>	<p>The graphic descriptions of physical violence reveal the harsh reality of Jesus' suffering. He endures immense physical pain, showcasing the brutality he faced.</p>	<p>Jesus transcends our limited understanding of love. He calls for a radical love extending to all, even those who oppose us. His sacrifice embodies the ultimate expression of this love.</p>

	Crucifixion point to immense physical suffering (Matthew 27:26-31).		
Thirst	Jesus' request for a drink indicates a basic biological need (Matthew 27:48).	This is a basic human physiological need.	It acknowledges a basic human biological need, further emphasizing Jesus' embodiment of human experience though he is considered as a God.
Social Rejection and Humiliation	Passersby mocking and hurling insults (Matthew 27:39-40). Religious leaders joining in the derision (Matthew 27:41-44).	Matthew emphasizes Jesus' social rejection. Even respected figures ridicule him, highlighting the depths of human cruelty he faced during his final moments. Jesus' suffering isn't just physical pain; it holds profound spiritual significance. He transcends the limitations of human suffering, offering his pain as a pathway to salvation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enduring physical torture and humiliation during the crucifixion (Matthew 27:26-44). • Connecting his suffering to the redemption of humanity (Matthew 26:28). These actions point toward a divine perspective. Jesus demonstrates power, unparalleled love, and acceptance of his role as a savior, transcending human limitations.
Loneliness and Abandonment	"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46).	Jesus' desperate cry on the cross reveals a profound sense of loneliness and abandonment. Even	Hope may be viewed as a fragile feeling, susceptible to disappointment.

		in his darkest moment, he experiences the emotional pain of isolation.	Jesus transcends the limitations of earthly hope, offering hope for life beyond death and a future purpose for his followers.
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The constructed collective social memory of Jesus Christ

Arrest

The book of Matthew details the arrest of Jesus for his trial in Matthew 26:47-56. In these verses, Judas arrives with a crowd carrying weapons, sent by the chief priests and elders. Judas identifies Jesus with a kiss, signaling for his arrest.

Trial

The trial of Jesus for his crucifixion is documented in Matthew 27:1-54. The Jewish leaders, including the chief priests and elders, planned Jesus' execution early in the morning. He was then bound and taken to Pilate, the Roman governor, for trial. Despite finding no wrong in Jesus, Pilate ultimately condemned him to death by crucifixion due to the crowd's demands, fueled by the Jewish leaders' fears of Jesus' growing followers.

Matthew 26:47-56 describes the arrest of Jesus, emphasizing his submission to the will of God and his fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

Punishment

The biblical references in the book of Matthew regarding the punishments of Jesus for his crucifixion can be found in Matthew 27:1-54. The chapter describes Jesus' trial before Pilate, his scourging, and his crucifixion. Despite the lack of evidence, Jesus was condemned for sedition. He was forced to carry his cross to the place of his crucifixion, Golgotha, also known as the Place of the Skull. The soldiers nailed Jesus' hands and feet to the cross, and a sign was placed above his head that read *Jesus of King of the Jews* in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. The crucifixion of Jesus was a fulfillment of God's plan for the redemption of mankind.

These punishments emphasize the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, the establishment of a new covenant, and the ultimate sacrifice for the redemption of mankind. The arrest, trials, and crucifixion of Jesus are all part of God's plan for the salvation of humanity. Despite the lack of evidence, Jesus is condemned for sedition, symbolizing the depth of his sacrifice and the cost of salvation.

Crucifixion

The biblical references in the book of Matthew regarding the crucifixion of Jesus provide a profound perspective on his sacrificial death and the theological imperatives it carries. Matthew 27:32-56 narrates the crucifixion scene, depicting Jesus' journey to Golgotha, the division of his clothes, and the placement of the sign declaring him as the King of the Jews. This event symbolizes the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and the establishment of a new covenant between God and humanity. The crucifixion, as recorded in Matthew, emphasizes Jesus' role as the ultimate sacrificial lamb whose death atones for the sins of the world, reflecting God's plan for the redemption of mankind.

The crucifixion of Jesus in Matthew underscores themes of humility, obedience, and selflessness. Despite his innocence, Jesus willingly endures unimaginable suffering out of love for humanity and obedience to the Father's will. The narrative challenges believers to reflect on their own lives, encouraging them to embrace humility, obedience, and sacrificial love in their relationships and devotion to God.

Table 3: The constructed collective social memory of Jesus Christ

Narrative of Jesus	Textual Evidence	SOCIAL MEMORY	
		REMEMBERED	FORGOTTEN
Arrest	Matthew 26:47-56; Matthew 27:17-23; Matthew 27:21; Matthew 27:22-23; Matthew 27:24-26	Jesus as the King of the Jews and a critic to the Pharisees and Sadducees. Judas leads a crowd	Jesus as a just and holy man and a miracle worker. Jesus did not think of escape when

		sent by the chief priests and elders to arrest Jesus. This leads to a series of events including Peter's failed defense with a sword and Jesus healing a servant's ear.	he noticed the arrival of the soldiers.
Trial	Matthew 27:1-2, 11-26 Matthew 27:1-54	He is brought before Pilate by the Jewish leaders, found innocent, yet sentenced to death by crucifixion due to public pressure. Pilate, Judge by the Roman Court. Suicide of Judas during trial and Peter's denial.	The trial and crucifixion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew reveal political dynamics of Roman occupation and Jewish fears of Jesus' growing followers. Despite innocence, Jesus was sentenced to death due to public pressure. The trial before Pilate, Judas' suicide, and

			<p>Peter's denial highlight the complexity of the narrative. The trial before Pilate may have lasted for six hours, and the role of Annas is significant. The suicide note of Judas sheds light on his remorse, and Pilate's death is seen as disgraceful.</p>
<p>Punishment</p>	<p>Matthew 27:26-30; Matthew 27:1-54</p>	<p>He was punished as ordered by Pilate. Scourging on the pillar, crowning with thorns, and blasphemy of the soldiers.</p>	<p>The use of the cross as a form of punishment in the Roman Empire, symbolizing universal spiritual impulses and the crucifixion of Jesus as the common savior of the world. The crucifixion was part of God's plan for the salvation of mankind,</p>

			requiring a sacrifice for the sin of mankind. The Scriptures record the full Bible story of the crucifixion, including the scourging, the crown of thorns, and the carrying of the cross. The crucifixion of Jesus was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and the establishment of a new covenant between God and humanity. The suffering and sacrifice of Jesus serve as a powerful example of humility, obedience, and selflessness for believers.
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Crucifixion	Matthew 27:33-44; Matthew 26:36-46; Matthew 27:46:00	Carrying the cross and the crucifixion	The people has forgotten that Jesus was baptized and the dove like apparition.
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The symbolic richness and theological significance of the pain and suffering of Jesus Christ in the narrative Matthew

The suffering of Jesus Christ holds profound symbolic richness and theological significance. His pain and suffering represent the ultimate sacrifice for the redemption of mankind, embodying God's love for humanity. The narrative of his trial, scourging, and crucifixion highlights the depth of his sacrifice, with descriptions of his physical torment, emotional trauma, and spiritual agony. The soldiers' scourging, his carrying of the cross, and the nailing of his hands and feet to the cross all underscore the severity of his suffering. Despite his innocence, Jesus was condemned for sedition, fulfilling God's plan for the redemption of mankind.

The pain and suffering of Jesus Christ symbolize the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and the establishment of a new covenant between God and humanity. The sacrificial nature of Jesus' suffering echoes the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, where blood was shed for the forgiveness of sins. In Matthew's narrative, Jesus becomes the ultimate sacrificial lamb whose death atones for the sins of the world, fulfilling the prophetic promises of the Messiah who would suffer for the salvation of mankind. This theological significance underscores the continuity of God's plan of redemption throughout history, culminating in the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross.

Furthermore, the pain and suffering of Jesus serve as a powerful example of humility, obedience, and selflessness for believers. Jesus willingly endured unimaginable suffering out of love for humanity and obedience to the will of the Father. His submission to the unjust trials, mockery, and crucifixion exemplifies a profound demonstration of self-sacrifice and forgiveness. This narrative challenges believers to reflect on their own lives, encouraging them to embrace humility, obedience, and sacrificial love in their relationships with

others and in their devotion to God. The suffering of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel thus becomes a transformative example for believers, inspiring them to embody the values of compassion, forgiveness, and selflessness in their own lives

Conclusion

The Gospel of Matthew presents Jesus' life as a significant themes that define his identity and mission. His birth is marked by his lineage as a descendant of Abraham, David, and the exiled Israelites, symbolizing faith, kingship, and the restoration of God's people. Throughout his life, Jesus assumes roles as a Rabbi, Miracle Worker, and ultimately, the Messiah, showcasing divine authority and fulfilling prophecies. In his death, Jesus is portrayed as the Redeemer and The King of the Jews, emphasizing his sacrificial death for the redemption of humanity and his ultimate sovereignty. The Gospel of Matthew skillfully weaves these themes together to present a comprehensive portrait of Jesus as the fulfillment of divine promises and the savior of mankind.

Moreover, the Gospel portrays Jesus' physical, emotional, and spiritual suffering as a profound exploration of his divine authority, humanity, and redemptive mission. Jesus' exhaustion in carrying the cross, emotional vulnerability in the Garden of Gethsemane, and sorrowful anticipation of betrayal challenge our preconceptions of a stoic, emotionless divine figure. By acknowledging Jesus' basic human needs and experiencing loneliness and abandonment, the Gospel highlights his immersion in the human condition, inviting reflection on the depth of his sacrifice and love. These portrayals of Jesus' suffering transcend human limitations, embodying an unfathomable love for humanity and revealing a depth of compassion that surpasses earthly understanding. Through the lens of Ricoeur's hermeneutic circle, we are invited to contemplate the profound implications of Jesus' suffering as a real and embodied human experience, emphasizing the transformative power of redemptive sacrifice and the nature of divine love.

The arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew depict his submission to God's will, sacrificial love, and the fulfillment of prophecies.

From Judas' betrayal to Pilate's verdict, these events symbolize Jesus' ultimate sacrifice for humanity's redemption. The narrative challenges believers to embody humility, obedience, and selflessness, reflecting on the cost of salvation and the depth of God's love. Jesus' suffering and crucifixion stand as theological imperatives, inspiring compassion, forgiveness, and selflessness in the lives of believers, emphasizing the transformative power of his sacrifice for the salvation of mankind.

Concrete effects of Jesus' crucifixion are evident in both spiritual and communal dimensions. Spiritually, his sacrifice provides the means for the forgiveness of sins, as emphasized in Matthew 26:28, where Jesus speaks of his blood being *poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins*. This act inaugurates a new covenant, signifying that salvation is no longer achieved through the law but through faith in Jesus as the savior. For believers, this understanding transforms their relationship with God, offering direct access to divine grace and an assurance of eternal life.

On a communal level, the crucifixion of Jesus reshapes ethical and moral imperatives, challenging believers to emulate his humility, obedience, and selflessness. His death inspires values of compassion, forgiveness, and sacrificial love, which are foundational to Christian discipleship. The transformative power of his sacrifice manifests in the lived faith of believers, who are called to embody Christ-like virtues in their interactions with others. Additionally, the resurrection, which follows the crucifixion, affirms the victory over sin and death, providing hope and renewal for humanity.

Ultimately, the crucifixion and resurrection together redefine the human condition, offering not only the promise of salvation but also a call to live in alignment with divine love and purpose. Jesus' sacrifice thus serves as both a theological cornerstone and a source of enduring inspiration for personal and communal transformation, bridging the gap between divine justice and human frailty.

The pain and suffering of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew hold profound symbolic richness and theological significance, representing the ultimate sacrifice for the redemption of mankind and embodying God's love for humanity. The narrative of his trial, scourging, and crucifixion underscores the depth of his sacrifice, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies and establishing a

new covenant between God and humanity. The sacrificial nature of Jesus' suffering echoes the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, where blood was shed for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus becomes the ultimate sacrificial lamb whose death atones for the sins of the world, fulfilling the prophetic promises of the Messiah who would suffer for the salvation of mankind. The suffering of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel also serves as a powerful example of humility, obedience, and selflessness for believers, challenging them to reflect on their own lives and to embody the values of compassion, forgiveness, and selflessness in their daily lives.

Data availability statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are drawn from the Gospel of Matthew in the New International Version (NIV) Bible, which served as the corpus for the analysis. The text is openly available at <https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/matthew/1/>.

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